



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

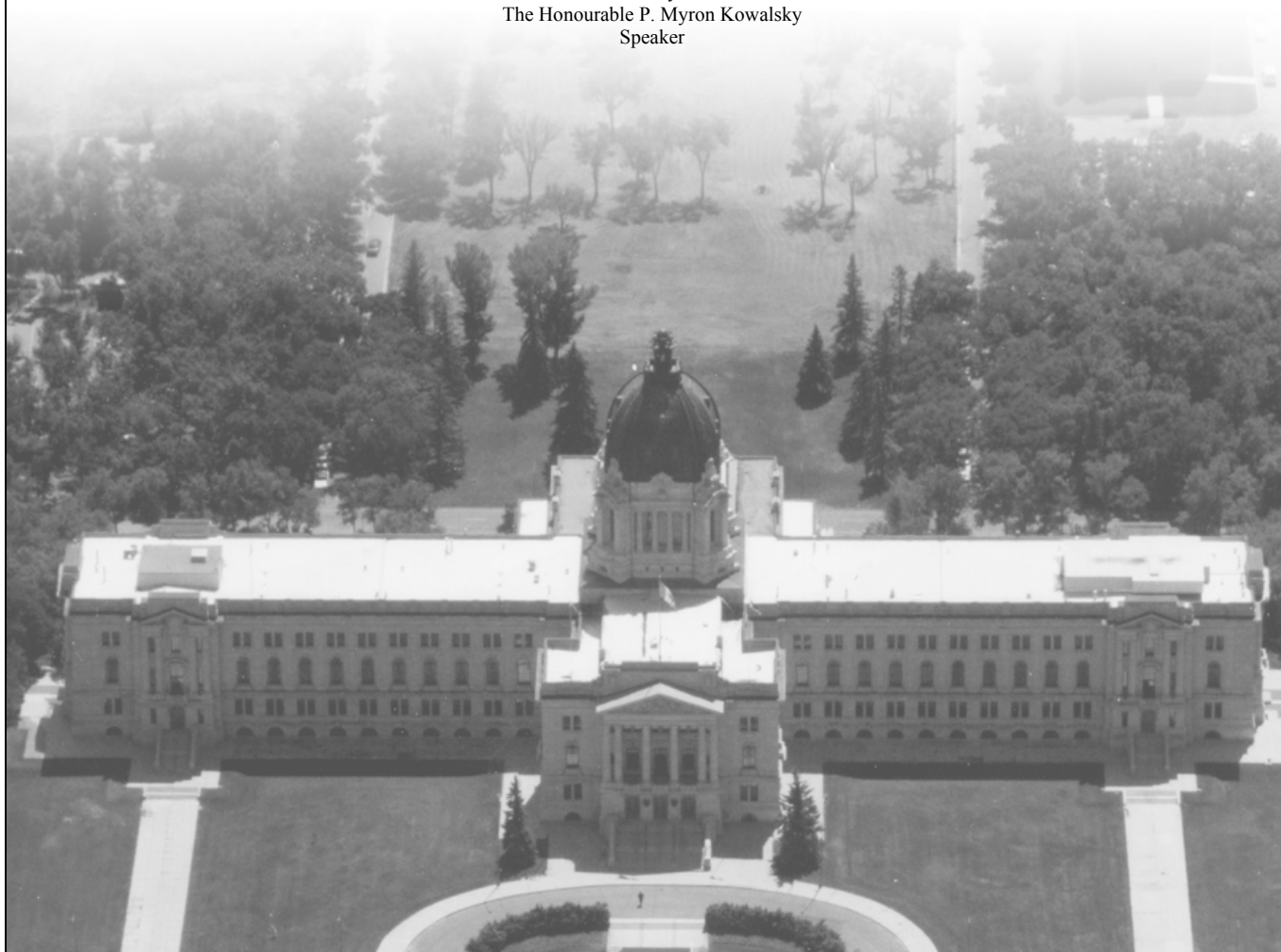
of the

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, Graham	NDP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Hon. Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Bakken, Brenda	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Beatty, Hon. Joan	NDP	Cumberland
Belanger, Hon. Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, 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, Hon. Joanne	NDP	Regina Rosemont
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Dearborn, Jason	SP	Kindersley
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, Hon. David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Gantefoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
Hagel, 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
Heppner, Ben	SP	Martensville
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, Eldon	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
McCall, 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, Hon. 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

The Assembly met at 13:30.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, again to present a petition regarding the tax on, potential tax on food, restaurant meals. Mr. Speaker, I read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

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

Mr. Speaker, I have presented petitions signed by people from the communities of Wolseley, Sintaluta, Grenfell, Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Lemberg, Speers, and Katepwa Beach. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition on behalf of constituents from Cypress Hills. They're signed by people actually who frequent two of my favourite haunts in the communities of Climax and Eastend. I'd like to read the prayer as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendations to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

I so present, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Martensville.

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise to present a petition in the theme that we've had for the last week or two. And I read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

And these are signed by the good people from Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Waldheim, Rosthern, Hague, Carlton. Matter of fact, I probably had coffee with these people when they signed it,

Mr. Speaker.

I so present.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Swift Current.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise on behalf of residents of this province concerned with the potential that the PST (provincial sales tax) would be expanded in the upcoming budget. The prayer of their petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendation to expand the PST to include restaurant meals.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petitioners that I have the pleasure of representing in the legislature today are from the great city of Swift Current, but also from Wymark, Tompkins, Shaunavon, Eastend, Saskatoon, Abbey, Success, Gull Lake, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, Morse, Gravelbourg, Rockglen, and the list goes on.

I so present, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to present petitions from people who are really concerned about adding tax to restaurant meals.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

The people who have signed this petition are from Estevan, Oxbow, Alida, Porcupine Plain, Ceylon, Forget, Tisdale, Leroy, and Saskatoon.

I so present.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you Mr. Speaker. I have a petition from the fine people of Rosetown-Elrose that indicate that they are strongly opposed to the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendation to implement a regressive new 7 per cent tax on restaurant meals. Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

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

Mr. Speaker, the majority of the signatures on this petition are from the fine community of Outlook, although I see that Birsay and Macrorie and Mildren are also represented. I'm pleased to present this petition on their behalf.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

Mr. Speaker, the signatures come from Esterhazy, Spy Hill, Stockholm, Rhein, Melville, Balcarres, Regina, Churchbridge, Ituna, Glen Ewen, Oxbow, Goodeve, Kamsack, and Moose Jaw.

I so present.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to present a petition on a subject near and dear to my heart; it's the water level in the Qu'Appelle Valley. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to do everything in its power to work with the First Nations people and the federal government to bring a prompt end to the dispute so that the water level of the Qu'Appelle River system can return to normal and end the economic harm and uncertainty this dispute has caused.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed from people out of . . . from Calgary and Regina.

I so present.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Estevan.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again today I stand to present a petition on behalf of restaurateurs and citizens who are very concerned about the proposed expansion to the PST. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this presentation today contains the signatures of over 2,500 concerned people from Estevan, Bienfait, Midale, Macoun, Steelman, Benson, Torquay, other areas in the province as well as other provinces.

I so present. Thank you.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on behalf of citizens of Melfort and the Northeast concerned about a potential expansion of the PST. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

I'm pleased to present on their behalf.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition of citizens concerned about PST being applied to restaurant meals. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

And the signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from Saskatoon, Meadow Lake, Bruno, Quill Lake, Humboldt, Naicam, Annaheim, Watson, Marysburg, Kyle, Prince Albert, Archerwill, Canora, Viscount, Preeceville, Watrous, LeRoy, Wadena, and Grande Prairie, Alberta.

I so present.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition from citizens that are concerned about a tax being applied to their food. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by citizens from all over the province.

I so present.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I also rise in the Assembly today to bring forth a petition signed by citizens of Saskatchewan that are concerned with the government's proposal to tax food. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatures on this petition are from Debden, Victoire, Prince Albert, Spiritwood, Shell Lake, and Medstead.

And I so present.

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

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition dealing with expanding the PST.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

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

Signed by citizens from Saskatoon, Dundurn, Hanley, Kenaston, and Yorkton.

I so present.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise to present a petition on behalf of petitioners from Carrot River Valley who are strongly opposed to any new 7 per cent tax on restaurant meals. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

And as duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, I have a goodly number of signatures from Nipawin, Tisdale, Arborfield, Carrot River, Hudson Bay, Prairie River, Mistatim, Codette, Red Earth, and Shoal Lake.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise on the regressive new 7 per cent sales tax on restaurant meals. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education recommendation to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurants' meals. Please do not tax our food.

And is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, these come from Saskatoon, Osler, Hague, North Battleford, Cudworth, Warman, Martensville, and Davidson.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Chisholm: — Mr. Speaker, I also have a petition regarding the proposed PST tax on food.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education's recommendations to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

And is duty bound, your petitions will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is from the fine people of Lashburn, Maidstone, and Waseca area. Thank you.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to bring forth this petition on restaurant food and reads as follows:

And therefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the government not to implement the Commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education recommendations to expand the provincial sales tax to include restaurant meals. Please do not tax our food.

And is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And these are from the good people of Kinistino, Wakaw, Tway, P.A. (Prince Albert), Domremy, Cudworth, Bellevue, St. Brieux.

And I so present.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order the petition concerning the balancing of the provincial budget presented March 24, 2004, has been found to be irregular and therefore cannot be read and received.

According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and are hereby read and received.

The petition concerning the hospital services to Davidson and Imperial health centres that being sessional paper no. 63;

And addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional paper nos. 47 and 49.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day 11 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Agriculture: how much did the province contribute to the PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration) rural water development program in 2000-2001 and I also have the same for the following years right up to 2004-2005.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 11 ask the government the following three questions:

To the Minister of Agriculture: as of this date, how many CFIP claims are left to be processed?

To the Minister of Agriculture: for the fiscal year 2002-2003, how much has the province paid out for CFIP claims and what was the average amount paid by the province per claim? And for the . . . to the Minister of Agriculture: for the fiscal year 2003-2004 how much had the province paid out for CFIP claims and what was the average amount paid by the province per claim?

(13:45)

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day 11 ask the government the following question:

To the minister responsible for SaskPower: what are the estimated cost savings to SaskPower as a result of the move to the new Saskatoon service centre this month? And further to this, was a cost-benefit analysis done for this move and will the analysis be made public?

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on day no. 11 I shall ask, I want to ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Finance: how much was spent on the planning and design of the ads used in the provincial government's advertising campaign regarding the federal equalization formula, and what company was contracted to produce these ads?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to my colleagues here in the legislature, it's a pleasure to introduce in your gallery two residents of Saskatoon, Shelley Sadoway is here as well as her son, Teddy Sadoway. I'd ask all members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming them here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Regina Coronation Park.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my great honour today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature a fine group of grade 9 students from O'Neill High School in the great constituency of Regina Coronation Park. The teacher is Mike Chase. The student of note is one Abby Putz, none other than the daughter of our Clerk assistant, Greg.

This group is on a Regina urban trek. They're part of an interactive learning program that . . . I understand this is its first, possibly second year but I think first year, and the program is called open skies. As I mentioned it's an interactive learning program. It is for . . . let me put it this way — it's for very good students and it's an opportunity for students to participate in the world outside of their classroom.

So I ask in particular Abby to stand and be recognized, Abby, and all colleagues to give her and the grade 9s from O'Neill a special welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Saskatoon Silver Springs.

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Mr. Speaker, thank you. I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly, a friend of mine Ken Sawatsky who's sitting in the east gallery. Ken is a business person from Saskatoon of some notoriety. He is one of three partners that started Crestline Coach, a business that employs over 100 people in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — They supply world-class ambulances around the country and across the world. Ken is also a founding member of Junior Achievement in Saskatchewan. Ken and his wife Merle have been honoured by the North Saskatchewan Business Association, by the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce,

with numerous awards.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join me in welcoming a real builder of Saskatchewan, Ken Sawatsky.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Athabasca.

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the west galley, I have two friends of mine that have travelled many, many miles to be here and I'd like to ask the Assembly members to recognize two very special people.

But before I begin, Mr. Speaker, one is Lawrence Corrigan. He's the housing manager back home at Ile-a-la-Crosse. And when I was in high school, Mr. Speaker, we used to do our tests all together in the gym and Lawrence used to always sit next to me. And he's done really well in school, got great grade marks. I suspected he was copying off of me, Mr. Speaker. And the problem was I was in grade 10 and he was in grade 12 and he still got straight A's.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to recognize, with Lawrence of course is Leon Desjarlais. Leon is a trapper, he's a commercial fisherman, he's also a carpenter, and now I hear he might want to be the next MLA for Athabasca.

But I want to ask all members to join me in welcoming Mr. Desjarlais and Mr. Corrigan to the Assembly today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

40th Anniversary of the Copper Kettle

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Copper Kettle Restaurant has been around for as long as . . . well actually, longer than I can remember. It is a friendly gathering place and an integral part of Regina's downtown.

Yesterday, the Copper Kettle celebrated its 40th anniversary. Many had the pleasure of travelling back in time to 1964 when a grilled cheese sandwich, with soup and french fries, cost only 75 cents, before GST (Goods and Services Tax) of course, Mr. Speaker. Myself, I had to make do with a nice tasty caucus meeting.

Anne and Robert Gardikiotis purchased the Aren's lunch counter 40 years ago and, in 1968, it expanded to include 93 seats. The restaurant underwent another change in 1975 when Robert and Anne purchased the Camera Craft store next door, installed a lounge, a bar, and expanded seating to 225.

In 2002, the restaurant was further renovated and they opened up O'Hanlon's Pub in partnership with Niall O'Hanlon — direct from Ireland I might add, Mr. Speaker — and they won two awards for exterior and interior renovation.

Mr. Speaker, Anne and Robert are committed to improving the feel and look of downtown Regina. They are actively involved in their community, and always thinking of ways to better serve their customers. And they've had a wide array of famous customers over the years — many casts and crews of multiple Globe Theatre productions and, as Robert is very proud to relate, Tommy Douglas himself.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Copper Kettle for reaching 40 years of success. Congratulations to Robert and Anne, and now to their son Paul and partner in management. Thank you to the Gardikiotis and their employees for the commitment and dedication to downtown Regina, to good food, good drink, and good times. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member from Moosomin.

Kipling-Windthorst Pioneer Passes

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a little over a week ago we laid to rest a true pioneer of the Kipling-Windthorst community. I speak of Tom Kearns, well known for Tom's editorials which were widely quoted.

Mr. Kearns was born and raised in the Windthorst area. He first worked in general stores in Windthorst, Peebles, and Corning. While in Peebles he began his journalism career by publishing a monthly news bulletin called *The Peebles Punch*.

Mr. Kearns enlisted in the Canadian Forces, obtaining the rank of captain in the artillery, and was awarded the Canadian Forces Decoration.

Following the war, Mr. Kearns and his wife purchased the *Kipling Citizen* which they ran successfully until health forced them to step aside and turn the business over to their family.

Both Tom and his wife Emily received the Silver Quill from the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspaper Association.

Mr. Kearns is well known for his service to his community as president of the board of trade — now the chamber of commerce — councillor, mayor of his community, and unit trustee for the Broadview School Division, plus many other boards. Mr. Kearns also ran as a federal Liberal candidate in 1958.

Tom would consider of his greatest achievements the construction of the Willowdale Lodge Care Home where he resided the last few years of his life due to failing health.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Kearns took an interest in pretty much everything and never stopped learning. His knowledge and insight was well known and respected; his way with words and his quick wit, a marvel. Our condolences are extended to the Kearns family and their many friends.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member from Saskatoon

Sutherland.

St. Thomas More College

Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, I had the good fortune of spending a good part of my post-secondary years at St. Thomas More College at the University of Saskatchewan which I'm proud to say is located in my constituency of Saskatoon Sutherland. This Catholic liberal arts college provided me with a first-rate education. And I still enjoy stopping by STM (St. Thomas More) to visit with friends and faculty.

Mr. Speaker, the President of STM, Father George Smith, recently announced \$36,000 in new entrance scholarships. Under this program St. Thomas More College will provide \$2,000 to one student from each of the 18 Catholic high schools in Saskatchewan.

These new scholarships are designed to attract quality students. They underline the importance that STM places on strengthening access to post-secondary education and demonstrate a commitment to community involvement.

Mr. Speaker, students, graduates and faculty of St. Thomas More have been recognized both nationally and internationally. More than 2,000 students are currently registered at STM and about 10,000 people take at least one three-credit course.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone at St. Thomas More College for its dedication to learning in this province and in Saskatoon, and for its commitment to students.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

PST on Restaurant Food Sales

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association delivered one pizza to each MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) in the legislature.

The pizzas, each missing a slice, came with a message protesting the possible expansion of the PST to include restaurant meals. That message was, don't take a slice of our business.

