



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

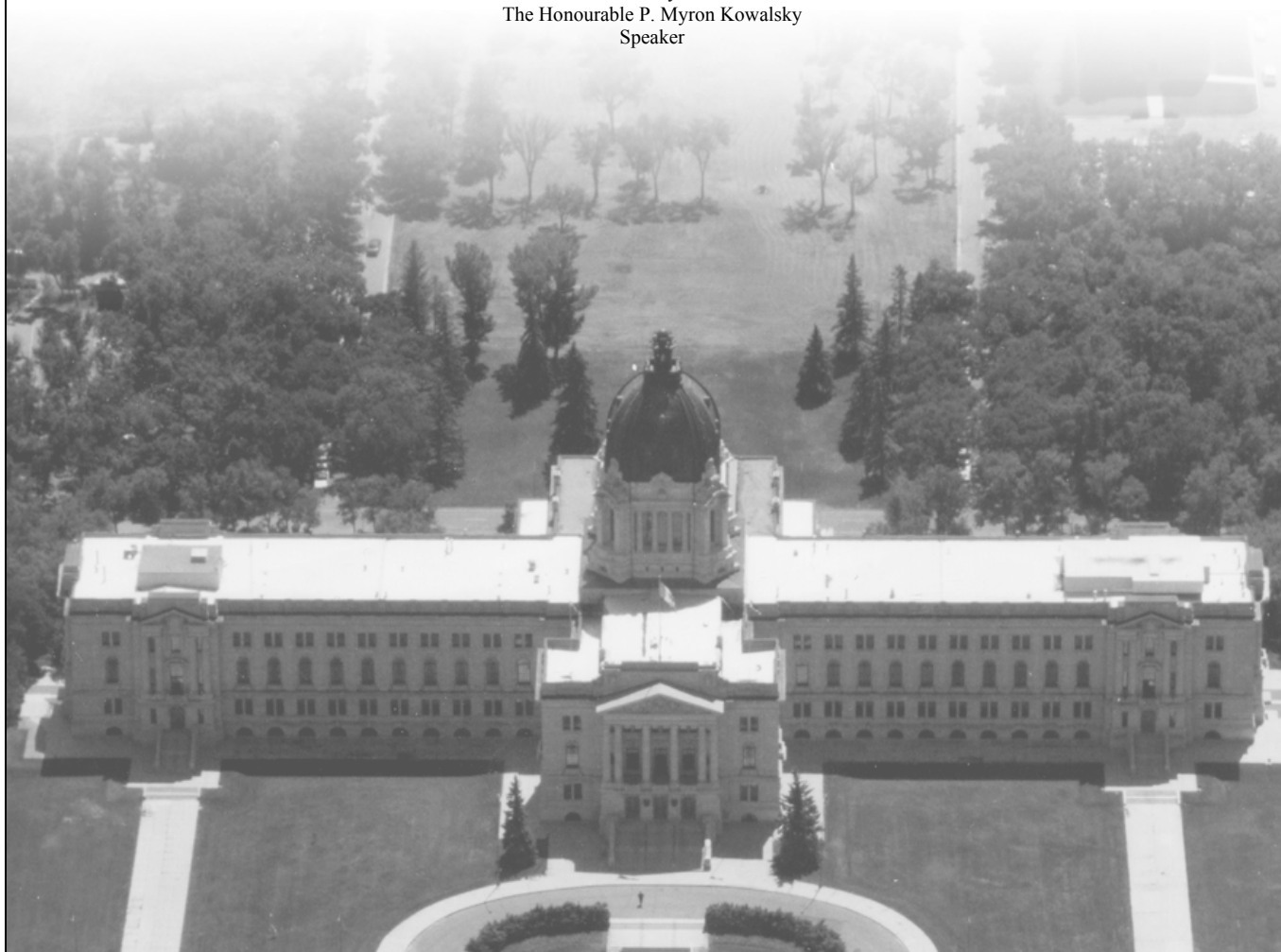
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
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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:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Moosomin.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure again to present a petition regarding school amalgamations. And I read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petition I present today is signed by the good folks of Montmartre, and basically it's all Montmartre. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Elhard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition on behalf of citizens of the province of Saskatchewan. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, these two pages of petitions are signed by individuals from the communities of Tompkins, Carlyle, Wawota, Eastend, and Gull Lake. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Swift Current.

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again on behalf of constituents concerned about the deficiency in residential support offered to people with long-term disabilities in my home community. The prayer of their petition is as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to provide the funding required for additional residential spaces for Swift Current residents and lifelong disabilities, Mr. Speaker.

And today the petitioners are from Wymark, Swift Current, and Rhineland. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again today on behalf of people who are concerned about the tragedy of crystal meth:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause this government to take the necessary action to implement a strategy that will deal with crystal methamphetamine, the education, prevention, enforcement, and treatment.

The people that have signed the petition are all from the town of Wadena. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition signed by people who are concerned at the size of the proposed school division. It's far too large to retain any local input into the education system. The prayer of the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatures on this petition come from the communities of Rosetown, Elrose, Plenty, and Richlea. And I'm pleased to present this petition on their behalf.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

**Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition to do with forced amalgamation of school divisions. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

The signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from the communities of Balcarres, Kamsack, and Melville.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Thunder Creek.

**Mr. Stewart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition signed by citizens concerned with the forced

amalgamation of school divisions. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by individuals from the communities of Moose Jaw, Caron, Ardill, and Kincaid. I so present.

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

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have petitions to present on behalf of citizens around the Avonlea, Claybank area regarding their brick plant. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to reconsider the decision to reduce funding to the Claybank Brick Plant.