While the Saskatchewan Party was more than willing to receive the message, our MLAs decided to take the pizzas to students at Sacred Heart Elementary School. We are pleased to tell the Assembly that grades 6, 7 and 8 basketball teams at Sacred Heart were able to have the pizzas for their season windup, as well as the grade 8 students that were taking part in the leadership program.

The Saskatchewan Party would like to take this opportunity to thank the CRFA (Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association) for the pizzas and Sacred Heart principal Rob Currie for helping us arrange this delivery.

I know I can speak for all the members on this side of the House that the message was much more important than the pizza.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moose Jaw North.

Tourism Excellence Celebrated

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

Mr. Speaker, last Friday, March 19, I had the pleasure of attending the 15th annual Saskatchewan Tourism Awards in Saskatoon. These 14 awards recognize individuals, communities and businesses across the province who have demonstrated excellence in the tourism industry.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make special mention of one of the award winners in particular. Yvette Moore of Moose Jaw received the award for Creative Excellence. Yvette Moore has been a major contributor to Moose Jaw's growing tourism industry which has been very valuable in my home community.

Grey Cup 2003 also deserves special mention for winning the Spirit of Saskatchewan Award. Mr. Speaker, Grey Cup 2003 delivered a memorable week-long celebration, demonstrated excellence in hospitality, and raised the bar for future Grey Cups.

Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge the valuable contributions of all individuals, businesses and communities in the tourism industry. I thank Tourism Saskatchewan for the role it plays in promoting our province on a daily basis, both within our borders and well beyond.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join in congratulating the 14 Tourism Award recipients for their outstanding achievements in our great province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Electrical Engineering Students' High Voltage Classic

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This weekend in Saskatoon the University of Saskatchewan electrical engineering students who have raised over \$250,000 for Saskatoon charities will host their High Voltage Classic.

This annual charity event is one of the largest 100 per cent student-run charity events in Canada. This year's charity of choice is the Hemophilia Saskatchewan. The electrical engineer students are endeavouring to raise \$25,000 to send boys and girls with bleeding disorders to camp. Parents of the children with bleeding disorders will also be able to attend the camp and learn how to control bleeds, to be trained by the proper use of various new medications now used in the control of hemophilia.

The event is an outdoor road hockey tournament, men's and women's mixed teams, three rinks simultaneously. I'd also like

to announce that our mayor will be playing with the councillors in a game against old-timer hockey.

I'd just like to congratulate the Saskatchewan engineering students, Ryan Dusik, Ian Stavness, and Kay Katzman from the Hemophilia Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Saskatoon Fairview.

Lanigan Company Makes Sale to Russia

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is one of the top exporters in the world. Columnist Paul Martin, writing on this topic in the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix* a short time ago, began his article by saying something that would surprise many of us.

Reach into your wallet. Seventy cents of every dollar you find originated outside this province.

Mr. Martin went on to say:

Saskatchewan is one of the most successful trading exporting jurisdictions in the world. And we didn't get this way by accident, we are very good at what we do.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Assembly about one effort that proves that point. Feed equipment manufacturer New Concept Industries located in Lanigan has secured a new order with Reactiv, a Russian chemical and agricultural company. The order is for roller mills and is worth about 300,000 US (United States) dollars.

Mr. Speaker, it took over a year of pursuing this deal to get it to pay off. The company has shown that dedication to focused and sustained marketing efforts in a territory can yield positive results.

New Concept and two other Saskatchewan agricultural equipment manufacturers were in Russia on a Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership-led trade mission from March 13 to 17. And I would also like to give a tip of the hat to the people at STEP (Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership Inc.) who have played an integral role in developing this market.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all members will join me in congratulating New Concept Industries of Lanigan on the fine work they are doing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:00)

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

Grassroots Gravesite Restoration Project

Ms. Bakken: — Mr. Speaker, Randy Van De Sype from Radville has initiated a project which he hopes will be completed for Saskatchewan's centennial in 2005. Randy's

project is the grassroots gravesite restoration project with the objective to restore old, abandoned, one-room school gravesites that dot the Saskatchewan landscape. There are over 3,300 gravesites in Saskatchewan, with only 450 gravesites still active. Some have been maintained to some degree, but most need work and care to restore them to their original condition. To quote Randy:

It is very shameful, how we the people of this country, have allowed this great part of our country's heritage to be forgotten. The people buried in these cemeteries are the real heroes of this country. They are the people who broke this great land and led the way for us.

Randy believes that the heritage in these gravesites is the heritage of Canada, heritage of Saskatchewan, and the heritage of the RMs (rural municipality). Randy believes that being that it's the heritage of all; it should be the responsibility of all to preserve these gravesites.

Mr. Speaker, what the grassroots gravesite restoration project is hoping to do is to combine government contributions at the federal, provincial, and municipal level, corporate sponsorship, and donations from the private sector to fund this program.

A trust fund for this project has been set up at the Merchant law firm. Mr. Speaker, we wish Randy Van De Sype and all those involved with this most worthwhile project success as they endeavour to preserve a part of our history in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Surgical Waiting Lists

The Speaker: — Recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. Monday we raised the case of Cheryl Sim who has been waiting for some time for a back and hip surgery. Today we have a 45-year-old business owner and a mother from Saskatoon who needs elective surgery — elective, but very important surgery.

Shelley Sadoway has been waiting since June 20, 2002. She has been told by doctors that her waiting time would be 18 months, then 2 years, then 3 years, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to report, however, that Ms. Sadoway has informed me earlier today that she, when raising these issues with her doctor and indicating to that doctor that she'd be raising them with the official opposition, has now been placed on the urgent list. We're grateful for that, Mr. Speaker. But there is still no definite date, there is still no definite date as to when she will receive her surgery.

The question to the minister is this, on her behalf: when is the government going to ensure that there are resources in place so that Shelley Sadoway and others like her, hundreds of others like her, can enjoy a quality of life here in the province of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, on Monday of this week we made our announcements about the target time frames for surgery. And at that particular event, Dr. Peter Glynn who is the head of our Sask surgical registry made a comment which I think I should read here in the House so we can put this all in perspective, quote:

I think we need to keep things in perspective because actually half of all the surgeries, all the patients waiting for surgery in Regina and Saskatoon combined, are dealt with within 9-weeks and 93% are actually now dealt with within (the whole system) in 18-months.

Mr. Speaker, we know that we have a challenge with some of the long-wait ones and that's what we're working at, and that's what we're attempting to be in a position where our target time frames will not have anybody in the province waiting longer than 18 months, but we will have our sort of median wait down below nine weeks for all the surgery in the province.

We're working hard on this problem because it's a problem here and right across the country and everybody's watching what we're doing to make sure that we develop something for Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, setting target times for surgery may be a step in the right direction, but we continue to hear things, Mr. Speaker, like the time it'll take to clear up the backlog being two years before that 18-month period can begin, Mr. Speaker.

We're raising the case today of a businesswoman and a mother in Saskatoon who has been told at one point that she will be waiting, she will be waiting for up to three years. She might still be waiting for that long had she not decided to raise this issue in a public way.

What about the others, Mr. Speaker, who aren't able to or who don't raise their case in this manner, for example? What is the Minister of Health telling them? It has to be more than, we're going to take two years to clear up the backlog and then you may have surgery within 18 months. Surely there is some other plan to ensure that people like Ms. Sadoway are getting the treatment that they need.

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, there is a plan and we've been working at this. And what it deals with is making sure that across our province all of the surgical patients in Saskatchewan are assessed in a common way. We have that system in place now. All new patients are assessed on that system and that's going to be part of how we deal with it.

But there's no question that there are certain individuals who have waited a long time. And I know that that becomes a real challenge for those people and for their families, especially if

they're still working, but it's also for the older people.

We know also that we provide the highest number per capita of knee surgeries and hip surgeries, along with Alberta, in Canada. And we've been making sure that we continue that. That's part of our plan. But it's also part of our plan to make sure that people are assessed fairly and that everybody knows what the rules are.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, for much of this week and part of last, the Minister of Health has been saying, in part anyway, that patients on waiting lists need only contact the Surgical Care Network. That's one of the solutions this NDP (New Democratic Party) government is offering.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this becomes a difficult task when the procedures you require aren't even listed on the Surgical Care Network and when you've never been actually given a definite date. Because people like Ms. Sadoway are logging on to the network and they're not getting the information that they are promised that they would get in terms of their anticipated time on a waiting list.

The question to the minister is this: in light of the fact that the measures they're introducing are either not working or still maintain the spectre for these people of a two-year-plus, 18-month wait for the treatment they need, in light of those things, is the Minister of Health entertaining any other measure? Is there anything else this NDP government can offer people like Ms. Sadoway who desperately need and deserve treatment in the province of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, the purpose of introducing the surgical care coordinators, just over a year ago, was so that people like Mrs. Sadoway and others would have somebody to talk to and deal with these issues.

They also have the ability to talk and work with their surgeons and their family doctors, who are their advocates, and people who work within the system. What we have to do is make sure that all of these parts are working together, that we have a method whereby people can understand how the surgeries are booked, and it's done in a fair and consistent way. We have that, working together with the professionals in this field, and we're going to see how that works.

On top of that, that then allows us to identify where we need resources to deal with some of the backlogs in certain areas or maybe make some other adjustments.

When it comes to resources, we have been told this week by the federal government that they're not adding more money into this system this year, that there may be something in the summer or next year. We need some consistency right across the country that provides long-term funding for our medical system in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort.

Emergency Room Issues at Royal University Hospital

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health. I want to advise the minister of another victim of the NDP government's failing health care system.

On Tuesday morning May Donald fell in her home in Maidstone and was taken to the hospital. The doctor suspected May had broken her hip, and she was sent by ambulance to Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon. Upon arrival by ambulance, May was loaded onto a gurney and rolled into the hallway of the emergency room. And there she lay, in serious pain, heavily sedated, disoriented, and by herself in the hallway for the next 30 hours. Mr. Speaker, May Donald is 90 years old.

Does the minister think that leaving a 90-year-old woman with a broken hip on a gurney in the hallway for 30 hours is acceptable health care?

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I know, and I think many of the members in the opposition and their family members, as well as those people on this side of the House, is that we have very many professional people who work in our health care system that provide very good care. And they work and they work hard, and we know that sometimes there are stresses and overloads at various points in the system, and that what we try to do is make sure we meet that.

Now I obviously feel the concern for this woman in that particular place, but I know also that the people who are working there would have made an assessment when she first came in and then tried to work to fit her into the overall schedule that they have there in that particular facility.

There are pressures in emergency rooms across the country. We have big pressures in our emergency rooms in Regina and Saskatoon. We're going to deal with them, but we have to deal with them with the professionals.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Gantefer: — Mr. Speaker, May Donald was loaded onto a gurney and rolled into the emergency room hallway at RUH (Royal University Hospital) at 4 p.m. on Tuesday. And that's where the MLA for Lloydminster found his 90-year-old aunt, barely conscious from the pain, 30 hours later. But it wasn't the nurses' fault; they were run off their feet. It wasn't the doctors' fault; there just weren't enough of them. There weren't enough beds to accommodate May Donald. So she lay on a gurney in the hallway, in excruciating pain, heavily sedated, for 30 hours.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister stop making excuses and explain to me and her family why a pioneer of our province, a 90-year-old woman who has worked all of her life, was forced to wait 30 hours in pain in a hallway at RUH.

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, in our system there are times when there are overloads, and we try to put together a system that will meet the needs of all of our people in the province. But there are times when some things just aren't able to be coped with all at the same time. But I know that the assessment takes place when people come into emergencies, and they try to deal with the people who come in, in a triage way, to make sure that everybody gets assistance.

In Canada, right across this country, there are pressures in emergency rooms, and in hospitals, and in other parts of the health care system as we try to cope with the costs of our system and with the pressures around the numbers of staff that we have. We've been working here in Saskatchewan to develop a plan that tries to deal with all of the different components that go into health care. We're going to continue on that plan because that's what we have to do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Gantefer: — Mr. Speaker, the minister and his government continue to minimize the serious health care situation; and the minister insists on characterizing the failures of the NDP's health care system as isolated incidents. Well, Mr. Speaker, we have received examples of nurses' reports detailing what the NDP describes as isolated incidents at the emergency room of the Royal University Hospital. These reports, filled out by nurses, are then filed by the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses in the region, to document serious situations in the ER (emergency room).

Mr. Speaker, I'll just quote the words of ER nurses as recorded in a few of these rather alarming reports:

All beds full . . . Hallways also full . . . Patients moved to hallway beds . . . needing oxygen . . . Oxygen . . . unavailable . . . Patients needing medication which are unavailable from Pharmacy . . . Unsafe working conditions for the staff. Unsafe care given . . . patients.

Mr. Speaker, is this what the minister means by isolated incidents where patient care is at risk?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, in any health care environment there are times when there are challenges around the capacity to deal with particular situations. When those arise, then you work to try to make sure that you can deal with those. What we have to recognize is that we are trying to provide medical care for across the province, and I think we're doing a very good job with access for people everywhere.

We also do not limit the ability of people to get into this access because of their financial means. That's a challenge and we're going to continue to work on that. We have to work on it in our local communities, we have to work on it on a province-wide basis, we have to work on it on a national basis. It's unfortunate that it appears that on a national basis some of the decisions

made recently do not include a long-term plan. But we need to work towards that plan, so that we can provide the care for everybody, because we are concerned about each and every individual Saskatchewan person.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:15)

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Mr. Speaker, if the minister can't understand what this means to people, maybe the Premier will answer the question.

Here's another nurse's report about another dangerous situation in the overcrowded and understaffed emergency room at RUH. Quote:

All hallway space used . . . Not enough nurses to care for patients . . . Continuously moving to accommodate new patients, and assessments dangerous. Totally inadequate care . . . Unfair that patients dying of cancer can't get bed in hospital. Patients' charts lost, patients lost. Tests not done.

Mr. Speaker, these are the words of a nurse struggling to help critically ill patients in a chronically understaffed and overcrowded emergency room, and she is not alone. And her words must be heard by this government as a desperate cry for help, not as an isolated incident.

Mr. Premier, are you listening? And what is the NDP government going to do to address the concerns of the nurses and doctors in the RUH ER?

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, in a little less than a week we are going to bring forward a budget which sets out some of the resources that we have to deal with health care as well as many of the other issues in this province.

And that's one place where the members opposite can help us, by supporting that budget to make sure that we go ahead with the resources that we need. They can also help us by contacting their friend Mr. Harper, down there in Ottawa, to see what he might bring into this national discussion, so we can get federal contributions to match the kinds of demands that are there in our system.

All of us have to work together to sort out this problem, and I ask those members across the way, you know, stop sucking the lemons or whatever it was they used to be doing. Let's start talking about positive things and talk about how we can build this health system in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the Premier to take a leadership role and dismiss these feeble

excuses of this Minister of Health and his uncaring attitude about these incidents.

Mr. Speaker, today we raise the concerns of Shelley Sadoway, a young woman who's been forced to put her life on hold while she waits three years for surgery. We raise the tragedy of a 90-year-old woman who waited 30 hours in the ER with a broken hip, and we shared the desperate pleas of two nurses as they cried out for help and filed reports about the unsafe conditions at RUH.

Mr. Speaker, these are the concerns that Dr. Witt raised when he wrote his letter to the minister, which the minister ignored until the Premier made him take action. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier do the right thing, reinstate Dr. Witt, and call for an independent inquiry into these circumstances that the minister trivializes?

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Health and as a member of this government, I do not ever trivialize any of the complaints that people in Saskatchewan have . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — . . . because each individual is an important part of how our province works. But I also need to have everybody recognize that our health care system, and the valued health care professionals in this system, are providing good care to many, many hundreds of thousands of people on an annual basis. And the important thing that we need to do is to provide the support with the resources that we can get here in our province.

Some of these challenges are national in scope, in fact even international in scope, so we need help from some of our neighbours and from the federal government. What we all need to do is to work together to make sure we get this problem sorted out. And I'm asking the members opposite to be part of the team and not something else.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Government Advertising

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. On a day when we're talking about the appropriate use and the proper use of precious tax resources for the Government of Saskatchewan, my question to him is this. You spent \$75,000 on this, Mr. Speaker — on this? On an advertising campaign whose market is two people. There are two people that need to get the equalization message from the province of Saskatchewan. One is the Prime Minister, and the other one has an office across the lake. And this government blows \$75,000 on an ad that one of those people probably will never even see as a way to deal with that issue.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: is this a proper use of the resources of the taxpayers of this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for the question and focusing attention on an issue that's of paramount importance to the people of Saskatchewan, and that is the . . . what we perceive to be the lack of a fair and equitable treatment on the part of the federal government when it comes to resource revenues that we generate in Saskatchewan, and their impact on the equalization scheme that Ottawa has.

We feel that we are being treated unfairly, inequitably, by Ottawa relative to the treatment that they provide to other provinces. We feel this is an issue that the people of Saskatchewan deserve to know about.

We appreciate the fact that the member is raising it today in question period, and thereby also helping to focus attention on this. We will continue to press Ottawa so that we can get fair and equitable treatment, so that we can get the resources that we need to support health care in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — So, Mr. Speaker, this is the NDP plan to fix health care in the province of Saskatchewan — take a \$75,000 ad out in a couple of newspapers that really only two people need to see. There's two people that need to get this message.

You know, this particular ad that we see in the paper today, Mr. Speaker, tells you a lot about the NDP's approach to governing. Mr. Speaker, it's one-third excuses and two-thirds blank. And that's exactly what we're getting from this NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, interestingly in the *Leader-Post* where this NDP ad is today, there's an article right beside it on the same subject by Ralph Goodale . . . or reporting on Ralph Goodale's comments on this ad, where Mr. Goodale says he finds the ad quite juvenile. You know how much he had to pay for that almost same amount of space in the *Leader-Post*, how many taxpayers' dollars were used to get his message out? Zero, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the Premier again to stand up and explain to people how this is a useful, a proper use of taxpayers' money in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Council of the Federation . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order. Order. Once again I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Council of the Federation, that group of political leaders from across

Canada, from the provinces and the territories, we sat down together and to get the message to the national government, what did the premiers and territorial premiers of this country do? We took out some significant ads across Canada to share the message with Canadians and to make movement.

Now he can say that the Premier of New Brunswick and the Premier of Nova Scotia, his good political friends, are wrong in doing so. Fair enough. But I tell you what. What do we see today? Right away a headline in *The Globe and Mail* telling us that the federal government is beginning to move on the question of the funding of health care.

Now we have an issue here, Mr. Speaker, that affects the financing of health care in this province, that takes, that takes, that takes leadership, Mr. Speaker; that takes leadership on an issue that has much to do with the future of revenues to the people of Saskatchewan. And what we need, Mr. Speaker, from this opposition, is some co-operation in our efforts, not criticism.

And, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I have listened carefully to the Leader of the Opposition, the new Leader of the Opposition, and it's just the same as the old leader of the opposition. All that we hear on a daily basis, all that we hear on a daily basis is criticism. Have we heard, have we heard, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, imagine this, Mr. Speaker. Imagine the Government of Saskatchewan, the NDP Government of Saskatchewan, that pleads poverty to people like Ms. Sadoway in terms of the resources she needs for health care, that pleads poverty to rural Saskatchewan, that pleads poverty to every single group that comes before it asking for anything from this government. Imagine that that's the same government that would waste \$75,000 on an ad campaign, on an ad campaign directed at two people, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, through you I make this invitation to the Premier, this offer. This coming Sunday they'll be commemorating the dig project at Wascana Lake. I believe that Mr. Goodale will be there; I believe that the Premier will be there, and I intend to be there. I would be more than happy to introduce them at no charge, Mr. Speaker . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — . . . if it would help out this particular issue, because we're going to help.

But the question to the Premier is this — he hasn't answered it: does he believe that this ad campaign is an appropriate use of taxpayers' money?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, is this the depth of public

policy that now occupies the bench of the Leader of the Opposition? Is this the depth of public policy that we have?

The Leader of the Opposition well knows that I and other ministers, the Minister of Finance, have met with Mr. Goodale; I have met with the Prime Minister. This is the depth of public policy we get.

Mr. Speaker, in this . . . in the course of the week that we've been in this House, the loyal opposition appropriately has brought to the attention of government circumstances facing citizens of this province which this government and no member in this House can be happy with when we hear of some of the concerns that are happening in our health care system.

But, Mr. Speaker, I ask you, I ask all members, have you heard one, one positive suggestion, one positive idea on what we might do to improve health care? Not a word; not a word, Mr. Speaker.

What we have heard, what we have heard is a Minister of Health who has talked about a plan to deal with the waiting times in our province, to deal with surgeries. What have we heard from the new Leader of the Opposition? Nothing, Mr. Speaker, nothing. Nothing has changed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I want to quote from a CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) story that ran not long ago. And I'm quoting. It says, quote:

If Calvert wants to lay the blame for his budget problems, he should be pointing at least one finger at himself (this quote says).

You know who said that, Mr. Speaker? It wasn't the Saskatchewan Party. It wasn't Ralph Goodale. It was former NDP Finance minister, Janice MacKinnon — former NDP Finance minister, Janice MacKinnon — who quite rightly has pointed out for anyone who has the time to listen to her that the problem in this province, it doesn't lie to your left, Mr. Speaker, on the opposition. The problem in the province of Saskatchewan is a spending problem on that side of the House, on the NDP side of the House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the ad here says, Tell Us Again. This is the NDP ad aimed at, aimed at Mr. Goodale and the Prime Minister of Canada. I'd like the, I'd like the Premier to tell us again about his plan for the future of the province of Saskatchewan. Tell us again about his plan to help people like Ms. Sadoway. Tell us again why people shouldn't rue the day, regret the day, that they re-elected this government, and explain . . .

The Speaker: — Recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — The unelected Leader of the Opposition . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — . . . says, Mr. Speaker, says, Mr. Speaker, that we have a spending problem. The Leader of the Opposition says that we have a spending problem.

Well of the \$800 million in new spending over the last . . . since 2001, 2000-2001, which the Leader of the Opposition complains about, he says that 50 per cent of that spending, or over \$447 million that has gone to health, is overspending. He says that's overspending.

The \$117 million of that spending, or 13 per cent, which has gone to education, Mr. Speaker, he says is overspending. The money that has gone to BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) and to agriculture and to the drought-stricken farm families of Saskatchewan, he says is overspending.

Would the Leader of the Opposition stand in this House and say which of those categories of spending he thinks we should not have done?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Royal Visit to Celebrate D-Day Anniversary

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation.

Hon. Ms. Beatty: — Mr. Speaker, in January the Premier announced that Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, would visit Saskatchewan in June of this year to help us celebrate the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings and to take part in a number of other special events. It is my pleasure today to announce the main engagements and activities for the royal visit that have been agreed upon with the office of the Princess Royal.

The royal visit will officially begin on Saturday, June 5 with a public welcome at the legislative grounds during which the Princess Royal will take part in a D-Day parade of her regiment, the Royal Regina Rifles. Her Royal Highness has been the colonel-in-chief of the regiment since 1982. The Princess Royal will also take part in events with the Regina branch of the Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association, and later on that day she will attend a dinner hosted by the Premier and Mrs. Calvert in honour of the D-Day anniversary.

(14:30)

On June 6 Her Royal Highness will attend a church service for her regiment. She will also receive an honorary degree at a special convocation at the University of Regina, visit the Pasqua Hospital, and lay the cornerstone for the Government House heritage property centennial project.

The Princess Royal will then attend a dinner given by the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan. The Princess Royal will spend Monday, June 7 in Saskatoon, North Battleford, and the town of Battleford. In Saskatoon, the Princess Royal will present the Saskatchewan Protective Services Medal to

individuals who have 25 years of exemplary service protecting the people and property of this province. In North Battleford, she will attend a First Nations cultural presentation hosted by the Battlefords Tribal Council and attend the centennial celebrations of the town of Battleford.

Mr. Speaker, this is a busy program, and we are grateful to the Princess Royal for responding so generously to our invitations. I know that the people of our province will extend a very warm Saskatchewan welcome to our royal visitor during her visit to our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the minister for an advance copy of her ministerial statement today. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, for her upcoming trip to Saskatchewan. As the minister has said, that she will be commemorating the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings which mark the beginning of the end of Nazi tyranny and the end of World War II in Europe.

As the minister said, the Princess Royal will be visiting Saskatchewan Saturday, June 5, and will take part in a public welcome at the legislative grounds and also take part in the D-Day parade of her regiment, the Royal Regina Rifles which she has been colonel-in-chief of the regiment since 1982. The Princess Royal will also take part in a number of other events in and around Regina, and also receiving a special convocation at the U of R and visiting Pasqua Hospital and laying a cornerstone for the Government House heritage property centennial project.

Mr. Speaker, the Princess Royal will spend Monday, June 7 in Saskatoon, North Battleford, and the town of Battleford. And it's encouraging to see a royal visitor get out and see the rest of the province while she is in Saskatchewan.

In North Battleford she will attend an Aboriginal cultural presentation which was hosted by the Battlefords Tribal Council and attend the centennial celebrations of the town of Battleford. And I'm sure the people of Saskatchewan will extend our royal visitor a very warm welcome. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Rosetown, or for . . . pardon me, for Rosemont. Regina Rosemont.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I thought I was going to have to move for a minute there.

Anyway, as I said yesterday I would hope that the federal government would consider visiting Saskatchewan and take a page out of our Building Independence book when they redraft their equalization formula. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I will indicate that I'll be supporting the Speech from the Throne. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I have a couple of questions that I have in my own mind as I start my response to the Speech from the Throne. And before I start that though, I'd like to congratulate you on your re-election to that Chair. As I understand, Mr. Speaker, that's the first time in this legislature since the Speaker has been elected that anybody has been re-elected. So I offer you my sincere congratulations and look forward obviously to working with you for the length of the term of this legislature.

I was thinking this morning as I was thinking about what I was going to say today, I'm not sure whether I'm a newbie here or not, Mr. Speaker. It's tradition of course, as some people have told me, that the people who are newly elected to the legislature, new MLAs, should not and would not be heckled by members from either side during their, during their maiden speeches. I was more concerned about the heckling from my side of the floor than I was from the other side. I expect that from the other side of the floor, Mr. Speaker.

But some of you maybe will remember that I did sit in this House very briefly during the last legislature actually, for about an hour and a half on June 26 last. And I had the opportunity at that time to in fact say a few words to the legislature at that point in time. I know I didn't want to speak too long on that particular day, it being the last day of sitting, and I knew that members from both sides of the House were anxious to get home. And so I said only a very few brief words, mostly in thanks to the people of Carrot River Valley who saw fit to elect me in that by-election of last June 25.

Well, Mr. Speaker, on November 5 the people of Carrot River Valley again saw fit to send me here to Regina on their behalf. And I certainly want to thank them at this point of time. I'm not a resident or a native of Carrot River Valley; most people in this House will also know that. Circumstance led me to Carrot River Valley and a sad circumstance of course, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, we lost Mr. Kwiatkowski, the former MLA for Carrot River Valley, just over a year ago.

We got through a lot of tough times in that respect in Carrot River Valley in the Saskatchewan Party. Of course we lost Mr. Kwiatkowski. Just after that we lost the husband, Mr. Don Stewart, the husband of the president of our riding association. And very shortly after the by-election of June 25, I lost my official agent, Mr. Vic Allen from Nipawin. So it's been a real

strong time of transition and loss for those of us involved with our party in Carrot River Valley.

We're getting over that, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to report that things are well on their way, and we've got a good, strong group of people there, and we're happy to report that things are as they should be in Carrot River Valley again.

I'm not particularly brand new to politics, Mr. Speaker. Again some in this House will know that I've had, like a few other members, had a former bit of life in federal politics, a former stint. I was elected from 1993 until 2000 as a Member of Parliament. And those are experiences and things that I will never forget and have no regrets for. There's a member . . . The member from The Battlefords could offer those same thoughts, and the member for Rosetown would probably say much the same thing.

Somebody asked me the other day what I find the real difference is between provincial and federal politics, and I had to think about that for a second, Mr. Speaker. And I relate a lot of things to sports because in our family we're big into sports. And I said to them, my answer was, it's sort of the same game but a different league. And in truth there's sort of a bit of truth to that.

The biggest difference though that I do find, or have found, is that what we do here in this legislature in Saskatchewan, in our province, is far more tangible. I remember quite often coming home from Ottawa at the end of the week and wondered what we'd accomplished. Very, very, very seldom do you ever see the results of what we did or what we passed in the House of Commons in Ottawa.

In Saskatchewan, provincially, it's different because if you fix a road or if you build a school or if you do something, it's tangible. You can see it. You can touch it. You can feel it oftentimes when you leave here on a Friday afternoon. I think that's what I find to this point is such a big difference.

I also can tell you that in the few short months that I've been an MLA, I've had the opportunity to probably be in more people's houses that have problems or issues with the Government of Saskatchewan than I ever did in seven years as a Member of Parliament.

I can tell you that I've had the opportunity to be in a lot of folks' homes in my constituency in Carrot River Valley who've had problems where SaskEnergy was going to shut off the gas or SaskPower was going to shut off the power or that Social Services weren't providing enough help in order to keep this family or this person or this household going. I didn't see that very often in federal politics. Of course I understand of course that, you know, a lot of that was not in federal jurisdiction.

But having said that, I very often or very seldom got those same kind of calls. And I'm finding that that's one of the big differences that I see, is that we get a lot of people who are on their last . . . we're their last hope, as MLAs — all of us from both sides of the House I'm sure. I don't hold the monopoly on that of course, and nor do I pretend to.

My family, Mr. Speaker, I want to say thank you to, obviously

my wife Melanie who has been certainly my strongest supporter since I became involved with politics, federal or provincial, some 12 years ago. I believe that that's the key to anybody who wants to get involved in this kind of life, is that you must have the support of your partner or your spouse and your family. I've had that good luck to have that support from her and from our children. And that's something that's been just an overwhelming feeling of good to have that kind of support.

Our four children of course who have helped us campaign in various campaigns since they were 6 and 7 years old . . . our two boys, Joshua and Tyrel, and our girls, Stefanie and Danille, have both . . . have all four been out handing out brochures with Allan Kerpan on them from time to time through one campaign or another.

Mr. Speaker, I was writing a history, our family history, in the last few days because our community of Kenaston where I was born and raised is producing a history book for our province's centennial. That's not unique either, Mr. Speaker. Many communities are doing that very same thing in Saskatchewan as we prepare for Saskatchewan's centennial.

The point I wanted to make though, Mr. Speaker, is that we really have an opportunity in this House to go into Saskatchewan's second 100 years with some renewed hope and faith. Mr. Speaker, I was hoping that we would get that from a government after November 5, but sadly I'm afraid that we're going to get more of the same.

Now I've had the opportunity to be in this Chamber for the last few days since this session started and listened to a very good number of speeches. I certainly can tell you that both members from our side are really putting a lot of pressure on those of us who are coming later in the Throne Speech debate because we're now going to be asked to say some really wise, intelligent things.

I keep in mind the member from Wood River who spoke at great length yesterday or the day before. I think he used the word socialist more times than perhaps I've ever heard used in a speech and I thought it was great.

The member from Melville-Saltcoats spoke the other day. Again good words from a person who had — and he mentioned this in this speech, Mr. Speaker, I'm not quoting — but he did mention a number of times about the difficulty of his campaign and the people that he ran against and he gave everybody credit. It was just a real . . . from a veteran of this House, it was really good for me to hear those kinds of things, to know what he had gone through in his recent election.

The member from Batoche yesterday who gave a very inspiring speech, I thought, Mr. Speaker. Obviously a new person, a new MLA to this legislature, I thought it was just an excellent speech.

And my seatmate from Saskatoon Northwest, who I said before I got up today that I would give him a pat on the back because you know we should do those kinds of things.

So I've heard lots of good speeches to this point in time. And I hope that this side of the House and the House in general won't

be disappointed with mine.

I wanted to talk a few minutes about the Throne Speech because obviously that's what this debate is about. Perhaps it could have been entitled, Tell us Again. Because that's sort of, that's sort of what we're getting, Mr. Speaker, with this.

And I guess you know what the thing that bothers me about all of this is that you know we've got a government here who have been in power for 12 years. And all of a sudden on November 5 and since then and through the Throne Speech, they're saying well we've got all . . . we've had a great revelation; we've got all these wonderful new ideas. We're going to do this and we're going to do that and we're going to fix all the problems.

The only question I have that arises out of that, Mr. Speaker, is that why didn't they do it before? I mean they had 12 years. It's not like they had 12 days to fix this. It's nothing new. The problems weren't new; the health care issues aren't new. You know the education problems aren't new; the agriculture problems, heaven knows, are not new. We've had ag problems. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I spoke in this very Chamber about an ag issue while I was a Member of Parliament, the fall of '99. It's not a new issue.

And yet all of a sudden we have these new ideas, these new, wonderful ideas that are going to fix everything. We are going to be protectors of the people.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to you they're hardly the protectors of the people. In fact the only people they want to protect are themselves. That's really . . . the more I see this, the more I'm involved the short time that I've been here, that's obvious. That's more obvious with every day that these people aren't worried about protecting the little guy. The people that are in trouble with health care and education and social services, and farmers and business people, and taxpayers, which is of course everybody in this province.

(14:45)

I looked . . . excuse me . . . and our leader. And our leader talked about this during question period. And he talked about this Tell Us Again ad that cost the taxpayers of this province \$75,000, Mr. Speaker. He was right, and I want to repeat what he said: he said it's two-thirds nothing and one-third repetition of nothing. And I guess that's why you know . . . where are the priorities? Could this \$75,000 could have been spent better?