As is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this is significant. There are people signing this petition from Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Regina, and the Big Apple, New York city, Mr. Speaker. I so present.

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

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I stand to present petitions from people in my constituency who would like to see the development of cabin lots in the area of Rafferty dam. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that the development of cabin lots in the area of Rafferty dam proceeds.

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

And this is signed by residents of Estevan, Alameda, and White Bear. I so present. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of constituents of Weyburn-Big Muddy who are very concerned about the CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization] program and also about the BSE [bovine spongiform encephalopathy] assistance package. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon.

Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that the CAIS program receives adequate provincial funding, the funding formula is changed to ensure equal access to compensation, and to contribute funds to the latest BSE assistance package released by the federal government.

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

And this petition is signed by residents of Bengough.

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

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have a petition here to improve SaskTel cellular service in rural Saskatchewan:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray to your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to take all necessary actions to install the technical equipment necessary to ensure that all rural areas in Saskatchewan are protected by reliable cellular phone coverage.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens from Jansen and Esk and Lanigan, I so present.

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

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present another petition to revisit the effects of the TransGas Asquith natural gas storage project. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately address the concerns of all individuals affected by this project, pay 100 per cent of the costs involved to rectify disruptions to water supplies, produce an environment assessment study encompassing a larger area outside the scope of the project, disclose the project's long-term effects on these areas, and consider alternative sources of water for the project.

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

Signed by the good citizens of Grandora, I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

**Mr. Kerpan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise today to present a petition on behalf of citizens who are concerned with the effect that the TransGas Asquith natural gas storage project will have on the quantity and the quality of their water supply. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately address the concerns of all individuals affected by this project, pay 100 per cent of the costs involved to rectify disruptions to water supplies, produce

an environment assessment study encompassing a larger area outside the scope of the project, disclose the project's long-term effects on these areas, and consider alternative sources of water for the project.

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

Mr. Speaker, signed by the citizens of Vanscoy and Delisle.

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

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today as well with regards to problems from the TransGas Asquith natural gas storage project. And, Mr. Speaker, I'll read from the prayer for relief:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately address the concerns of all individuals affected by this project, pay 100 per cent of the costs involved to rectify disruptions to water supplies, produce an environmental assessment study encompassing a larger area outside the scope of the project, disclose the project's long-term effects on these areas, and consider alternative sources of water for the project.

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

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again I am pleased to be able to present a petition on behalf of Saskatchewan citizens gravely concerned with this government's plan to force the amalgamation of school divisions. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signatures to this petition, Mr. Speaker, come from the communities of Goodeve, Melville, Grenfell, and Balcarres. I so present.

#### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Clerk Assistant:** — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and pursuant to rule 14(7) they are hereby read and received as addendums to sessional papers 72, 180, 637, 640, 666, 715, 716, and 720.

#### NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 89 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Agriculture: how many new egg production units were allocated to Saskatchewan in 2004? How many of those new egg production units were sold to existing registered egg producers? When were they issued?

Of the new egg production units that were sold to registered egg producers, what amount of money was collected? Of the remaining new egg production units that were not sold to existing registered egg producers, how many have been allocated to new producers? When an egg production unit is sold, where does the money go?

What policies or guidelines are in place regarding the spending of the funds generated from the sale of egg production units? If a public auction of egg production units is held, what happens to the units that do not receive bids? When was the last time that an egg production unit was offered to a new producer who had his name on the Saskatchewan Egg Producers' Marketing Board waiting list?

And I have the same question for the year 2003.

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Elphinstone.

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly a group seated in the western gallery. This is a group of 56 — count them, 56 — students from grades 5 and 8. They're accompanied by their teachers, Krista Strube, Trisha MacBeth, and chaperone Donella Harvey, as well as another teacher, Ms. Kerry Jedeck. Now I want to single Kerry out for a bit of special attention of course, because Kerry and I went to school together a few short years ago at Scott Collegiate.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Sacred Heart is a very special school. It's from my home neighbourhood. I'm a Kitchener kid of course and so it's a bit of a rivalry there, but it's always good to see the students from Sacred Heart. I look forward to having a visit with them a little later on, a picture, maybe some juice, and we'll have a good exchange, I'm sure.

Anyway, please welcome to this Assembly, their Assembly, the group from Sacred Heart Community School. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member from The Battlefords.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature two people, two constituents of

mine, seated in your gallery today.

Seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Randy Pritchard, area services manager, and with him Mr. John Turner, family services supervisor, for the Department of Community Resources and Employment in North Battleford. I ask all members to welcome them to their Assembly and to thank them for the dedication they demonstrate on a daily basis protecting children and helping to build healthy families in The Battlefords.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Greystone.

**Hon. Mr. Prebble:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join my colleague, the hon. member for The Battlefords, in welcoming Mr. Pritchard and Mr. Turner here today, and particularly to welcome Randy Pritchard back to this legislature.

Members will recall that Mr. Pritchard served as the chief staff person to the committee of MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] on both sides of the House that looked at the whole question of how to stop the sexual exploitation of children in this province. And he served that committee with distinction, Mr. Speaker, and helped that committee and this legislature formulate some of the actions that have been taken on behalf of vulnerable children today.

So I know all members will want to join me in welcoming Randy back to the House and expressing our deep appreciation for the very, very effective way in which he served our all-party committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as well and on behalf of the official opposition, I want to extend a welcome to Randy Pritchard and John Turner, and certainly thinking back to the days when we spent a fair bit of time doing committee work, especially addressing the issue of sexual exploitation of children, and to have Randy's expertise and all the advice he gave us. Now we didn't always accept it but it was certainly advice that was worth chewing over and we want to thank Randy and certainly welcome John on behalf of the opposition. Welcome.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

#### Tribute to Pope John Paul II

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness but great respect that I rise in the Assembly today to pay tribute to Pope John Paul II, who passed away on Saturday, April 2.