I can tell you where it could have been spent better, Mr. Speaker. In Arborfield, in my constituency, the school of Arborfield . . . It's a small town, Mr. Speaker, of roughly 300 or 350 people. It's not unique; it's much like any other small town. The roof of the school leaks, Mr. Speaker. In fact, last fall, when we were fortunate enough to get some, some fall rain, it was during the election campaign, the roof of the school was leaking so bad that they had to close three school rooms. And they had to move the kids out of these rooms and put them in the gymnasium until the rain quit. Of course when it's not raining it didn't leak, and that was the — that was the reason I suppose why they didn't fix it.

What I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, is that we've got a

misappropriation of priorities. Things like this school in Arborfield, where they can't use it. I'm sure they won't be able to use it when the snow melts off the roof, it'll leak again.

An Hon. Member: — Seventy-five thousand would fix that.

Mr. Kerpan: — Yes, perhaps \$75,000 could have been used to fix that school, Mr. Speaker.

We talk about things like the 2002 crop year, when many people in my constituency and in my area left crop out because of the bad fall weather. There was a program at that time, Mr. Speaker, that allowed for wildlife damage; it was administered through the Saskatchewan crop insurance program. It wasn't paid for by the crop insurance program, it was a federal program administered by the Saskatchewan crop insurance administration.

Just had a meeting about that a few weeks ago, with the numbers of farmers who (a) never got any compensation for wildlife damage; (b) who got in some cases as much as \$16 for a whole quarter section of hay; and in other cases, where they were given some compensation and were asked to have it back.

Now we were in contact with the federal Department of Agriculture and they said yes, there's lots of money there, and we were prepared to pay out every claim. And yet, I'm not sure where the money went. And as Jerry Maguire said in his movie, you know, show me the money. That's what they're asking for. That's what some of these farmers are still waiting for. It's almost two years now, and they're still waiting for decisions on this compensation.

Seventy-five thousand dollars could have been better spent there. Would it have fixed all those problems? Of course not; of course not. But it would have helped. It would have been a sign that this government is finally taking into account what everybody in the province knows ought to be the priorities.

Mr. Speaker, my job, my responsibility in this opposition party to date is to be critic for Corrections and Public Safety. Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity over the last few months to have look at, tour most of the facilities in Saskatchewan, the correctional facilities, and to really . . . What I'm trying to is develop a new idea for what we might want to do with corrections in the near future.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we know, and I'm going to go see. And next week I'm going to the facility in Regina, but it's no secret. CBC did a news article on it not too long ago, a documentary that talked about the inmates being literally able to kick the walls out. It's almost 100 years old, and we all know it needs rebuilding. We all know it needs replacing, and yet the government seems very reluctant to make moves on those kinds of things.

And I ask you, and I ask this House, would not have that \$75,000 been much better spent on initiating a study or an architect's schematic drawings or whatever into what we need to do with corrections in Saskatchewan? I think so. I think so.

Again, it wouldn't have built a new prison. A prison is probably going to cost this province somewhere in the neighbourhood of

\$80-\$100 million, but it's a start, Mr. Speaker; it's a start.

I look at things like . . . When we talk about corrections, Mr. Speaker, it costs in this province, Saskatchewan, it costs taxpayers \$127 a day to keep an inmate; \$127 a day, Mr. Speaker, as opposed to \$95 a day in Alberta. Almost a 30 per cent more to keep an inmate. Why is that, Mr. Speaker? My colleague from Wood River says why is that, and he's right. Why is that?

I know the members opposite are going to say, yes, well Saskatchewan Party guys just have Alberta envy. But I'll tell you what, Mr. Speaker, in Manitoba the cost is exactly the same — \$95 a day to keep an inmate. The only envy I see is that I would like to be saving \$32 a day. That's what I'd like to be saving.

Those are the questions that we have to ask and that this government is not . . . are failing to answer, Mr. Speaker.

I looked at some of the things that were said in the Throne Speech and, Mr. Speaker, for those of us who were here in Saskatchewan and old enough to know and remember the early '70s when Allan Blakeney became the Premier, you know it really starting to sound like Blakeneyism repeated.

In fact, I'm waiting every day to wake up some morning and come to work . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . exactly, to come to work some morning and to hear that land bank is back, because that's wouldn't surprise me.

You know? I mean . . . But that's what this government . . . Like, we came through a period of time . . . And whether you agree, whether you were politically in line with the Roy Romanow administration, the former premier, or not, you have to say at least they balanced the budget.

Did they balance it properly? I don't know. I mean that's arguable. Did they balance it on the backs of the taxpayer? Of course they did. But that's always the way it goes. But at least, at the end of the day, we could look at our books and say, they're balanced or we had a surplus.

Since this Premier has taken over, Mr. Speaker, it's a billion-and-a-half dollars that . . . We're going backwards. And I say to you that, from everything I read in the Throne Speech, it's reverting 30 years ago — 30 years ago.

Like, it's a billion-and-a-half dollars, Mr. Speaker. How do we justify that? \$75,000 on this Tell Us Again ad, Mr. Speaker, doesn't fix a billion-and-a-half. But it's a start. It's the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, instead of more of the Tell Us Again attitude, more of the Blakeneyism, more of the 30-year-old politics, they could have said, they could have said . . . They should have said and what we would have hopefully said is that: Hey, we're going to live up to our responsibilities. We're going to make sure that CFIP is paid up and that the farmers of this province get everything.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kerpan: — We would have said that, Mr. Speaker. We would have said — and this is more directed at my constituency — we would have liked to have seen our government renegotiate with Weyerhaeuser for their forestry management agreement. We think it's time that that happens.

Outfitting's big in our constituency, Mr. Speaker, the outfitting industry. Many people are frustrated. The government could have said, should have said — and it wouldn't have cost them a nickel, Mr. Speaker, they could have done it for free — say, we want to look at the regulations for outfitting. That's all you would have had to say and we would have had an opening of discussion amongst industry and the government. But they didn't.

All they did was they said, we've had BSE. My gosh, we've had BSE. It cost us money. My gosh, we've had forest fires. It cost us a lot of money. My gosh, we have a terrible equalization formula. It's costing us a lot of money. I know that, Mr. Speaker, and they're right; nobody is arguing that. My argument is, my argument, Mr. Speaker, is that it's excuse after excuse after excuse. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't cut any ice any more. It's just that simple.

Mr. Speaker, in question period just a few minutes ago, just a very few short minutes ago, the Minister of Health stood up in his place and said to our leader that we should go talk to Mr. Harper in Ottawa. I said to myself, what's that all about? I mean, where is that coming from?

We could've said back to him, why does he not go talk to Jack Layton? But he didn't, Mr. Speaker. Our leader said, our leader said, back to the Premier, he said, talk to Mr. Goodale and Mr. Martin. Those are the people that are in power. And that's what the priorities have to be. That's what we have to do.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I talked about, I talked about this government professing — and they've always professed — to be the protectors of the people. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I'm tired of hearing that; the people of Saskatchewan are tired of hearing that. The people of Saskatchewan know that the only thing that this government protects is their own backside. It's that simple.

Do I wish that we had a surplus in this province? Does our party wish that we wouldn't have to stand up every day and use the health care issues that our people have talked about in question period the last few days? Certainly we wish that was the case because that would mean things are on the improvement, on the way back to where they should be. And not only that, but of course they wouldn't have to listen to us come hard at them on issues that they don't like to hear about. Instead, we're going the other direction. And that's what bothers me, Mr. Speaker.

That's what this whole Throne Speech is about, is that, is that I see and our party sees no direction, no direction and no new ideas. And as I said at the outset, Mr. Speaker, of course by now I think everybody is catching on to the fact that I will be voting against the Throne Speech.

But in conclusion and finally, I want to say again, thank you to the good folks of Carrot River Valley.

I'm going to stand here, Mr. Speaker, as long as this session lasts. Every opportunity I get, that I'm going to remind the government, I'm going to remind the people of Saskatchewan about broken promises. I'm going to remind them about excuses, and I'm going to remind them about two-thirds of nothing and one-third of nothing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member from Regina South.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to begin my remarks today in response to the Throne Speech by thanking the constituents in Regina South for returning me to the legislature for now the third time, this being my third election that I've run in and the third time I have a chance to represent them in this House.

I have to say, as many on this side will know, I didn't think I would be elected the first time, was certainly pleasantly surprised the second time, and I guess, just downright shocked the third time. So I'm very happy to be back, and very happy to represent such a good group of men and women and people down in Regina South.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to congratulate you on your election to the position of Speaker. I have, of course, known you for many, many years. You were of influence to me as a teacher. You have certainly been . . . certainly took a great deal of patience as a teacher. And I know I have tested your patience probably more as a colleague in the House. But I have welcomed your advice, and your admonitions, and your support, as we have moved forward. I want to congratulate you and wish you well in your role as a Speaker of this 25th Legislative Assembly.

This is the 25th Legislative Assembly and I think that in itself is such a unique and historic opportunity for us to sit back and to think about what it is that we do with Saskatchewan. The twenty-fifth legislature represents 100 years worth of democratic experience in this province. This is the 25th government that this province has had. And it is an opportunity for us to look forward to what Saskatchewan's second century will be.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, that was very much the tone of the Throne Speech that was brought down this last week. I think the Throne Speech . . . And I would say of all the throne speeches I have had the pleasure to listen to in my time as a member of this Assembly, this was the one that I think spoke the loudest, and spoke the most clearly, in terms of the new direction that this new government wants to take.

I heard loud and clear during the provincial election campaign that Saskatchewan people wanted us to start thinking about the next century. They wanted us to start moving aggressively forward with change. They wanted us to set a new direction. And they wanted us to listen to what they had to say.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that I've heard loud and clear during that campaign the priorities of Saskatchewan people. They believe overwhelmingly that Saskatchewan is a great place to live, to work, and to raise their families. They believe overwhelmingly that there are a number of priorities that our

government must tackle and that this legislature collectively must tackle — namely, point number one being how we deal with children and youth in our provincial agenda. It is that focus that has really spelled out clearly in this Throne Speech as we start thinking not only about the next century, but how we deal with the next generation.

(15:00)

I am particularly pleased not only to be the member for Regina South — a job that I enjoy, that I hope I reflect my constituents' will appropriately — I'm also particularly pleased to have been invited to be the Minister of Learning in this new government.

When I first had an opportunity to speak in this Assembly in 1995 — I guess it was the spring session of 1996 — I had the pleasure of seconding the address in reply. At that time I had a chance to spell out some of my thoughts as to where I thought we should go.

I was particularly pleased in listening to the mover and the seconder who spoke on this speech as they outlined for the first time where they thought the province should go. I thought that the quality of those speeches was remarkable. I thought that the vision that they outlined was so in sync with what Saskatchewan people believed, and the eloquence that both the members spoke with was truly remarkable for first-time members. I was very, very proud to serve in the same caucus, in the same government as the member for Sask Rivers and the member for Walsh Acres. And I think that as I've listened to speeches on this side, I have been particularly proud of the work of my colleagues.

It caused me to revisit what I had first said when I came to this Assembly. And I had thought a great deal at that point; I had slaved all night on my speech, working on it. As members know, that of course is my practice here now; I love to slave over these things. But I had talked a great deal eight years ago about the work that I believe we needed to do to make the province more youth friendly, the work that we needed to do to bring our educational institutions into the 21st century, the connection between our education agenda and the employment agenda of the province.

I am very grateful to this Premier. He has given me the opportunity now as the Minister of Learning to aggressively and actively move forward with those ideas. And many of them, although they are not by any means mine, many of these ideals that we all share on this side are expressed in this Throne Speech.

I want to talk briefly about the agenda for youth. We believe strongly on this side that Saskatchewan's future is depending on us making sure Saskatchewan listens to the youth of today. Mr. Speaker, we have listened to what young people say. We continue to and we hear what they are talking about. There are three particular initiatives that I think are very important.

One is the agenda that we call CareerStart. CareerStart builds on the good work of future start . . . JobStart, Future Skills; JobStart, Future Skills — that was introduced just after the 1995 election in terms of our initiative. It was a new way of dealing with helping young people enter into the economy and move

from education into employment.

CareerStart builds on these initiatives. And as we move forward over the next coming months, indeed as we move through this term of office, the people of Saskatchewan — and I hope in particular the young people of Saskatchewan — will have a better understanding of how they fit into the province's economy and how they fit in to the decision-making process and our culture and our society as we move forward.

CareerStart will give these young people the opportunity to become active participants in Saskatchewan's economy. And I am very excited about how we begin to move forward with that.

The approach that we're taking in CareerStart has a number of different options. Certainly we focus a great deal on education and training at the post-secondary level. We have a tremendous infrastructure built. We have two world-class universities in this province. We have a technical college. The technical institute through SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) is one of the best in this nation. The program offerings are remarkable. We have an extensive regional college system which allows people from all parts of this province to participate in gaining education, to gain upgrading, to participate in terms of skills training that allows them to contribute while they remain in their home communities. This is something we should cherish as Saskatchewan people; it is something we should be proud of because it is unique in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the work that we have in front of us as we think about how young people interact with our economy, how they become involved in our economy, how they become leaders in that economy will be possible because we have made strong and strategic investments in our educational infrastructure. We have made investments in our educational institutions and we have made investments in young people that will help them move forward into those institutions.

Our post-secondary system is one we should all be proud of. It's possible in large part the success that we see out of these young people as they come through our universities and our technical colleges really starts many years before of course as they go through the K to 12 (kindergarten to grade 12) system. I've heard a lot of people over the last year, 18 months, talk to me about things that they want to see in terms of changes to get a better understanding of how young people can move into education and from there move into the job system.

I've heard a great number of people talk to me about how we need to re-emphasize practical and applied arts curriculum within our school system, how we need to think about where it is that young people fit in at the secondary level system in terms of the skills that they need to move forward.

Success in our province is not measured simply by the certificates and the degrees and the diplomas that people achieve when they complete their education. Success is found in the participation in our communities, in our society, and ultimately in terms of the jobs and the success and the achievement they can find there.

I believe that we need to reorient our education system to

become much more focused on connecting young people, students, through the education system into the economy.

To that end I have asked my department to begin work on what I call a K to J agenda — a kindergarten to jobs agenda. It takes a look at how we move young people through our education system, how we can make sure they've got the skills to move on and succeed — whether that is in our medical colleges at university, whether that is in our technical training colleges, whether that is in terms of their participation in our society and moving directly into work after high school.

We need to think about how that works. Saskatchewan today has a unique perspective. And I hear the members opposite talk about this a great deal. They talk about how Saskatchewan young people always flee the province. There's no room in Saskatchewan for young people, say the opposition. And yet I look around our province and I see that we have shortages of skilled workers in a number of areas. I look at our communities and I think, how is it that we can have industries that are trying to find young people to participate in them? How do we not have a better way to match this up?

This is part of what I believe the education system, our learning infrastructure, needs to focus on, is helping young people move through the K to 12 system into advanced training, into jobs. It's an important part of what we need to focus on. I'm excited about CareerStart. I'm excited about what we can do on a K to J agenda. And I know that we will be able to make advancements because over the last decade we have made significant investments in our educational infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other things that we should be proud about within our education system, not the least of which is as we move forward with School^{PLUS}. School^{PLUS} builds on the success that this province has had over the last 20 years in developing community schools. It has certainly been enhanced by the initiative that the Premier, when he was minister of Social Services, had launched around the agenda for children, the Action Plan for Children. We are now at a point where we can incorporate it. The ideas of educators, the ideas of our communities, of people involved in the non-government sector, of parents — involve them in the school system more actively.

School^{PLUS} is largely a wraparound program. It tries to reorient our education system as the heart of our communities. That makes better use of not only educational infrastructure but the resources that our communities have that may fall outside of the normal school budget. This is a tremendous idea. It is an opportunity that we have to make our schools more relevant, to provide a better education for our children, and to make sure that our communities remain strengthened.

I've been impressed as I've listened to speeches, actually on both sides of the Assembly, the number of times that the members have talked about the importance of schools in their community — not only in terms of the good work their teachers are doing in terms of making sure our children are well educated, but the role that the school plays in terms of the life of that community.

Certainly one of the challenges that we face because of the

changing demographic of the province, because of declining enrolment, is making sure that schools are able to remain in place, that we . . . Unfortunately for the last 30 years I've seen school closures and inevitably we will see them again. What we need to think about though is how we can, where the schools are in place, how we can make them a more central part of our education system. As we think about School^{PLUS}, I will be very interested in hearing the views of members in this Assembly on how we can make better use of that in terms of revitalizing our communities.

When I grew up as an elementary school student in Kindersley, Saskatchewan, the life in the community revolved very much around the school, or revolved around the hockey rink, around the downtown, around church on Sundays. Today in a lot of our communities, our schools do not play the same central role as they used to.

Certainly our communities have changed. In many of our inner cities there's not that same sense of participation around recreational activity, around life in the community. There's less social cohesion. I think we have an opportunity to rebuild that. I think we have an opportunity to strengthen that social cohesion and I think we have an opportunity as a result to strengthen our communities around our schools. This is a big part of what I think School^{PLUS} can do.