Mr. Speaker, for over a quarter of a century on the global stage, Pope John Paul II used his office to draw attention to the plight of the world's downtrodden and oppressed. During a trip to Africa early in his tenure he said, "I speak in the name of those who have no voice." And he spoke forcefully, eloquently, and he spoke often on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, this was a man who worked and travelled tirelessly to bring his message to the world. He was an advocate of peace and nuclear disarmament. He was a strong defender of human rights and religious freedom. And he was the first pope to enter a mosque or to preach in a Protestant church or in a synagogue.

He was born in Poland in 1920 and played a prominent role in the struggle for and the achievement of Polish independence and democracy. He created World Youth Day in 1985 to bring together young Catholics from across the globe. In 2002 we well remember this celebration of faith took place right here in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, Pope John Paul II touched the lives of billions, Catholics and non-Catholics alike, and the world mourns his passing. Mr. Speaker, the role of the Holy Father is sometimes described as servant of the servants of God. Pope John Paul II served and for this the world is grateful.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, over the weekend this world lost one of the remarkable figures of our time. Pope John Paul II was truly a transformational leader, not only of his faith but of the world. Karol Wojtyla became a priest in 1946, the same year the Iron Curtain descended across eastern Europe and millions of Christians who lived behind it were prohibited from freely practising their faith.

On his first trip to his native Poland as pope in 1979, the new pope called on the Holy Spirit to "renew the face of the earth" — the words of a man who understood that God does not change but through his grace God can change the world. And he was right.

Lech Walesa said the visit to Poland led to the rise of the Solidarity movement and the eventual toppling of communism in Poland and throughout eastern Europe, where today millions of Christians and others enjoy the same religious freedoms we take for granted here in the West. Walesa said, "He was a gift from the heavens to us," which just proves that God has a way of putting the right people in the right place at the right time. John Paul II was clearly the right pope for his time.

Later in his papacy he oversaw an explosion in the growth of Catholicism throughout the Third World due largely to his unprecedented travels to the Third World nations and his advancement of the social gospel.

Over the weekend I heard media reports that the Pope had visited 140 nations but, you know, I don't think he was there to visit. Wherever he went he was there to change things, to spread

the word of God and the gospel of Christ.

On Saturday the most travelled pope in history made his final journey, a journey home to be with the Father he had served so well and whose word he had spread to so many throughout the world.

This was a life that lived up to the words of the Apostle Paul and we pay tribute to it today. Those words:

I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **National Ukrainian Centennial Celebration**

**Mr. Hagel:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday I had the honour of attending the cultural extravaganza put on by the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, the National Ukrainian Centennial Celebration which was held here in Regina.

Mr. Speaker, more than 350 performers came from nine cities across the country. The Ukrainian dancers, orchestra, choir, and violin virtuoso put on a performance — 100 years in the making — that left the audience exhausted, in awe, with tears of joy from this centennial celebration. The performance was an artistic demonstration of what can be achieved when we work together in the spirit of confederation.

Mr. Speaker, the pictorial presentation covering the history of Ukrainian settlement in Saskatchewan was a source of inspiration. The Ukrainian community has a long history with our province from opening the West to developing industry and political leadership. The first wave of Ukrainian settlers arrived here in 1891 and since then our Ukrainian citizens have truly helped to shape and define what Saskatchewan has become in our first 100 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join in congratulating this weekend's performers, organizers, and guests, and in commending the national and the Regina branches of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians for all they have done to help enrich the cultural diversity of our province. It is an honour that they chose Saskatchewan for this wonderful centennial celebration as a tribute to our province which cites as our official motto, "from many peoples, strength."

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member from Saskatoon Northwest.

#### **Remembering Pope John Paul II**

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to speak on the shepherd. He was only a shepherd but he changed the world. He conquered nations but had no army. He captured the hearts of the young but never met them. He comforted the

old, even in his pain and suffering. He brought relief to the poor but never fed them. He converted love to peace. He gave us all hope, faith, and love of fellow man. With just the name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, he did all this.

I saw Pope John Paul in Toronto in 1985 and although not a word was exchanged a simple glance was all that was needed to deliver a peace of both mind and body. It has been 20 years since that encounter, but Marie, Kelly, Paul, and I still remember to this day that glance and the warmth we felt. It is what we believe that keeps us strong at this time; that he must die in order to be raised. We will remember him now and when we meet him again, and we thank God for the time he allowed us to have John Paul II here on earth.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all in this House remember the Pope in your own time and in your own manner.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **Saskatoon Principal Honoured**

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As is the case with any organization, a school reflects the person who leads it. Principals are leaders, administrators, and facilitators who help shape a school's vision and mission as well as its culture and climate. Great principals lead by example and are role models for the teaching and learning process in their schools.

Mr. Speaker, I'm extremely pleased to share with the Assembly today that Mr. Basil Hughton, the principal of the high school I attended, Mount Royal Collegiate in Saskatoon, has recently been honoured by the Learning Partnership and named as one of Canada's outstanding principals for 2005.