Mr. Speaker, I have another strong passion for another area beyond education and that of course is the strength of our provincial economy. I am impressed by the resilience of our economy. Certainly over the last couple of years we have been tested as we have had difficulties with softwood lumber that have affected our forestry sector; we have had a large number of unfortunate situations occur within agriculture that have made it difficult for farming families; we have seen challenges in terms of a number of our different sectors of the six key sectors we've identified. There have been a number of challenges.

But our economy has responded well. And despite this, despite these challenges, we continue to see job growth in this province. It was interesting to note in February that we had a record number of Saskatchewan people working: 477,000 people working in February. I think it's also impressive to note that there was a significant growth in the number of people working full-time in our province.

These speak . . . these statistics speak to the strength of our provincial economy. They speak to the opportunity that we have. As minister of Information Technology I believe very strongly that one of the areas we can see additional growth in is the area of information technology.

In the coming weeks I anticipate that we will be announcing initiatives to strengthen our IT (information technology) sector, initiatives that will take into account new procurement processes, initiatives that will take into account sector-building, capacity-building, ways that we can look at supporting businesses, whether that's in terms of commercialization of new technology through the research institutes, whether that is an ability for us to improve on attracting new capital into the province. I believe that by working together with business, by working with the sector, that we can make significant growth

occur.

This is not an easy issue. Certainly a year ago — it was just about a year ago in fact — that I was standing in this House answering questions about a decision I had made at that point that we would pursue a contract to revitalize our government's IT services and to dramatically expand for the period by about 1,000 new jobs in the IT sector through a contract with EDS (Electronic Data Systems). We had decided not to pursue that for a number of reasons.

But that discussion at that time said to me very clearly that there was opportunity for us to expand the IT sector, that there was an opportunity for us to use provincial government expenditure to leverage economic development, that there was an opportunity for us to find a way to build a partnership between our own IT sector here in Saskatchewan, between large multinational companies and our universities to create real growth.

(15:15)

Mr. Speaker, that discussion of a year ago is one that I believe we need to capture again, that we need to think about how it is that we can revitalize and increase the opportunity in the IT sector.

I am impressed, as I've had the opportunity to talk with our educational institutions — our two universities — about their agenda in research in information technology. Saskatchewan has tremendous potential, and is one that this government — through the agenda that has been introduced in the Throne Speech and indeed through the initiatives that we'll announce in the coming weeks — we'll certainly pursue.

I believe very strongly, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan is a land of opportunity. I have listened, listened to the members opposite during the question periods. I certainly listened to them a great deal, during the election campaign, say how everything is wrong in this province. Everything is wrong. This was very much the message that they sent forward. It was a sense of desperation I think, on their part, the attack that they made. It was that everything that this province had stood for in the last decade had sent the province wrong.

And yet what did we see? What is it we see? We saw that this opposition came forward and said that their solution to this during the campaign was a massive privatization agenda that not only affected the Crown sector, which has been very important for us leveraging economic development, that SaskTel was clearly in their sights, despite the important role that it plays in fostering economic growth in this province. No recognition whatsoever of the role the Saskatchewan people played through their Crowns, through the public sector in terms of growing this province. Instead it was replaced by a simple slogan and what . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please, members. One at a time. Everybody in this House will have an opportunity, I hope, to speak. I recognize the Minister of Learning.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, I appreciated that just as I sat down, I had a chance to hear the member for Estevan say that it was shocking but it was true.

And I appreciate that she has admitted to this. I was very pleased that she has admitted to this. And at least it shows that one member over there is perhaps starting to see the light, so I . . . I was surprised though in the campaign. This campaign was a particularly interesting opportunity for us to present two competing visions of Saskatchewan to Saskatchewan people.

The members opposite say that it was a . . . one of fear and one of hope. It was the agenda of hope that received the plurality of votes in this election that is the basis for our Throne Speech this week and will be included in every one of our initiatives as we move forward.

The members opposite, on the other hand, the members opposite, on the other hand . . . and I appreciate that they too have, I think, understood this and that they have undertaken to replace their leadership. I would like to congratulate the member for Swift Current on his, I assume it's ascension, acclamation, election or whatever it may be to head his party. I hope that he brings to the House new ideas and a new prospective for his party.

I am however reminded that it was of course the member for Swift Current, and the member for Weyburn, and other members on that side, who were key architects of the agenda that, that party took into the last election.

No fiercer, no stronger opponent to Crown ownership than the member for Swift Current. And I think we need to remember that, that it may be a new face, but its the same brain and they're still looking for a heart. This is very much where that party opposite is. And I think as we see this spill out over the next several weeks that we're in this House and indeed over the next four years of office, there is no doubt that we will see the members opposite continue to advance that agenda. They may change the approach but there is no doubt the agenda is the same.

Even today as we listen to the debate in the House around health, which focused prominently in our Throne Speech, around the quality of life issues, and the work that the Minister of Health has done to deal with the surgical waiting lists, to deal with the difficulties there, that the members opposite have not presented not only a comprehensive plan, they have not presented a single solitary issue to deal with that. Not one new idea, other than to ask for new money.

And then when we ask for money from Ottawa, as we have, the criticism that we get is that we are asking for the money. And so there are the members opposite standing up and criticizing us for asking for a fair share from Ottawa that we have asked for under equalization, where we have been hard done by, where we could in fact, if we had the money, reinvest it in the public services of this province.

That's why we are taking the case to Ottawa. That is why we are asking for them to make Mr. Martin's promise to treat Western Canadians fairly in a new way. We are asking him to do that today by giving us the same opportunity to benefit from oil and gas revenue that he has given the Atlantic Canadian provinces.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — And, I ask the members opposite to set aside their rhetoric, to set aside their agenda against this government and support us in gaining additional resources for Saskatchewan people.

I listen to the member who had served with distinction in the federal House, who spoke immediately before me, and I listened to him talk about why we should not have spent money to advertise Saskatchewan's case for additional resources.

And he said, you know, I could have spent that money on a new roof for my school. I could have spent that money on . . . And he lists out six or seven things. I think by the end of his speech, he'd spent that money seven or eight or nine times. If you could have done that, I would say to that member, if that's what you were thinking could be done with 75,000, imagine what could be done with the \$350 million that Ottawa takes away from Saskatchewan on an annual basis. Just imagine what this province would be like if we got a fair share from Ottawa; if we could make this province, allow this province, to use its oil and gas revenue, use its oil and gas revenue for the benefit of Saskatchewan citizens.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Mr. Speaker, there will be issues in this House that we will disagree on. But there are number of issues where Saskatchewan people should come together, and will expect its legislators to come together and set aside the rhetoric. And I would say that getting a fair share from Ottawa is at the top of the list.

Now is the time for the new face of the Saskatchewan Party to show Saskatchewan people that their interests are truly reflective of what the population wants. Set aside what may be seen to be best for the Saskatchewan Party, and think for once about what's best for Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, we will have a number of opportunities, and I look forward to, I look forward to listening to what the members opposite have to say. Unfortunately, with seven or eight of them speaking, I can't hear them all at once, but it's . . . I know that during the next four years they'll have an opportunity to stand on the opposition side and to present a vision and a new set of views as to where they want to move forward.

But I would encourage the member for Swift Current to do that. I would encourage the member for Swift Current to lead his party in a progressive way, and to begin to bring forward the new ideas. This criticism is just not, this criticism that the members opposite levy, the prop comedy that they come in, in terms of their newspaper, holding up the newspaper ads and shaking — just doesn't quite work.

Because I think Saskatchewan people know that really what it is, is the strength of your argument; that is what will sway the debate. And that is why we have taken a campaign on health care, in conjunction with other provinces. That is why we have made Saskatchewan's case on equalization. That is why we are continuing to look for new ways to advance our education agenda, to find new ways to engage the federal government in training, and that is why this Throne Speech that was presented this week deserves the support of not only the members on this

side but the members on all sides of this House. And I would encourage them to join with us in helping move Saskatchewan forward and finding a bright future for the next generation. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Silver Springs.

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's with great pleasure that I rise today to make my maiden speech in this esteemed institution.

Please accept my congratulations, Mr. Speaker. You're the first Speaker ever to be re-elected. Thank you also to the member for Wascana Plains for letting her name stand in this election. Our caucus is confident in your impartiality and the legislature is a better place due to your presence and poise. Openly we look . . . we will work towards a level of order and a type of decorum that has already been established in this new session. However I've noted that passions run high in this Chamber and if we stray, rein us in.

Congratulations as well to the Deputy Speaker, the member from Saskatoon Sutherland, my neighbour in northeast Saskatoon and, as well, a credit to the electoral process.

Congratulations to all members on their election. I know each member will keep in mind his or her mandate. As Premier Klein stated so well the other day, our boss is the public. If we forget that, it's our peril.

It was especially pleasing to get to know the nine other new members of this Assembly on both sides of the House during the orientation. Although we are all newcomers, we bring a zest, an enthusiasm, and a pride that can't help but have a positive impact on this legislature. In this regard we are a legislative team.

So it is with great pride that I stand here today, Mr. Speaker, as the first elected member in the brand new constituency of Saskatoon Silver Springs.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — It is with pleasure that I stand here as one of the first three Saskatchewan Party MLAs elected in urban Saskatchewan. I know members opposite will agree, the first three in what will be a long line of Saskatchewan Party MLAs representing Saskatoon and urban Saskatchewan in this legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Perhaps members opposite will also agree that we constitute a government party-to-be. But I will not be partisan, at least until my maiden speech in this Chamber is completed.

Saskatoon Silver Springs is the fastest-growing area in the province. Sadly it's one of the few growing areas in our province. Saskatoon Silver Springs consists of the

neighbourhoods of Erindale, Arbor Creek, Silverspring, Forest Grove, University Heights, and part of Sutherland. It will soon include the new residents of Willow Grove.

Saskatoon Silver Springs, Mr. Speaker, is characterized by growth, by dreams, by ambition. It is predominantly made up of young people who have chosen to stay in Saskatchewan, a trend not immediately noticeable in the rest of the province since many others have been tempted to move to places like Alberta where job growth abounds.

My constituents, Mr. Speaker, have chosen to stay in Saskatchewan because they love it here. They have chosen to make their homes here. They have chosen to raise their families here, to build their careers here. I am proud of their resilience and their resolve. They don't want to look back at a socialist experiment that has failed. They could care less about passé dogma like the *Regina Manifesto*.

The people of Saskatoon Silver Springs want Saskatchewan to grow and to prosper. They want our economy to expand so their kids can stay in Saskatchewan. They want a bigger revenue pie in this province so that the services that this provide . . . this pie would provide would be there. They want growth.

The people of Silver Springs are much like my wife Trish and myself. Trish left Ontario to come to Saskatchewan to pursue her career in broadcast television. She came here for a year or two — well that was 15 years ago. Members opposite who don't know me may think she stayed in Saskatchewan solely because of my charm, wit, and good looks. Members on this side of the House know it must be, it surely must be more than that that kept her here.

The truth is Trish loves this province as much as I do. And I want to thank her for her constant support and encouragement. I want to thank her for a family of two great children. I want to thank her for being my friend and motivator. I want to thank Trish for her values and her vision.

Saskatoon Silver Springs is also made up of people who have achieved success on a provincial and national scale. People such as Tim Gitzel, the CEO (chief executive officer) of Cogema Resources, one of the largest uranium producers of the world, lives right in Saskatoon Silver Springs, Mr. Speaker. People like Grant Kook, the CEO of Golden Opportunities, Saskatchewan's largest venture capital fund and one of Canada's best-run funds, period, lives in Saskatoon Silver Springs. Entrepreneurs like Joel Teal, a founder of Preston Developments, now part of Dundee Developments, and other entrepreneurs like Bert Harman and Merlis Belsher have helped shape the landscape of Saskatoon and our province.

(15:30)

The streets of Saskatoon Silver Springs are named after community builders, Mr. Speaker, builders who have excelled in their endeavours: artists such as Wynona Mulcaster and William Perehudoff; musicians such as David Kaplan; athletes such as Diane Jones Konihowski and Catriona LeMay Doan; community builders like Bob Hinitt and Larry Lashyn; former Saskatchewan mayors such as Sid Buckwold and Cliff Wright. My constituency represents a legacy of builders, of visionaries,

of excellence. And I intend to live up to that legacy.

Saskatoon Silver Springs is also home to a group of 10 citizens — 9 individuals and myself — individuals who took it upon themselves to lobby for a new high school; a group of 10 citizens who would not take no for an answer; a group of 10 citizens who felt that their children were too important; a group of people who thought 600 kids riding crowded buses to a crowded school did not make for a quality education. They lobbied the school board. They lobbied the provincial government for three solid years, asking the question, Mr. Speaker, where will our children go to school?

Mr. Speaker, that school should have been built three years ago, but thanks heavens for elections. Finally, just prior to the election, this government decided to announce the school.

An Hon. Member: — Will they keep the promise?

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Now I know, I know as my hon. colleague says, that the government has already backed away from most promises they made just three short months ago. However, members on that side of the House should note that a northeast collegiate in Saskatoon is one of the promises they better not back away from.

Craig Stevenson, Ray Morrison, Russell Scott, Laurie Semenoff, Elden Erickson, Lorna Gibson, Donnette Sonder, Wendy Bokshowan, and myself will not let you break this promise. And surely your party must know the risks of running away from a commitment to citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the privilege of this occasion does not escape me as I stand here today in this legislature. I believe politics is an honourable profession. It's one of the highest callings. It's one way that you can give something back to your community. Those of you who know me well know it's been a long-standing dream of mine, a burning desire to become a member of this esteemed institution.

It goes back to the early 1970s when a young *StarPhoenix* newspaper carrier had the privilege of meeting his Member of Parliament. He was no ordinary MP (Member of Parliament) — he was the Rt. Hon. John George Diefenbaker.

Back then, he would fly into small communities by helicopter, usually into school yards. I would go to the front of the line to shake his hand and then I would run to the back of the line and shake his hand again. I think he was on to me, Mr. Speaker.

What that MP showed me was the incredible power of a dream — the opening up of the North. Mr. Diefenbaker's dream is now coming of age. It will happen, Mr. Speaker, because it must.

I also had the opportunity at a young age to meet a newly elected premier, Allan Blakeney, when he came to town. It was Saskatchewan's homecoming in 1971. I think he found it strange that a young six-year-old was sitting in the front row applauding his every word.

However, it wasn't long after that that a few farmers took me aside and explained a few things to me, like the NDP land bank

where young farmers had to compete with the government to purchase land. Mr. Speaker, that tempered my interest in the NDP to this very day.

A few years later, in school each student was asked to identify a public figure in the community that would come into our class and speak to our grade 8 class. Mr. Speaker, the mayor came; the fire chief came; the grocery store owner came. I phoned Ottawa and I asked the Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn to come. He was Canada's new minister of Energy, and I thought he just may come to small-town Saskatchewan. And he did.

Mr. Speaker, since then my interest in politics has been cemented. And my belief in what makes a politician great is not only his dream or his oratory, but his accessibility to people who put him or her there. We the politicians are not the parade — the people are. It is our responsibility and privilege to walk with them, share their visions and concerns, and to serve them.

I am so happy to see Canada Post honouring Ray Hnatyshyn with a stamp. He is truly one of Saskatchewan's greatest heroes.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege — and I do consider it a privilege — of growing up in rural Saskatchewan. The community of Blaine Lake was a multi-ethnic community. If I wanted to get those newspapers delivered and I wanted to get . . . collect money for them, I needed to know how to speak a little bit of Russian, a little bit of Ukrainian, and a bit of Polish, and some German. In fact all our citizens in Blaine Lake got along so well together that they were mentioned as a model of multicultural co-operation in the federal bilingualism and biculturalism commission.

Mr. Speaker, I had a privileged upbringing. I had the privilege of knowing a couple of Blaine Lake residents with a truly amazing life story. They were both children of farmers. They were born not far from one another, maybe a mile. He left school in grade 9; she went on to graduate from grade 12 at 16 years old. They fell in love, were married, and raised two boys.

This couple had dreams. They believed in hard work, individual initiative, and the free enterprise system. They instilled these values in their kids and they taught them to pursue their dreams and gave them the confidence to achieve their goals. This Blaine Lake couple, Mr. Speaker, are my parents, Alex and Lucy Cheveldayoff. My dad had his life cut short 17 years ago but I know my mother is watching this speech on television today.

Their values, Mr. Speaker, personify Saskatchewan — true and honest sense of community, a belief that you must give something back to your community, and a belief that you not only can but must make a difference in the world. My dad served as a member of Blaine Lake Town Council and he was a member of the Optimist Club, a service club that allowed every kid in the community to play hockey. That club made a difference in kids' lives. My dad was part of that difference.

Like so many parents, my parents also lived their lives for the betterment of their children. My brother, Kevin Cheveldayoff, for example, left home at 14 years of age to pursue his dream, a

dream shared by so many Saskatchewan kids. He dreamed of one day donning the jersey of an NHL (National Hockey League) team. He achieved his dream on June 11, 1988, when at the Montreal Forum, New York Islander general manager, Bill Torrey, announced the words every kid wants to hear: the New York Islanders are proud to select with their first-round pick from the Western Hockey League, Kevin Cheveldayoff. At that moment, Mr. Speaker, a dream was fulfilled.