Mr. Speaker, this is a prestigious and national award that recognizes administrative as well as academic excellence. It is particularly meaningful because recipients are determined based upon nominations and information provided by their colleagues. Mr. Hughton was recognized for developing a satellite campus for 18- to 22-year-olds that provides an atmosphere particularly suited to the learning needs of older students. He has also formed a partnership with the Saskatoon Rotary Club to employ a restorative justice worker to help to develop peer mediation and conflict resolution skills with students.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating Mr. Hughton on being chosen as one of Canada's outstanding principals, and to thank him for innovative approaches to education and for his dedication to his students.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **25th Anniversary of CJWW Radio 600**

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night I had the opportunity to join with 1,500 country music fans from

across Saskatchewan to honour the 25th anniversary of Saskatchewan's most listened-to radio station, CJWW. In April 1980 CJWW hit the airwaves at 1370 on your AM dial, soon moving to 750 and then to 600. Mr. Speaker, what better way to honour this radio station than by having a big country music concert featuring some of the great talent this province has to offer.

The evening began with Saskatchewan's rising star on the national and international stage, Jessica Robinson, followed by Donny Parenteau, the fiddle playing magician from Prince Albert. Then the Poverty Plainsmen took to the stage followed by Mr. Saskatchewan, Brad Johner. The evening finale was a rousing rendition of the Saskatchewan centennial song.

Mr. Speaker, CJWW radio has been a great supporter of Saskatchewan musicians for the past quarter century. The station has been led by my good friend, community builder Vic Dubois. Vic and his team, including the morning duo of Rod Kidder and Steve Shannon, are extraordinary community volunteers, building on examples set by such radio legends as Denny Carr and Easton Wayman.

CJWW is known for its morning segment called *Boots and Salutes*. Mr. Speaker, they say you haven't arrived politically in Saskatchewan until you've been booted on *Boots and Salutes* — I have had that distinction.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and all my colleagues to join me in a big salute to CJWW radio 600, Saskatoon. Happy 25th anniversary.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### ORAL QUESTIONS

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

#### Timing of Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Health Care Workers

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just prior to the 2003 general election there was a memorandum of agreement signed between SAHO and three unions representing health sector workers, CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees], SEIU [Service Employees' International Union], and SGEU [Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union]. This agreement dealt with joint job evaluation for health care workers.

Mr. Speaker, on budget day the Premier stood in his place and defended his government's record on fair negotiating. He said his government believes in settlements negotiated in good faith.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Was this memorandum of agreement that was signed just before the last election the result of negotiating in good faith?

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, in the health care field there have been many challenges around making sure that the various unions that are providing the services to the regional health

authorities across the province, one of the initiatives that was introduced quite a number of years ago was to work towards a joint job evaluation which would allow for comparisons to be made across workplaces across the province. That's an ongoing project and people have been working at it for many years.

We think we've been able to solve many problems. There are still some others that are challenges and we'll continue to work with the managers and with the workers to sort these things out.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that response. A very interesting response when we know that before the 1999 election the NDP [New Democratic Party] government promised health care workers it would undertake a joint job evaluation. But by the time the 2003 election rolled around, none of the details had been ironed out for any kind of agreement on how to proceed.

But then on the eve of the 2003 election, the memorandum of agreement was signed between SAHO, CUPE, SEIU, and SGEU.

My question is to the Premier. Why was there political interference by his government in negotiations in order to get this deal done before the election?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, the people who are working on this project — and it included many people from a number of different unions across the whole health care system in the province — spent years, literally years, working towards how they were going to do this process.

And, Mr. Speaker, it started I think in 1999 or in fact earlier than that, some of the discussions, but in 1999 we made the commitment to go ahead and do this. And, Mr. Speaker, people are still . . . been working diligently on all of these different issues. And I think the important thing to know is that in any process that takes a lot of years to implement, you have to work at it carefully with all of the appropriate people. Mr. Speaker, I think that's what's been happening.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this memorandum of agreement was signed on the eve of the 2003 election call. It included, among other things, a \$1,000 lump sum payment to health care workers. I remember that quite clearly because one of the NDP's many scare tactics in the last election was to threaten that if the Saskatchewan Party formed government, they would tear up the agreements and take away the \$1,000 payment.



Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Why was the NDP government in such a rush to get this deal done before the 2003 election? Was there political interference by his government in the negotiating process in order to get this deal done before you called . . . before the Premier called this election?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, my understanding of how this worked, from being involved with this government for many years, was that in 1999 there was finally a decision made to go forward with the process of joint job evaluation and that was based on years of discussion.

Before 1999, people were working to figure out how to do this in many different ways and the goal was to have that implemented. Different decisions were made all through that time to have the whole matter go ahead and it's continuing now.

Each time that people go to the bargaining table, there are questions that are either referred to the joint job evaluation table or come back to the bargaining table. That's continuing. It's a process where the people involved — the managers, the employees — solve the problems.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — . . . clear that this government circumvented the normal negotiating process. The Saskatchewan Party has obtained a copy of the decision rendered by the dispute resolution tribunal, the tribunal that was put together to try to correct this mess. The decision is dated January of 2005 and it says, and I quote:

By the fall of 2003, a provincial election was drawing close and the issues surrounding JJE remained outstanding. There appears to have been a desire to ensure that pay rates were established for new positions resulting from the JJE project prior to the election.

Mr. Speaker, since when does election timing have anything to do with collective bargaining and a fair negotiation process? Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier: was there political interference from his government in the negotiation process?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll reiterate that this was a long-term project that had started in the years prior to '99, but I think in '99 was the time that the decision was made to go ahead with the joint job evaluation. It involved many, many people. It involved dealing with pay equity issues right across a whole number of employees. And that project continues to this day because there are some parts that haven't been totally sorted out.