Just as I have been able to take my seat in this legislature, another dream was fulfilled. We both owe a great deal to our parents. I was so happy that my mother, my aunt, Marilyn Postnikoff, my uncle, Nick Cheveldayoff, were able to join Trish and myself last week on the floor of this legislature as I took my seat for the first time. I feel their confidence in me is a beacon to direct me in calm and stormy seas.

However I must confess, Mr. Speaker, last week was not the first time that I took a seat in this legislature. I had the privilege of serving in Saskatchewan Youth Parliament, an organization I would like to salute at this time. Spending Christmas holidays in this Chamber would not appeal to everyone. But to those who participated, lifetime friendships were formed. I know the Premier and the Minister of Agriculture have also had the privilege of participating in Saskatchewan Youth Parliament. I must say that experience makes this Chamber a little less daunting.

I encourage all members to get to know the participants of Saskatchewan Youth Parliament that are from their constituency. I represented the constituency of Redberry, which is now, unfortunately, just part of the history books. Members such as Dennis Banda and John Gerich always made me feel welcome.

I also had the opportunity to participate in the Terry Fox Youth Centre and Forum for Young Canadians, two great programs designed to help students learn and appreciate the government institutions of our country.

One of my greatest life experiences was being selected as a Page in the House of Commons. This is truly a magnificent program. It brings together 40 first-year university students from across Canada to study and learn about parliament and to attend university full-time. A full load of classes and 20-hour-per-week job made for precious little free time, Mr. Speaker. However, we still took time to paint ourselves green and attend the Saskatchewan Roughrider football games whenever the Riders came to town, something I would encourage the present Pages to do as well.

Like so many of life's experiences, it's the friendships that you make along the way that you treasure most. My roommate in the Page program was Mike McLarnon. He went on to become the MLA for Whitehorse Centre in the Yukon legislature and the deputy speaker.

Now hon. members know Speakers are a rare breed. They bring uncommon devotion and perseverance to their job. However, Mr. McLarnon went above and beyond. When the Saskatchewan election was called last October, he drove straight from Whitehorse to Saskatoon, sleeping in his car along the way, just to help me in my campaign.

The member from Saskatoon Sutherland knows Mr. McLarnon well, and I think he was quite surprised to see him on the campaign trail. Other Pages such as Bill Laurence from Cap de la Madeline, Quebec and Philip Pineau from Summerside, PEI (Prince Edward Island) took great interest in our election as well.

You can imagine my disappointment, Mr. Speaker, upon learning that a similar program, the Saskatchewan legislative internship program, was cancelled by this government. However, something tells me, Mr. Speaker, that a new government will soon be in place in our province and will reinstate that program.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — One day when I was carrying out my Page duties, I came up to the parliamentary cafeteria in Ottawa around 10:30 in the morning, where I found an older gentleman sitting alone, having tea and toast.

Well being from Saskatchewan, it didn't take me long to realize that it was Tommy Douglas. What an opportunity for an 18-year-old from small-town Saskatchewan. On many occasions I snuck away from my duties — it was a big place; you could do that there — to join Mr. Douglas for a few moments. I bought every Tommy Douglas book I could find and had him autograph them all.

Now I certainly didn't agree with most things that Mr. Douglas did. Chasing away oil companies and any business that made a profit in Saskatchewan was not a smart move, as history has shown. Nevertheless I became interested in him from a scholarly perspective. Based on our conversations, I began researching all Saskatchewan premiers and leaders of political parties. I was impressed with Walter Scott, J.T.M. Anderson, Martin Pederson, Tommy Douglas, Ross Thatcher, and Grant Devine.

Whether you agreed with their politics or not, they dreamed big. Today we would say they all had vision, a vision backed up with a call to action and truth. A vision . . . The famous Tom Peters in his book *In Search of Excellence* observes that all great institutions have a bias for action — putting performance and results above process. In other words, a vision with purpose. That's the common denominator in all great leaders as well.

I was very pleased, Mr. Speaker, when the member from Rosetown-Elrose, another great leader, assigned the post-secondary education critic responsibilities to me. The member from Rosetown-Elrose is a visionary in his own right and he provided a great foundation for the Saskatchewan Party.

Post-secondary education is an area of Saskatchewan history that had many visionaries. Walter Murray, the first president of the University of Saskatchewan, built a university that was consistent with his vision for the future of the province. In 1907 he wanted to see a university as limitless as the broad horizons of this beautiful land.

Another more recent visionary from the University of Saskatchewan, Dr. Leon Katz. The Canadian Light Source did

not come to the U of S (University of Saskatchewan) by accident, but came because Dr. Leon Katz built Canada's only linear accelerator laboratory and recruited physicists to use it.

Innovation is not new to Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. There have always been innovators. However, now Saskatchewan must play a leadership role in the knowledge economy. Fortunately our universities have two great visionaries at the helm, Mr. Peter MacKinnon in Saskatoon and Dr. David Barnard in Regina. They will guide us in the right direction.

(15:45)

In a knowledge economy, a global marketplace, a borderless world, we as a society are as only . . . are only as competitive as our competence. Education is the door to our destiny, and the importance of post-secondary education is growing. It's always been an important part of my life. It is where I had the dream to study politics. I was very humbled to be the recipient of the first-ever Saskatchewan Queen Elizabeth II Scholarship for excellence in parliamentary studies. I would like, at this time, to commend Saskatchewan's chief of protocol, Michael Jackson, for his administration of that award.

I had the chance to learn from the very best, Mr. Speaker. In high school, I had teachers like Terry Warren, Martin Thatcher, Dean Vause, Arne Lindberg, and David Dyck. In university, I was able to study under such accomplished academics as David E. Smith, and John C. Courtney. I also had the chance to study with the very best, Mr. Speaker. Special individuals like Reg Downs, Iain Harry, Stuart Pollon, Mitch McLeod and yes, the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Swift Current.

I knew some 20 years ago that there was something special about the Leader of the Opposition. I knew back then that some day he might be premier. Today, Mr. Speaker, I know he will be premier.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — We all dreamed of the day when we'd be part of this legislature and entrusted to govern this province. I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that day may come very soon. And we will be ready for the challenge.

Because learning is continuous today, whether you're a farmer, a pharmacist, or a legislator. I can say that continuous learning is epitomized by no one more than my mother. She is 70 years young, Mr. Speaker, and will be convocating with her second degree this spring. She has taken one class every year for the last 10 years — a span of over 50 years of post-secondary education, and something I am very proud of, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to joining her on the convocation stage as part of my current duties.

Mr. Speaker, as I direct my remarks specifically to this Throne Speech, I ask the question: what do people like the Rt. Hon. John G. Diefenbaker, Tommy Douglas, Grant Devine, Walter Murray, and Dr. Leon Katz have in common? I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that the common thread is a bias for action, putting performance and results above process, and a vision for the future.

Well let's see how this Throne Speech compares to the actions of these visionaries. How does this Throne Speech stack up? Putting performance and results above process. Well what is the Throne Speech response to that? The Throne Speech makes a narrow-minded approach that only government can create jobs, only government can create wealth, and only government can create hope in this province. Strike one.

A bias for action. Here's what the Throne Speech says. We will develop the means to achieve our commitment. Have you ever heard an emptier phrase than that? The members opposite may have many biases, but a bias for action is certainly not one of them. Strike two.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, a vision for the future. Even most socialists agree that small business is the key to the future of our province. What does the Throne Speech say about small business? Only a passing comment. This government feels it doesn't even need a private sector. Strike three, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as many curling fans across Saskatchewan would say — certainly those that attended the Nokia Brier in Saskatoon earlier this month would say — Mr. Premier, you missed the broom. Mr. Speaker, you missed the broom, you missed the house, and soon it's time to invoke the mercy rule on this government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I must tell you what a great feeling it was on election night when over 4,000 of my friends and neighbours put their trust in me and elected me as their representative.

Mr. Speaker, how do you say thank you? How do you express your appreciation for people like Ken and Merle Sawatsky, people who have spent years helping me get here? How do you thank people like Mike Morrissey and Marlin and Bev Stangeland, Lorne and Bernadette Mysko, Beth Epp, Luan Neufeld, and about 100 others who have spent countless hours helping me get here today?

I guess all you can do is the best you can when you take your seat in legislature. But I guess sometimes you even have to do better than that. You have to do better than your usual best. You have to reach deep and find that potential that even you don't realize you have.

In June 1979, Mr. Speaker, three months before his death, the Rt. Hon. John G. Diefenbaker sent me an autographed copy of the Canadian Bill of Rights. The letter that accompanied it said:

To Ken Cheveldayoff, who will some day have the privilege of serving his province and his country in an elected capacity.

Mr. Diefenbaker's prophecy came true, Mr. Speaker, and I intend to make the most of this opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I know you had an opportunity to meet my children at the swearing-in ceremony. They were hard to miss. They were the ones doing the wave when my name was announced.

As I know history will record this speech, I want to speak directly to my children, Carter and Paige Cheveldayoff. I know that some day you'll be reading this speech or maybe your children will be reading it. It is my hope that some day you will be able to serve in this Chamber or serve your community in your own special way. Remember, you are the future and that's what makes the future so special.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for this special opportunity. I will be voting against the motion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased this afternoon to be able to rise and join in the debate on the Speech from the Throne.

But first off, I would also like to join with others in congratulating you on your election to the Chair of Speaker. And I would also like to congratulate the member from Wascana Plains for putting her name forward in the election. It's a daunting spot that you hold, Mr. Speaker, and we look forward to working with you over the next four years. And we will appreciate your guidance and good rulings throughout session.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome our colleagues back to the legislature. And also a special welcome to the colleagues that were newly elected in this previous election.

It's a unique experience that we have here in the legislature that our constituents award us by giving us the privilege to serve here and to bring their hopes and dreams to this building and to help build the province of Saskatchewan. And I'm sure that our new colleagues will all rise to the occasion, Mr. Speaker, and I wish them all well.

Mr. Speaker, it's said that we all . . . we're representative of our constituencies and that each of us brings with us the priorities and the values that are predominant in our constituencies. And, Mr. Speaker, what you have to do is just think back over the speeches that we have heard since the Throne Speech debate has begun, and hear each of the members as they have talked about their constituency. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm one of those folks that gets a picture in my mind when people talk about things. And when members have spoken about their constituencies and talked about the province of Saskatchewan, it gives each of us a better understanding, not only of our colleagues, Mr. Speaker, but also of the province that we all call home.

Mr. Speaker, before I get into the Throne Speech, I would like to, as other members have done, thank my family for the support that they have given through this career and through elections, which really consume an awful lot of time. They are very supportive and I couldn't have done it without them, Mr.

Speaker.

Also I would like to pass along a thank you to the constituents of the Moose Jaw Wakamow constituency, and not just the folks within the city of Moose Jaw but also to the new area of the Wakamow constituency that takes in the rural area south of the city down to just south of Spring Valley — Pasqua, Baidon, Spring Valley, Crestwynd. It's a beautiful area of the province — farm land, rolling hills, pasture land. I spent a fair bit of time out there during the election, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to this summer having more opportunity to get out and to meet more of the constituents out there.

Mr. Speaker, we have talked often about Moose Jaw in this House, and I don't think there's anyone in the province that hasn't heard or talked about Moose Jaw. First it was always because of our unusual, unique name, and there always seemed to be little comments about Moose Jaw. But it's taken on a new turn over the last couple of years, Mr. Speaker, where the city has really rebuilt itself on its history.

So it was appropriate . . . Last year was Moose Jaw's centennial, and there was a number of celebrations throughout the year. And it was, it was an eventful year and a very good year for Moose Jaw, and there are some new projects on the go. The spa is still booming, the casino, the Yvette Moore Gallery, and my colleague from Moose Jaw North talked about Yvette Moore receiving an award at the tourism event the other evening. There's many things on the go, businesses opening; things are changing.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of our centennial was really a very tragic day, where we had a fire, which I'm sure everyone knows about, where part of the historic section of downtown Moose Jaw burnt in a very large fire. But typical Moose Jaw, the city has really rallied around and they are now working on plans to see what can be done with that area, and I have no doubt that Moose Jaw will come through the rubble of this fire and be a better community for it.

Mr. Speaker, during our centennial events and the one that I . . . that really sticks in my mind, it was the final event that the city of Moose Jaw put on. It was a banquet, a gala event for . . . the last formal event for Moose Jaw's centennial.

And when I was getting ready to go to this event, and actually throughout the whole year whenever I had thought of Moose Jaw being 100 years old, I always thought back to the newspaper in Moose Jaw; the *Times-Herald* runs quite regularly a article from Leith Knight. Leith was the . . . worked at the Moose Jaw Public Library for many, many years and she started writing articles about the history of Moose Jaw.

And every time one of Leith Knight's articles was in the paper I loved to read it because it really brought the history of Moose Jaw, and the city and events, and the people that lived in Moose Jaw, to life. They're interesting articles and really gave me a better understanding of Moose Jaw and the things that it went through in its first 100 years.

So when we were at this gala event speaking about the centennial and our first 100 years, as I was standing at the podium making a few remarks congratulating Moose Jaw on its

centennial, as I looked out over the crowd, Mr. Speaker, I realized that the folks sitting in the audience at this gala event were the pioneers for our next century in Moose Jaw. And it truly was in the hands of the people there as to what Moose Jaw will be and what it will accomplish over its next 100 years. We really are the pioneers of this century.

Mr. Speaker, the future of . . . is in our hands also for the members that are collected here and assembled here in this House. The vision that we put forward for the future of our province, and the vision that was put forward in the Throne Speech really is establishing the future for the pioneers that we are leading into Saskatchewan's second century.

So while we always talk about the future and what the plans are for the future, Mr. Speaker, there's many things that we do that lay that groundwork. And there's many things that are ongoing that lay that groundwork to continue the good work that's begun.

One of the, one of the areas that I really want to touch on today was when the Premier invited me again to sit in cabinet as the Minister of Labour. It is indeed a privilege for me, and it was also an excellent opportunity to continue the work that has begun in the department over the last term of government.

(16:00)

And when we talk about future, we can't build on the future and towards the future unless we have a good base to build from. And as the Minister of Labour I've had an opportunity with all of our very dedicated folks in the department to build a good future and continue to build on the foundation that's there for people, working people in this province.

And there's just a couple things that I would really like to touch on. Last October we announced an action plan for health and safety in the province of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more devastating to a family or a worker or to a business than to have a serious injury. And it is incumbent on each and every one of us to ensure that safety in the workplace, safety at play, safety at home — these are all things that we pay attention to, and that we realize that it is a matter of life and death, and that it is important to each and every one of us, and that we have to ensure that safety and working safely is just a matter of attitude and a matter of fact and the way that we do things. And that's one thing that I feel is extremely important and will be more important as we move into our second century.

Mr. Speaker, some of the things . . . other things that have been accomplished in the department over the last session, the Mines Regulations were proclaimed. This review of the Mines Regulations which are very technical, quite a bulky document, has taken a number of years of consultation and hard work by many groups. And, Mr. Speaker, those were passed last session and proclaimed, which was very good news.

And, Mr. Speaker, I don't think there's any of us that won't remember the day that the firefighters came to this legislature and sat in the galleries when we proclaimed . . . or we passed the piece of legislation that covered occupational diseases for firefighters.

Many times in this House we pass legislation and we carry on the day-to-day business, and it seems remote sometimes from actual real life. But when we have the opportunity to see people that take an interest and have lobbied for this piece of legislation for many years, it was an . . . well an extremely moving day to have all of the firefighters here and see their support for the legislation and the work that was done in this House. That's got to be one of the big days in my memory in this House in the time that I have served here.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other things that we do in the department that I am extremely proud of — and I had the opportunity the other day when we had a visiting delegation from South Africa — is working with the Status of Women office and working with the women's organizations around this province. It has been a privilege to be able to travel around the province and meet with these . . . the groups to see the work that they do in their communities. Quite often it's voluntary; quite often it is on a shoestring budget. And they provide excellent services and are very dedicated to the work that they do.

And it's been a . . . it was a real privilege last fall at the beginning of Women's History Month, which is October, that we released the Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women.

So often women's issues are looked at as women's issues. But they're not, Mr. Speaker. Women's issues touch every sector and every aspect of what we do right across the scale of government. So there's many areas that have been worked on. There's many things that need to be done.

But, Mr. Speaker, this action plan and its release and having the opportunity to meet with women's groups across the province and get their response to it has been remarkable. We have made some advances — many advances in fact — and we have been able to share our knowledge and the work that's gone on here, as we did with the delegation from South Africa last week.

But it's an important part of what we do, and it's also the action plan for health and safety, the Action Plan for Saskatchewan Women — these are all a solid foundation for us to move into the next century and to continue to build on all the good things that are here in Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, I guess many people when you talk about the action plan and you talk about what we have been doing, they questioned the importance. But it truly is something that I believe in and have believed in all my life, is that every person in this province, no matter what their role or what their job or where they live throughout the province, whether they be volunteers, whether they be in the paid workforce, whether they be entrepreneurs, business people, or . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . MLAs — a little help from my friend here — MLAs, we all contribute, each and every one contributes to the fabric of Saskatchewan and the fabric of who we are, to the character, the productivity, the priorities of Saskatchewan. And every person is important in the role that they play and the roles that they take on. And I firmly believe as the Minister of Labour that that is something that I carry with me in my day-to-day work, that each and every person in this province is important and needs to be respected for that.

So, Mr. Speaker, here we are. We are quite an assortment of

people from all corners of the province and all areas of the province. We each bring with us our priorities and our values that are in our constituencies and we come here to shape Saskatchewan.

And how do we do this? We spend much time reviewing issues, researching issues, discussing issues, and we look at the big picture of Saskatchewan and the things that we need to move forward and to improve the quality and the quality of life for everyone right across the province.

Now one of this . . . Now it isn't all that serious, Mr. Speaker, because there is times when it can be an awful lot of fun. And one of the best events that I think I have ever been involved in — or I know I've ever been involved in — is actually the Premier's summer bus tour where we all get on a big bus and we travel around Saskatchewan, stopping in communities and meeting people where they live, where they work.

And we don't always run into people that agree with us. But, Mr. Speaker, they are all pleased to talk about their community, the things that are going on in their community, the thing that they may need, the things they would like to improve, and the wonderful work that they have accomplished in each of their communities.

And it's important I think for all of us to have a better understanding of the province as a whole. But these are just some of the things that build that good platform and for what we will do in the future. And that, Mr. Speaker, is where I'd really like to turn to the Throne Speech.

This Throne Speech really does lay out the future of Saskatchewan and for our future generations. You end up . . . I don't think there's anyone in this House that would disagree, Mr. Speaker, that young people and education are really where the future of Saskatchewan lies. Working on the various programs, the Minister of Learning previous to me touched on many of the educational issues that are being looked at and addressed and are in the plans and partway through, but one that I would really like to touch on is School^{PLUS}. And I'm very pleased to see in the Throne Speech that there is a proposed expansion for School^{PLUS}.

Mr. Speaker, I have a community school in Moose Jaw, a couple of them actually in Moose Jaw, but one in particular that I visited and we have talked at length about the School^{PLUS} model, and what they are doing within their school, how families are involved, how young children are getting and receiving the services that they need to improve their lives and to put them on a good course for a very stable future.

Mr. Speaker, that's one thing that I'm very pleased to see in the Speech from the Throne. And I could go on, on the education, but I think the Minister of Learning really covered a great deal of that.

And also, Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to see the comments, the building a green and prosperous economy. We always talk about the economy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but a green economy is something that appeals to more and more people all the time. The expansion of the windmill and the wind power is . . . I mean, it's exciting. It's good to see the changes and the

viewpoints that are changing to the importance of the environment and how we need to be better stewards of the . . . all of the resources and the beautiful province that we have. Those areas are very important.

The forestry centre in Prince Albert, that is going to be an excellent addition to the city of Prince Albert and to the forestry industry and really be a showcase for that industry that means a great deal here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Development in the uranium industry and also potash. Mr. Speaker, we sometimes I think take for granted some of these major industries. I know I drive by IMC Kalium every day coming in to Regina and until you actually go speak to some of the folks that work there — and this is one thing that we did on the bus tour — have an opportunity to see what they do, to see the part that they play in Saskatchewan's economy. They are important industries and I'm very pleased to see the commitment to those industries in the Throne Speech.

Mr. Speaker, the young entrepreneurs program that has been talked about is going to be exciting. Young entrepreneurs and many other young groups, Mr. Speaker, are important to Saskatchewan. I think that's been recognized in the Throne Speech and I think we will continue to see that. And during the election it was exciting to see many young people get involved in politics and get out and work on campaigns. They are an important part of Saskatchewan.

I would recommend to anyone, Mr. Speaker, to spend some time with young people — whether it is public school, elementary school, high school level, or young adults at the university, or in other areas of the province. They give us a outlook on life, a new energy in the things that we do.

And we need to have young people more involved in the province in more decision-making roles, more active within the province because they have wonderful ideas. They have huge amounts of energy, and they look at areas with fresh eyes and give us new ideas that really adds excitement to the things that we do.

Mr. Speaker, there is a number of things that are in the Throne Speech that we could talk about. And Mr. Speaker, I keep thinking, you know, there's some groups that just blow up the balloons and wait for them to drop from the roof to have a party begin. Well you know, Mr. Speaker, this government and this side of the House, we know that the party doesn't start until the work is done. And, Mr. Speaker, we are committed on this side of the House. We will do the work to . . . and initiate the plans and continue on with the programs and the focus that we have to improve the quality of life for Saskatchewan and to build a better future for all people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that's our commitment to the people of Saskatchewan. We will continue with the good plans. We will continue with the work, and we can celebrate when the work is done. So, Mr. Speaker, with the focus of education, a green and prosperous economy, and improving the quality of life for all residents of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to rise and to support the Speech from the Throne. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a privilege to stand in the legislature today and speak to the throne from the speech. I would just like to thank a few people that needs to be thanked and congratulated.

We'll start off with the re-election of the Speaker and also the election of the Deputy Speaker. Congratulations to both of them.

Special congratulations to the member from Swift Current, as his election to Leader of the Official Opposition and uncontested nomination. And I think that it's going to be a very exciting time in Saskatchewan politics with the member from Swift Current as the Leader of the Official Opposition, and great things to come for the official opposition. And one day we'll be the Government of Saskatchewan and make the changes we need in this province.

(16:15)

I would like to congratulate the nine new members that were elected last fall — four from the government side and five from the official opposition. It's a privilege to be elected to the legislature. It's a great privilege and an opportunity for those members to speak on behalf of their constituents, and I wish them well. And they've done a great job in debate so far, and I look forward to more input from those members.

I'd like to say a special thought for the member from Yorkton who, as we all know, is not well. And we wish him very well and hope to see him back in the legislature very soon. And I do truly mean that, and I look forward to his debates in the legislature. And he's always been a member that, as Minister of Agriculture, that I could always go to at any time and talk to him about the issues. And I look forward to him being back in the legislature.

A special thank you I think has to go to my wife, Cindy, and my family. I guess no one other than people who have sat in the legislature or in parliaments understand the commitment that it takes as a member representing our constituents: the time away from home, the time away from family, and so many things that have to be really looked after back home by Cindy and my family.

My daughter, my eldest daughter actually kind of left home about the same time as I did when I entered politics in 1999. She went to St. Angela's Academy in Prelate, and this spring she'll be graduating from that school and hopefully will be attending university in Regina next fall. My oldest son who just turned 16 last fall and of course got his driver's licence, so that's a whole new experience for him, and he has already put a few more grey hairs in his dad's head worrying about his situation driving around, especially during the winter months when he first got his licence. And my youngest daughter Alex, who is going to school in St. Gabriel's in Biggar as well. My son goes to Biggar Central School 2000 in Biggar.

And they're special people in my life, and they've done very well without me when I'm not there, but it's certainly a big commitment on their part, and I'd like to thank them for their

sacrifice they've made while I'm in the public eye.

In 1999 I was elected as the member for Redberry Lake constituency. And this past fall I ran and won in the new Biggar constituency. It's new and old. It's new since the last previous two elections. The Biggar constituency existed for many decades quite frankly before that.

And I'd just like to thank the people from the portions of the Redberry Lake constituency that were in Rosthern-Shellbrook in the previous election. It's generally the people that live in areas, communities, in and around Blaine Lake; and Leask, Saskatchewan; north of Speers to Hafford, to Richard, and those areas. And I would like to just thank them for the hospitality. I'm going to miss going to places like Hafford and Blaine Lake and Leask where they have many great community functions and always welcomed Cindy and myself and my family to any event. And a very special thank you to them.

The northern boundaries of the new Biggar constituency where I was elected, re-elected in this fall, is the Redberry Lake itself. And so I still have some constituents that still live in that area, and I will continue to represent those people and speak on their behalf, especially about an item concerning the Redberry Lake Interpretive Centre and that area.

In 1999 when I was elected, I went out looking for a place to put my office, Mr. Speaker. And . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — To ask for leave, Mr. Speaker, to introduce guests.

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

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That is carried. I recognize the member for Athabasca.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I apologize to my colleague for the interruption and thanks for the leave as well.

I want to introduce several people that have joined us in the Speaker's gallery. These ladies are from a long ways — northern Saskatchewan. It's always a pleasure to introduce them to be here. We actually had a fight as to who was going to introduce them. The member from Regina Centre wanted to do it. The member from Cumberland wanted to do it. But of course Athabasca MLA gets the privilege.

But I want to take a few minutes to introduce to you Mary Jane John-Klassen of Patuanak. She's a member of the English River First Nation. And she retired from the provincial government on October 1, '01, Mr. Speaker.

And as well with Mary Jane is Pauline Aubichon of Patuanak. She's also a member of the English River First Nation and a

community health representative.

And of course the third visitor is Chrissy Aubichon of Patuanak as well. And just so people know, my father was born in Patuanak; that is his home community. And this is the reason why, Mr. Speaker, I'm such a good hockey player because Patuanak is the hometown of many fantastic hockey players like August George Jr., August George Sr., Moe Apefis, Abe Apefis, and the list goes on.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank them for their long travel and to welcome them to the Assembly today and ask all members to join these fine ladies from the English River First Nation near Patuanak.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I was saying I was looking for an office after the '99 election and went to various communities and went to the community of Perdue and went to the local town office. And upon entering the office, they said, well we've already looked at three different sites in Perdue that you can have as an office. And so I was pretty interested to see that they were thinking well ahead for me, and in the end I did put my office in Perdue. So I'd like to thank those people in Perdue for the hospitality, and it was a great experience having the constituency office there. It was relatively close to home, and I think we were able to serve our constituents well.

It's interesting after the 2003 redistribution of constituency boundaries, the people of Biggar, when they heard that I was going to be running in Biggar constituency, just assumed that I was going to move my office right away from Perdue to Biggar, but I kept reminding them that I have to get the job before I'll start booking real estate. But as it turned out, the people of Biggar constituency gave their support to me, and I'm very humbled by their support and hope to represent them well in the future.

And we did move our office to Biggar, and again there was a, there was a couple places that are already in Biggar kind of waiting for me to make my decision to set up an office . . . (inaudible) . . . very easy, but a very nice spot in the town of Biggar. It's very central to the constituency.

I still represent the area from Langham, Radisson, Borden, Denholm, Maymont, and also continue to represent the area from close to Saskatoon to . . . from Asquith and Perdue of course, Vanscoy, Delisle, and the boundaries now include the town of Biggar and also go out to the communities of Cando

and takes in the town of Wilkie, Landis, Handel, Springwater and smaller communities out in that area. So it's really a central point now having the office in Biggar, and I look forward to representing those people in the constituency of Biggar.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech of course as we know is and continues to be a very vague document, and really there is . . . what we need in the Throne Speech is more action and less talk. As we know in Saskatchewan, health care system is really deteriorating. There's many examples of that. The provincial economy is faltering. Infrastructure is crumbling, and as we know people continue to leave this province. And that's not a good prescription for the future of this province.

And I only need to look at some of the many examples. We've brought up many examples in the legislature since we've been sitting, about especially the crumbling health care system and people waiting in lineups for months for operations and waiting in hospitals for hours and hours and hours.

But I'd just like to point out some specific examples of the problems in health care coming from my constituency, Biggar, and just one or two examples actually is from the town of Wilkie. And there is a young man there . . . is waiting for a kidney transplant. And he was on home dialysis up until around the beginning of March. And so home dialysis was no longer working, and he had to go to Saskatoon three times a week for treatment. And of course this young man does not have a lot of money. He takes the bus to Saskatoon three times a week for dialysis.

And he received a call from the Royal University Hospital informing him that he must come to Saskatoon to receive some shots, and he wasn't told why he needed to get these shots. But he made a trip in October to get his first dose of vaccine for chicken pox, and he was told that he needed another shot, and he would have to come in for this shot. The bill was for \$75. And he wondered why he had to go to Saskatoon when there's a doctor and there's a health clinic in Wilkie, and why he couldn't take these shots in Wilkie. And he was told no one was qualified in Wilkie to give him the shots. And that was very odd for him. It was very inconvenient, costly, quite frankly, for him personally.

And a second story which was going on at the same time which ties the two situations together . . . another neighbour required shots twice a week, and he was also told that there was no one qualified in Wilkie to give him these shots. And this gentleman's wife is a registered nurse, and when they complained they suddenly found . . . changed their criteria, and both these gentlemen were given these shots in Wilkie, by the doctor in one case and by this gentleman's wife in the other case.

And it just seems odd. I mean it brings up a lot of questions of what's going on in the health care system when people from Wilkie have to pay, through their own expense, travelling to Saskatoon to receive some very minor medical procedures — in this case vaccines — where why couldn't these be done in Wilkie, when as it turned out there is qualified people in Wilkie to give these vaccine shots?

And the number of questions that these people brought to me

was that, they're wondering if there is not just a concern between Saskatoon Health District and the Heartland Health District about who should get these patients. There would be more funding, if they get them into Saskatoon, for the Saskatoon Health District.

And you know, they're worried about those types of issues because it seemed odd that there's no coordination between the two health districts to help these people. And especially when you continue to hear in the media about the overburdened staff in Saskatoon in the hospitals there, why these rural doctors and nurses and health centres could not be used more effectively.

Other situations that are in the Biggar constituencies — and the one right in the town of Biggar — there was . . . basically a rumour went round about the closing of the Biggar Hospital. And many people were very upset about this and came to me with their concerns.

I had a meeting with Heartland Health Board and the CEO, and their response was there was no plans immediately to close the hospital. And throughout our discussions — they of course couldn't promise forever to keep the hospital open — basically said that you need a bigger population base to ensure that this hospital stays open. Well Biggar is a fairly thriving community with a number of businesses. And we wondered, you know, if you can't keep the hospital open in Biggar, what hospitals will be open?

But in our discussions, the CEO said to us, well I think I know where the rumour started. The board, in the fall, passed a motion to change the name of every hospital in the Heartland Health District to health centres, health clinics. And he said, I think that's where the rumour started about closing the Biggar Hospital.

And he says, the reason we didn't change the name of the Biggar Hospital was that the name was already taken up by the local doctors in the local clinic. And they've got the name, so they weren't willing to give the name up.

Well it seems very interesting in today's world of limited budgets, health care concerns, that this health board would go to the expense of changing the names of every hospital in the health district. And it's very suspicious because I've been through the situation with name changes in another hospital and that was the hospital in Hafford, Saskatchewan where, at the time when they renovated the hospital and made some upgrades, they wanted to change the name and not put the name hospital on it. And the local people were very concerned about it and basically demanded that the name hospital be put on the Hafford facility. And as we know now, the Hafford Hospital is closed and has lost its acute care beds and emergency ward, and it's gone.

(16:30)

And so I just have to say that it's very suspicious that the health board would go to the trouble of changing all the names in the hospital and in the district, and it seems suspicious. And many people from the area believe that's just a precursor to closing hospitals in the health district, and then the government could technically say they never closed a hospital, they're health

districts already or health clinics already.

Mr. Speaker, we talk about the Throne Speech and the direction of the economy and of the province, and as we see this government today is managing decline. In every area that you look, the government is trying to manage decline. They're pointing the finger at the federal government for the lack of transfer payments and there's reasons about this, the lack of transfer payments or shortchanging in the transfer payments, but at the end of the day the government does not have an economic plan in place that will grow the province.

What we need to do is grow this province. If we have more taxpayers, more people coming to the province, we'll have more taxes to spend on health care and education. And we continue to see out-migration in this province — 3,500 people in the last year; 17,000 since the present Premier took office three years ago. And that is not a prescription for success in the future.

Yes, we will continue to have hospital closures; we'll continue to have schools that close because people are leaving this province. And again as an example of that happening, in the Biggar constituency right now the Saskatoon West School Board has made a motion to close one of two hospitals . . . schools in the district. It's either going to be Borden or Radisson School that's going to be closed. And the people in those communities are quite outraged that they're going to be closing one of these hospitals.

And really I met with the school board chairperson and we went through the reasons. I mean there just is not the students in the area to warrant keeping both schools open. It's not the school board; they're having to make these hard decisions. But what we need in place in Saskatchewan, in rural Saskatchewan, is truly revitalization.

The government has spoke of revitalization in rural Saskatchewan; it's not happening. This government does not have a plan and continues to let rural Saskatchewan really go down the drain. And places like Borden and Radisson and Maymont and Sonningdale may very well lose their schools. Their hospitals have been already closed.