Mr. Speaker, these kinds of problems aren't solved in one document, in one agreement, one kind of particular situation. They're solved in relationships over a long period of time. Mr. Speaker, that is what's been happening in this case, and that's what's going to continue to happen as we make sure that we have good health care across this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gets a little worse. And I'd like to quote from the tribunal's decision again. And I quote:

It was the intention of the parties that . . . [their] respective proposals would become the basis for a negotiated settlement. However, government officials prepared a Memorandum of Agreement.

Let me repeat that part. Government officials prepared a memorandum of agreement. Continue with the quote:

This document which was hurriedly put together, and not actually negotiated, was signed by the parties on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2003.

Mr. Speaker, this document was signed a few days before the election was called. Mr. Speaker, what government officials wrote this agreement, and did the Premier approve of the blatant political interference in negotiations?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, when you're working with thousands and thousands of employees across the province who are doing many different jobs . . . And as we all know, there were some changes that were taking place around the regional health authorities, in the establishment of the regional health authorities, meaning that there were different groups of employees put together with members of different union contracts. All of these things ended up creating questions around how the fairness worked.

Joint job evaluation was one way that this was looked at. Another place was at the bargaining table. Pay equity issues between male and female line kinds of jobs were also being dealt with. All of these particular issues were dealt with over quite a number of years, and that process continues to this day, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, I remember quite clearly how the NDP government threatened health care workers that during the election, if the Saskatchewan Party would win, they would not honour the agreement or pay the \$1,000.

Well it looks like the chicken has come home to roost, only it's the NDP's fault. On June 15, 2004, some health care workers received a memo from their union stating that they might actually have to give back their \$1,000 lump sum payment. The memo to CUPE employees stated, and I quote:

... it is in your best interest to keep this increase in wages separate and available in case it has to be repaid.

Mr. Speaker, why did this NDP government try to unfairly influence the outcome of the last election by promising health care workers a \$1,000 lump sum payment only now to have to take it back?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, as I said before, this is a long-term process. We knew when we made some of the decisions in the late '90s that it was going to take quite a number of years to implement. We had large committees working together to try to sort this out. It took a lot of resources to make sure that all of these things were being dealt with in an appropriate way. We had to make sure that the various unions were all on board.

And, Mr. Speaker, this process continues to this day and, Mr. Speaker, we are not afraid to be making sure we have appropriate benefits for the workers within our system. We think that's entirely appropriate as a government of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let's review what happened in those last few days before the 2003 election was called. The Premier knew he was going to call an election on October 8, 2003. Let's assume that.

The NDP wanted to be able to tell health care workers that they were getting a \$1,000 lump sum payment and then threatened that the Saskatchewan Party would take it away. The only problem was SAHO and the unions weren't getting the deal done quickly enough. So the NDP drafted its own agreement in the dead of night, Mr. Speaker, and told SAHO and the unions sign it, and completely circumvented the negotiating process for blatant political purposes.

Mr. Speaker, the only person who would have known for sure when the election was to be called was the Premier. The deal was rammed through by the NDP a few days before the election was called. Mr. Speaker, what role did the Premier have in this blatant political interference in these negotiations?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, as I said before, this is a

long process which we've been working at for many years. There have been some challenges in the initial discussion about going ahead with the joint job evaluation.

In the actual process itself, there have been some challenges and, in fact, based on the agreement that the parties entered into, there have been questions about some of the wording in that and that's where the continued discussion takes place.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to work with this whole issue and make sure that the problems are sorted out in an appropriate fashion. That's what we need to do; work with the managers, work with the workers, and make sure that the people are providing care for all of our citizens in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad the minister has brought forward the point about the language in this document that is unclear. I want to quote from this tribunal decision again. It says:

It is clear that the Memorandum of Agreement . . . was structured in a most undesirable manner. Although the parties signed the "agreement" . . .

The word agreement is put in italics by the tribunal, Mr. Speaker, and I continue with the quote. It says:

. . . the large "p" [large "p"] considerations which led to it created a document that is quite incoherent.

Mr. Speaker, that's quite a statement. Will the Premier please explain what exactly were the words large "p" political considerations all about?

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, once again I'll reiterate that this has been a long process and the process continues. And in this whole situation, what is the ultimate goal?

The ultimate goal is to pair fair wages for fair work providing good services in health care for our Saskatchewan citizens. And sometimes there's disagreement about how that's done. Sometimes those disagreements are sorted out at the negotiations table. Sometimes they're sorted out in arbitration. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, sometimes they're sorted out in the courts. All of those places can provide solutions. But ultimately it's the people involved who have to come and sort out what they're doing.

We, Mr. Speaker, are going to use all the processes that are available and make sure that we end up with a joint job evaluation plan that implements pay equity and it'll be going and providing good support for all of our workers for decades to come.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, it's pretty clear that the tribunal's decision leaves absolutely no doubt that this agreement was the result of political interference on the eve of an election call and not the result of fair and legitimate negotiating process. The decision says and I quote:

Quite clearly, it is an agreement the parties would not have arrived at if left to their own devices. It is an example of the distortion that can occur when the normal negotiation processes are circumvented.

Mr. Speaker, and why were the normal negotiating processes circumvented? Because of the large "p" political considerations. Because the Premier needed to ram this deal through before the election was called. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier admit that the NDP interfered in the negotiating process because he needed this deal signed before the election was called?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I think this is a place where we can be quite frank with each other. I think that the members opposite — that member and we can go down the line — have talked about civil servants and our public employees as deadwood and people that have no use to society. People have a great deal of concern about what kinds of attitudes that they have towards public servants.