And we continue to have a deteriorating agriculture economy, as we know with the BSE, the drought situation. What is the government's response to the drought, is by increasing crop insurance premiums to the agriculture sector to make it more difficult for producers to continue farming.

And, Mr. Speaker, as we see with the present government's agriculture policy, we look, have to look no further than CFIP. And really it's a disgrace to see this provincial government not make up its share of the shortfall in CFIP. The federal government has announced that it will be putting \$65 million into CFIP to pick up its shortage, its coverage in CFIP, but the provincial government has refused to do this.

And it's very serious because people have received 70 per cent of the CFIP money and they're expecting the other 30 per cent to come. And in these very dire straights with BSE and continuing low commodity prices and drought from previous years, they're having to pay bills. And they were counting on

this money, and that money is not coming. And it's very unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that the government is renegeing on its promise.

In the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, the government is talking about more government intervention. And when I talk about an economic plan for the province, this is not the way to go. History has shown this is not the way to go. The economy will continue to falter with more government involvement. What people and businesses around the country and around the world want to see is the government to look after taxation rates, infrastructure, things like that. As was mentioned before, be really the referee in the economy, not part of the economy in such an overwhelming way.

Of course we need the government in areas of . . . that the four major Crowns are involved with — SaskTel, SaskEnergy, and so on. These are critical areas that need to be . . . continue to have government ownership and control in. But certainly having a government having a policy to compete with the private sector in packing plants as they did with Centennial Meats and many other ventures in the province, at the end of the day only does one thing. And that scares away investment, scares away people from wanting to come into this province to live and work in this province, and scares away businesses from investing in this province.

And even in the oil and gas industry, the royalty rates have been reduced. It's much better than it used to be but still, the oil companies still look at Saskatchewan as kind of the last resort, the second place to go to invest. And there's many other areas that are problems in the oil and gas industry, and regulation is one of the big concerns. Lack of infrastructure, quite frankly, in the oil and gas sector in Saskatchewan is another big concern.

And we talk about . . . And we hear about this government wanting to go back to the days of the 1970s. And that just scares the businesses away from this province, when you think about the Blakeney government and nationalization of the . . . (inaudible) . . . industry.

And even their agriculture policies in those days was really anti-development. We saw the government in those days against practically every innovation in agriculture. The Agriculture minister of the day told Saskatchewan people that all they wanted to do was produce it and ship it out of the province. Well as we know, that's not the way to go.

In this province, we need to produce the agriculture products. We need to have some secondary input into the agriculture policy . . . into agriculture products. We need to build packing plants. We need to process our grains so we can have a value-added product to ship out of the province.

And by that doing, we'll create more jobs, more tax investment, more investment in the province, more tax revenue. And that's the way we're going to keep our hospitals and our schools open, by having more people in Saskatchewan paying taxes. And it's unfortunate this government continues down the same avenue that it has for the past number of years.

Another issue, Mr. Speaker, in and around Biggar is concerning cellphone service. There's a huge gap in coverage in the Biggar

area. And nowadays, it's just vital that we have proper cellphone coverage in the rural areas. Just a safety factor is very important. But today, business people, farmers, rely on adequate cellphone coverage when they're doing business.

And there's a petition being sent around by the RM of Biggar and I will be presenting this petition in the legislature in the coming days and weeks, and there's a number of people very concerned about that.

And it's unfortunate, whenever we talk to SaskTel or the minister responsible, it seems it takes a lot of pressure from the local people before they finally make any changes or improvements in that area.

Mr. Speaker, another item . . . As I said, I still represent part of the Redberry Lake area. And the Redberry Lake Biosphere Reserve is really an important feature in that area and they're hoping to use that as a real economic development in tourism and other areas in the Redberry Lake area.

And they continue, the committee and the corporation continue to ask the provincial government for help — limited help quite frankly — just to keep the interpretive centre open would be a start. But they're looking at other help in other areas and this government continues to ignore them.

There's lots of money for Meewasin, and Wascana, Waskesiu, and places like that, but no help for more localized area around the Redberry Lake Biosphere. It's internationally recognized by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) and it's very unfortunate that the government hasn't taken some interest in this area and helped the people in that community to develop that reserve and draw more economic activity into that area.

And as an example, this is a motion from the RM of Great Bend. And it was made back in last September, but this pretty well sums up most of the constituency of Biggar and its problems. And the resolution that was passed was that the RM of Great Bend No. 407 be declared an agriculture disaster area for the cattle industry and grain growers. The BSE crisis has collapsed the cattle industry and requires immediate opening of the border for all livestock to address the problem grain producers have, again being hard-struck with untimely climatic factors, severe grasshopper infestation, low yields, and a commodity price which falls short of the farming input costs.

And that pretty well sums up the situation. As always, farmers and people in agriculture are very optimistic. We are still short of moisture in a great part of the area in Biggar constituency, but there's adequate moisture to get the crop going.

We hope there's light at the end of the tunnel in the BSE situation, but it's very serious and the people of Biggar constituency are really coming . . . it's coming to a crisis point if things do not turn around.

Mr. Speaker, I believe I've spoken most of my time and I would just like to say that this government has not brought in an economic plan or a policy or a Throne Speech that will grow the province and I will not be supporting the Throne Speech.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McCall: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I'm such a New Democrat, and I'm such a person about sharing and co-operating, that I've happily given a couple of minutes of my time to the member opposite.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McCall: — Anyway, thanks for making great use of it.

Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to enter into the debate on the Throne Speech. And I want to state at the outset I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne and voting in favour of the motion of the member from Regina Walsh Acres and seconded by the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

I want to congratulate them on excellent first speeches and I am sure that they will make a great contribution to public life in Saskatchewan and that they will serve their constituents long and well.

I also want to commend the first speeches of the members from Meewasin, and Cumberland, and Battlefords. It is an honour and a pleasure to serve with them and I look forward to working with them for the people of Saskatchewan for many years to come.

I also want to acknowledge the contributions to this debate by the new members for the opposition side and I want to congratulate them on their election to this Assembly and to commend them on some interesting first speeches.

There are two elections that I would like to comment on, Mr. Speaker. The first is that of yourself returning to the Speaker's Chair.

I first came to this Assembly following a by-election in February 2001 and my first session was your first session as Speaker. Moving forward from that common starting point I've appreciated your patience, your humour, and your steady ways. And I'm sure you will continue on in that good way, judicious and diplomatic, in this very close House.

I also want to congratulate the member for Regina Wascana Plains for contesting the election of Speaker. As the Tories and the Liberals and the Saskatchewan Party have found out in Wascana Plains, again and again and again and again, the member is a formidable campaigner. And I thank her for her candidacy and for helping us demonstrate that our Speaker is a democratically elected Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McCall: — The next election I'd like to comment on and offer a few ... offer congratulations and perhaps a few observations is that of the Leader of the Opposition.

The member from Swift Current possesses strong speaking abilities, a nimble mind, a sense of humour, and he will undoubtedly bring a lot of passion to the job. He also speaks fluently about Polly Pockets and *The Simpsons* and I think that's great. Even better — he no longer wants to grow a mullet, Mr. Speaker.

I would also urge him to remember that his job and the job of the opposition is not just that of opposition, but it is also that of proposition. So as they enter into these debates we'll be looking for the alternatives that they bring forward.

(16:45)

I'd also like to point out to him that in terms of history, we've had a lot of interjections from the other side about the '70s and the '80s and so on and so forth. It's interesting to note that the member, the member from Swift Current says that to do things ... we've got to be doing things different here in Saskatchewan, things that we haven't done in six decades. Well that of course, Mr. Speaker, would take us back to the glory days of 1934. And things were rolling then in Saskatchewan, certainly. Anyway I wish him well and congratulations on his new post.

I'd also like to wish well to our colleague the member from Yorkton, and a heck of a guy, Deputy Premier, and a fine hockey player. As many have pointed out he's an approachable fellow, got a good sense of humour, and he's tough as nails. And I'm sure that he's going to be able to fight this battle with cancer, Mr. Speaker.

Now as the new member for the new constituency of Regina Elphinstone-Centre, I want to offer my thanks for the support of the people in my constituency. I was pleased to see that the support for the NDP rang in at about 64 per cent in the November election in that riding, and I want the people of Elphinstone-Centre to know that I will continue ... that I will strive to be worthy of that strong support, and I will continue to work hard for them and with them.

Prior to redistribution, I represented fine people living in Rosemont, Mount Royal, and part of Normanview, and I want to thank them for having giving me that privilege. I want to congratulate them on having elected the members for Rosemont and Walsh Acres, both of them great individuals who will do a fine job for the people who sent them to this Assembly.

When I think about the new riding that I represent in this Assembly, I feel excited; I'm encouraged, I'm humbled, and I'm honoured. Because Regina Elphinstone-Centre is a place of diversity, of vitality, and creativity. We have challenges, to be sure, and I'll have more to say about that later on, but it's a great place, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to tell you a bit about it because this is my first speech for that new constituency. The main neighbourhoods are parts of Regent Park, all of north central, downtown, part of Cathedral, core, and the old warehouse district. This constituency is where many of the important events in our city's history have taken place, such as the Regina Riot or the debate and passage by the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) of the *Regina Manifesto*, to name two events of

certain interest to both sides of this House.

And many of the institutions and buildings found in Regina Elphinstone-Centre continue to play a vital role in the civic life of our city to this day. They're the old territorial buildings, the Armouries, Hotel Saskatchewan, City Hall, the Old City Hall building, the head offices for all the major Crowns, the exhibition grounds and the AgriDome, Taylor Field, Globe Theatre, Victoria Park, police stations, fire stations, courthouses, the Legion Hall, the Regina Union Centre, Casino Regina, the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association), the YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association), the Lawson Aquatic Centre, and the Fieldhouse. The head offices for Conexus Credit Union, the F.W. Hill mall, the Saskatchewan head offices for many different businesses and organizations, the headquarters for the three major political provincial parties, including of course our own much beloved Tommy Douglas House.

The CNR (Canadian National Railway) and CPR (Canadian Pacific Railway) lines run through Elphinstone-Centre.

We've got pools and schools and daycares and parks and libraries and galleries. We've got some of the finest places in Regina to shop, dine, have a social drink, or see a band — be it in downtown along 13th Avenue or along 11th Avenue or in the old warehouse district.

We have churches of many different denominations, including some of the oldest in our city's history. We have a Vietnamese Buddhist temple and a Sikh temple.

We have the headquarters of urban Aboriginal services at the Gathering Place which houses the Regina Treaty Status Indian Services and the urban offices of the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council. And we are here today I might add, Mr. Speaker, as is Regina Elphinstone-Centre on Treaty Four land.

We have the Pasqua Hospital in Regina Elphinstone-Centre, the Regina Community Clinic, and the offices for the new provincial health line.

Now the people of Elphinstone-Centre are just as diverse and interesting. It's a living, breathing example of our province's motto, "From Many Peoples Strength." There are many First Nations: Assiniboine, Cree, Dakota, Lakota, Nakota, even some Innu. There are many Métis people. There are people who've immigrated to Canada from all over the world — from Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, Central America — and when Regina's Mosaic festival is on, Mr. Speaker, this constituency gets to show off this diversity at some of the finest pavilions in the festival.

And these people work at all kinds of different jobs — professionals, tradespeople, public servants, small-business people, in the service sector, and in the cultural sector. There are people who are retired and there are people who are in the process of preparing to join the workforce. And there are lots of people who want to work and who are striving to break through the barriers of poverty and to overcome challenges such as disabilities.

These people come together in different ways to improve their

neighbourhoods and to make their voices heard. There is the good work done by the Core Community Association, the Cathedral Village Community Association, the North Central Community Society.

There are the business improvement districts for the downtown and old warehouse districts and with RTSIS (Regina Treaty Status Indian Services) at the Gathering Place, the seat of urban services for the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council. And they come together with their government representatives at the federal and municipal levels and with us from the province to make their communities even better places in which to live, to build on strengths, and to take on challenges.

And a special example of this fine tradition of working together is the work of the Inner City Community Partnership which brings together community and all three levels of government. The primary focus of the partnership is my home neighbourhood of north central, and I share with many in the sincere hope will make a positive and long-lasting contribution to the quality of life in north central and indeed throughout the inner city.

The leadership of these organizations helps to provide an environment to some of the most notable civic events that this city has to offer. There is the Cathedral Village Arts Festival, a veritable extravaganza of entertainment and art and community. And certainly the member from Rosemont knows a heck of a lot about that fine institution.

As I've said, Mosaic takes place throughout much of the riding. The AgriDome plays hosts to the Pats and many national and even international sporting events, particularly curling. Taylor Field hosts the Riders and the Rams and has been the centre stage for two of the most successful Grey Cups ever held, especially the one this past fall.

There is the Folkfest and various other festivals that take place in Victoria Park in the summer. There's the Globe Theatre and many productions that take place at the Regina Performing Arts Centre. It's a happening place, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McCall: — Another component that plays an important role in making this constituency a great place in which to live — particularly in the core and north central neighbourhoods — is the good work of many community-based organizations and faith-based organizations: the Circle Project, United Way, Indian Métis Christian Fellowship Centre, the friendship centre, Welfare Rights, Street Workers' Advocacy Project, the Boys and Girls Club, the North Central Family Centre, Street Culture Kidz, the Salvation Army, Aboriginal Family Services, family services, Rainbow Youth Center, Common Weal, Sakewewak, Ehrlo Community Services, the various housing co-ops, the Community Action Coop, REACH (Regina Education & Action on Child Hunger Inc.), the Food Bank, the Saskatchewan Cultural Exchange Society, the Canadian Mental Health Association, the Regina Alternative Measures Program, the Regina Open Door Society, the Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry, Carmichael Outreach centre, Chili for Children, the Mennonite Central Committee, Souls Harbour, and the Rescue Mission. And I should apologize in advance in case I've

forgotten anyone, but I don't think there's much chance of that. Is there, Mr. Speaker?

These organization do tremendous work and really complement the efforts of our community schools and innovative on-the-ground governmental organizations such as the Four Directions Health Centre, Mobile Crisis Services, the Randall Kinship Centre, the Albert Scott community police station, and Regina Housing. Working together with the people in Regina Elphinstone-Centre, the hard-working and caring people of these organizations strive to make . . . to take on some of the toughest challenges that we have to face in Saskatchewan.

Most of the challenges are rooted in poverty: basic food and security; inadequate income and housing; unstable families; high rates of involvement with the criminal justice system; spousal abuse; trouble in school; and substance abuse. There's a tremendous need for healing and for empowerment and for building independence.

And I know that we've made some progress, Mr. Speaker, and that various socio-economic indicators show that we are headed in the right direction on many of these challenges. But we've got a long way to go, Mr. Speaker, and to quote the bard, "and miles to go before we sleep."

Many of these problems are complex and intergenerational in nature. To cite one particular set of causal factors, colonialism has inflicted horrendous damage on Aboriginal people. In particular, much of the human damage and dysfunction that is concentrated in places like north central is, I believe, a direct legacy of the residential school system. I'm not saying that the residential school experience was bad for everyone. Not everyone who went through the residential schools were physically or mentally or spiritually or sexually abused, but so many were, Mr. Speaker.

And the terrible thing is that, and even more terrible than the abuse inflicted at residential schools, is the fact that this abuse tends to perpetuate itself down the line. And this intergenerational damage tends to evidence itself in continued poverty. At worst, it also evidences itself in fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, substance abuse, abuse in the home, kids getting forced into the sex trade, and all manner of terrible outcomes.

And unless the chain of abuse is broken — and that takes monumental effort on the part of anyone, let alone someone that has to face racism and poverty as well, Mr. Speaker — then the chain keeps on playing itself out and ensnaring and enslaving generations to come.

But people have been able to break that chain, Mr. Speaker, to make a better life for themselves and for their children. And I think that it is our job in government to bring resources to bear, to help put the supports in place, and to bring about conditions that circumstances . . . to bring about conditions that are more conducive to making the choice to break that chain.

I focus on this challenge, Mr. Speaker, because I see it as one of the biggest challenges that we face in Regina Elphinstone-Centre. And it points the way more broadly to a challenge that we face in Saskatchewan as a whole and that is

the place of Aboriginal people in our society.

It is often said that our future is young and Aboriginal and that's true for all of Saskatchewan and it's particularly true in Elphinstone-Centre. There is such a tremendous human resource to be tapped into but if we don't get it right, we as a province will suffer. If we don't marshal our resources effectively, if we don't bring Aboriginal people into the mainstream, if we don't respect the treaties, if we don't form strong partnerships with Aboriginal government, if we don't educate our people about the treaties, if we don't work collectively to evolve self-government, if we don't support innovative programs like Kids First and School^{PLUS} and the Aboriginal employment development plan, then we're headed for trouble — all of us, not just Aboriginal people.

But there's a lot to be hopeful about. And noting the hour of the day, Mr. Speaker, I believe that I'll pack in my remarks for now and resume tomorrow and now move to adjourn debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre that debate be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I move this House now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion's carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker: — This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 16:57.

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