And, Mr. Speaker, when you're in a situation where there's a possible election call you might look at lots of different options. But, Mr. Speaker, I think that what we have to remember is that on this side of the House we set up a plan in the late '90s to move forward with pay equity through a joint job evaluation program. It was a long process, we knew that it would be; we knew that it was going to cost money to do it, but we think it was the right thing and the fair thing to do.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — The Premier stands in this House and defends that he is negotiating in good faith, but he has no problems interfering in the negotiating process when it suits his purposes. That's exactly what happened with this memorandum of agreement on joint job evaluation that was signed just before the election. It wasn't getting the job done quickly enough through the normal negotiating process so someone in this NDP government stepped in, wrote their own agreement, and got the parties to sign it just a few days before the 2003 election was called.

My question is again for the Premier: what role did the Premier play in circumventing the normal negotiating process and ramming through this agreement on the eve of an election call?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I think a few years ago people reminded me here that I talked about lemons and what was going on in the back room over there. But today we've got sour grapes. We're refighting an election that was two years ago. Mr. Speaker, we need to move forward.

But I think what we always have to remember is that the concerns during those years 2002-2003, after Premier Campbell was elected in British Columbia, is that there was a lot of privatization going on in the health care system. And those kinds of issues were permeating every discussion across this country. Mr. Speaker, when I was involved as the Minister of Health, and I was appointed in 2001, this became a number one topic in all of the discussions here in Saskatchewan and in the country. And, Mr. Speaker, all of these kinds of things are factors which involve people ultimately coming to some memorandums of agreement about what they should do.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, this agreement was signed between SAHO and the three unions — SGEU, SEIU, and CUPE. This negotiating process was circumvented on the eve of an election call because of large "p" political considerations, because the Premier wanted this deal done before he called the election. He wanted to dangle a carrot in front of the health care workers to vote NDP.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier please explain what was his exact role in circumventing these negotiations and politically interfering in the negotiating process?

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has made a lot about very specific dates but I would remind him that if he looks at the information there, the memorandum of agreement — in other words, the agreement to agree to do something — was done in early October, but it wasn't ratified by all the unions and SAHO until December of that year.

And it's now the discussion going on about what was ratified in December is the real issue. And these discussions continue and hopefully they'll get sorted out. There's agreement on most things, but clearly there's a reference to an arbitrator for one or two or more clauses. And, Mr. Speaker, that's quite normal when you have agreements that if you want to sort them out you get some outside help or ultimately you go to the courts, Mr. Speaker. But what's really important here is that the workers, the managers, are sorting out all of these issues so that they can provide good health care for Saskatchewan people.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, the tribunal that reviewed the case that is before it has used words like incoherent, has used words like large “p” political consideration. It has used words that says that if the bargaining units would have been left to negotiate a settlement, they would not have done what they did.

Mr. Speaker, quoting again from that tribunal’s decision, on page 2 it says:

This document . . . was hurriedly put together, and not actually negotiated, was signed by the parties on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2003.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier knew that he was calling a general election on October 8, five days after this memorandum was signed. This memorandum as stated by the tribunal is incoherent, is hurriedly put together, and in fact it was not negotiated. How can the Premier stand in this House and say he defends negotiated contracts when in fact the proof is the exact opposite?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, my colleague here has told me that I probably should quote the Eagle lyrics to this song:

Get over it  
Get over it  
All this whinin’ and cryin’ and pitchin’ a fit  
Get over it, get over it.

Mr. Speaker, what happens in any situation is that you look at all of the factors involved, in the political situation of 2003 . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Order, please, members. Order. Order, please. The Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we will continue to work with all of the people involved to sort out problems. And we will get agreements, we’ll get memorandums of agreements; we’ll get agreements, we’ll get all these things. When there are problems interpreting how those things are done, we will seek help from arbitrators, we’ll seek help from courts, we’ll seek help from mediators. That’s how you sort out relationships.

But ultimately, Mr. Speaker, what you try to do is make sure that your main goal is a tack which is providing the best care for Saskatchewan people. And we’re going to continue to do that because we’ve got so many good people doing that job here.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, well, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Minister of Health that I’m not an Eagles fan as such. But I understand from my colleagues that the Eagles group also has a song called “Lyn’ Eyes”.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, for that minister, for that minister to stand in this House and say to the workers, the health care workers, just get over it. I want to read from a memo that was circulated in the Prince Albert Health Region dated June 15. And I quote from that memo and it says:

. . . any overpayments will be recovered by the Employer. This may include the \$1000.00 lump sum payment in lieu of retroactive pay that was paid out December 2003.

Later on in another paragraph it says, quote:

. . . you will be required to pay back any overpayment . . .

Mr. Speaker, for that minister to stand in this House and tell workers to get over it, what did he really mean by the negotiated contract? Will the Minister of Health clarify whether or not he intends health care workers to have to give back the money that they’ve been paid?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I and all of the members on this side of the House, the Premier, we believe in going forward with fair wages for our employees, for pay equity. And we will go forward with the agreements and making sure that we can provide that kind of compensation to the people who provide valuable care throughout this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, we’re not going to apologize for that. We will continue to work at that goal. It’s not always easy. There are challenges, there are disagreements. But, Mr. Speaker, that’s why we have such good processes in place in this province that all these things can be sorted out.

Mr. Speaker, we’re going to continue to work for the people of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

Orders of the day. Why is the Government House Leader on his feet?

### POINT OF ORDER

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, point of order. I wonder if Mr. Speaker could undertake to review *Hansard*, and in particular the exchange of the question period just past. And in particular the comments of the member for Canora-Pelly, where he, I believe, undertakes to do something that he would not be allowed to do directly in this House, and that is to make use of a certain word. But in my view, in my view, Mr. Speaker . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please, members. Order, please. I do want to hear the entire point of order. The Government House

Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But in my view, Mr. Speaker, the member is doing indirectly what he's not allowed to do directly. And as well, it is a premise of debate in this House that the member ought not to do that, and I would ask the Speaker to review the record and to rule at an appropriate occasion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — On the point of order, I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

**Mr. Gantefer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly would like to speak briefly on the point of order that the Government House Leader makes. Mr. Speaker, as I recall the member in his comments about the Eagles' song was very specific and very careful to make sure that he said it correctly, that this was the name of a song. And I think in that context, it's a quote, it is a song that's on the record in the Eagles' library, and I think that it is entirely appropriate that he use it in that context, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Thank you. Order, please. Order, please, members. Order, please. Order. Order, please. Order. I will take the matter under advisement and bring back a ruling in due time.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Let's just . . . I would ask all members to just settle down a little, please, so we can carry on these routine proceedings. If there are any further interruptions . . . I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased today to stand on behalf of the government and table responses to written questions 917 through 920 inclusive.

**The Speaker:** — 917 to 920. The responses have been submitted.

## SPECIAL ORDER

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY (BUDGET DEBATE)

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed amendment thereto moved by Mr. Cheveldayoff.]

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina

Walsh Acres.

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the budget. I rise to support the people of Saskatchewan. I rise to continue to repair the damage caused by the party opposite. I rise to protect the children, the elderly, the working people, and the future of our province from the policies of the party opposite. I rise to defend our way of life, our traditions of decency and sharing, from the rapacious policies of the members opposite.

This budget tries to address the needs of the province in the context of the fiscal situation we find ourselves in. Mr. Speaker, I want to explain how we have tried to balance the needs of many. The opposition has over the years pointed out that there are shortcomings in infrastructure and in services in Saskatchewan. We have consistently acknowledged that the debts left to this province by them when they were government have hobbled this province. We have done the best with what we have had to work with.

They have said that there is not a thing in this budget that they can vote for, not hospitals, not schools, not fire observation towers, not farm support, not increases to social assistance, not transportation for the disabled, not better or increased volumes of cancer treatment, and, Mr. Speaker, that's bizarre. These people who tell us every day that we are not doing enough for the people of the province can't find a thing to vote for.

Mr. Speaker, I'm calling on the members opposite during any stage of the budget, if there is anything they can agree with, to vote for it. During estimates in committee, they can vote for it then. For once, Mr. Speaker, they could do something positive instead of letting out their usual, unholy belch of anger and resentment.

We have had to clean up the mess they left this province. We have had to rebuild this province one budget at a time, arm in arm with the people of Saskatchewan. This province was left in terrible shape by their policies. During the '80s when the people across the aisle were in power, they scared away business, investment, and people. Businesses didn't want to be part of an economy that was unstable and . . . [inaudible] . . . downward out of control. People didn't want to invest while the kleptocratic predecessors were in power. And the people — well they just moved away.

I remember the graffiti downtown on a boarded up building that said, quote, "Tory times are tough times." And now they want to do the same thing all over again. They won't vote for the budget. They won't support a balanced and sustainable plan. They won't vote to maintain a manageable state of affairs. They want to blow the bank again; \$1 billion in five minutes, the opposition Finance critic tried to spend. Every day they scream to spend more and tax less without a concern as to how it will be paid for, without a concern as to how to balance a budget, without a concern about a long-term plan to maintain stability and steadily increasing prosperity

The members opposite are victims of and are peddling unworkable, get-rich-quick schemes. They are duped by their own blind . . . [inaudible] . . . belief. Wishful thinking is their substitute for policy, Mr. Speaker. Their previous leader, Grant

Devine, still won't admit their policies were wrong.

This budget is the 12th consecutive balanced budget for Saskatchewan, NDP balanced budgets, Mr. Speaker . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Ms. Morin:** — . . . after the people on the other side of the House almost bankrupted the province. This province was three days away from bankruptcy, Mr. Speaker. Those people when they call themselves Devine Conservatives almost bankrupted this province. And their members still praise their previous leader. The member from Arm River-Watrous has said, quote, "You look at the Devine government. It did a lot of good things . . ." Mr. Speaker, once again they proved they are incapable of managing our province.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are Devine Conservatives and, as my colleague called them, the Progressive Conservative Party under the witness protection program. Now Mr. Speaker, they don't like it when we expose them from under their rock. They want to go scuttling back to the cover of their shadows. They get really upset and call us names, Mr. Speaker. The member from Wood River stood in the House a short while ago and said, quote:

We get the member from P.A. Northcote, gets up and wants to call this side of the House Conservatives; the other member gets up and wants to call Conservatives; and yet, Mr. Speaker, by ruling in this House I can't call them what they . . . are. So the only thing I . . . [could] call them is [that] they have the policies and the attitude of their Cuban cousins.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise the House — and this is parliamentary, Mr. Speaker, because I'm using it as part of the proper name of an organization and not as an epithet — that I have never been or run as a candidate for the Communist Party. The member for Wood River, however, cannot deny that he was a Conservative. The MLA for Wood River was defeated as a Progressive Conservative candidate for Wood River constituency in the 1995 election. He was only later elected as a Saskatchewan Party MLA in a by-election in 2000 for Wood River. And do we believe his sudden conversion to the kinder, gentler Saskatchewan Party? I think not.

Let's review a few of things the member for Wood River has advocated. Cut millions from social services, boot camps, general downsizing of government, the privatization of every Crown corporation, health care premiums, medicare user fees. In 1998 the member for Wood River said:

I dislike monopolies and any time you deal with a monopoly, you lose one basic little word in our life and it's called freedom.

The article goes on with the member from Wood River's philosophy and I quote:

(Saskatchewan drivers lose their freedom by having only one choice of where they may [buy] their car insurance, he said.)

I guess that's the missing freedom, to be able to cough up an extra 2, 3, or \$4,000 a year in insurance premiums, Mr. Speaker. That helps young people, doesn't it, Mr. Speaker?

The list of Devine Conservatives goes on, Mr. Speaker. And apparently I'm obviously hitting a nail because we've got very few members listening to this speech. The MLA for Cannington was first elected as a Progressive Conservative member in the legislature for the constituency of Souris-Cannington, 1991, re-elected as a Progressive Conservative MLA in 1995. He currently sits in the legislature as a Saskatchewan Party MLA.

The MLA for Moosomin was first elected as the Progressive Conservative member for the legislature for the constituency of Moosomin in 1986 and sat in the Grant Devine government. He ran again in the 1991 election as a Progressive Conservative candidate and currently sits as a member of the Saskatchewan Party caucus.

The MLA for Swift Current was a ministerial assistant to the Progressive Conservative cabinet minister, John Gerich, during the Grant Devine administration. He ran for the Devine Conservative nomination in 1991. He was elected as a Saskatchewan Party MLA in 1999 for the constituency of Swift Current.

The MLA for . . . keep listening, it's interesting. The MLA for Martensville was elected to the legislature as a Progressive Conservative MLA for Rosthern constituency in 1995. He now sits as a Saskatchewan Party MLA.

The MLA for Weyburn was defeated as the Progressive Conservative candidate for Weyburn-Big Muddy constituency in 1995 election. She was elected as a Saskatchewan Party MLA in 1999.

The MLA for Estevan was the constituency assistant to Estevan Progressive Conservative MLA, Progressive Conservative leader and premier Grant Devine. She was elected as a Saskatchewan Party MLA in 1999.

The Conservative MP [Member of Parliament] for Regina-Lumsden-Lake Centre used to be employed as the executive director of the Saskatchewan Party. He was formerly the executive director of the Saskatchewan Party of Saskatchewan and is currently the Conservative MP.

The MLA for Thunder Creek was an executive member for Thunder Creek Progressive Conservative executive. In 1985, he sought but did not win the Progressive Conservative nomination for Thunder Creek. He was then endorsed by Colin Thatcher for the nomination and is listed as one of the founding members of the Saskatchewan Party.

Mr. Speaker, this is the most interesting part of my research. When these people changed their name from the Progressive Conservatives to the Saskatchewan Party, they didn't even change the phone number to their party office.

One of the founding and most influential members of the Saskatchewan Party was the former MLA for Kindersley who was the former leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. Did you know that the last leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of

Saskatchewan picked the first leader of the Saskatchewan Party? Did you also know that the first leader of the Saskatchewan Party, the member for Rosetown-Elrose, used to hold a Conservative membership, and that *The StarPhoenix* reported he was to be nominated to leadership at the convention by, I quote, “former Tory leader, Bill Boyd”?

Mr. Speaker, both leaders of their party were picked by the last leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan. Yes, it's true, Mr. Speaker, hand-picked. The last leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan was the biggest donor to the leadership campaign of the member for Swift Current who happens to be the current leader of the present Conservative Sask Party. I quote directly from the *Leader-Post* April 22, 2004:

Wall's campaign had to provide a list of donors who had contributed more than 250 . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Order. Order, please. The member has made some wide-ranging remarks, and while we do allow for a wide range of debate in the budget speech, eventually the remarks ought to be related to the budget. So I'd ask the member to relate her remarks to the budget.

**Ms. Morin:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm simply describing what reasons they have for not voting for the budget, and I'm leading up to that point right now.

So I repeat, “Wall's campaign had to provide a list of donors who contributed more than \$250.” Quote:

The biggest individual donation was \$1,500 from former provincial Progressive Conservative leader and Saskatchewan Party co-founder Bill Boyd.

The former member from Kindersley is now the campaign Chair of . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I'm not sure if I made myself clear to the member, but the member ought to relate her remarks in some manner to remarks that have been made by other members or to remarks that have been made . . . or to the motions and the amendment. So I ask the member to do that.

**Ms. Morin:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm simply pointing out that they're opposed to the budget because this is not the way that it was done formerly under Grant Devine and that this is something that therefore is not part of their ideological process. Mr. Speaker, I quote from the *Leader-Post* February 7, 2005, of this year:

Wall [says] . . . recruiting candidates for the party is key. The party has appointed former provincial Progressive Conservative leader, Bill Boyd, one of his [Sask Party's] . . . founding MLAs, as campaign Chair for the next vote.

Mr. Speaker, I quote from the *StarPhoenix*, January 20, 2005:

The Conservative side [quote] has always worn the pants in this marriage, and the core of the party has . . .

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

for Regina Walsh Acres.

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They simply can't vote for this budget. We can see why they can't vote for the budget because it struck a chord. We now know what the history is and what it's led to and why they feel the way they do about this budget, especially when it's a budget of this sort. Mr. Speaker, I quote from the *StarPhoenix* January 20, 2005:

The Conservative side has always worn the pants in this marriage and the core of the party has always been rural conservatism. Not coincidentally, [Bill] Boyd remains a key player in the Sask Party to this day.

And again, that's why they won't vote for this budget. They are Devine Conservatives. Their out-of-control spending promises proves it. So of course they can't vote for this budget, Mr. Speaker. The budget is everything they are not. They are wild, out-of-control spenders who would take this province down the tubes again. “\$1 million in five minutes,” I quote, Mr. Speaker.

I want to quote from the opposition . . . one billion, my apologies. I want to quote from the opposition leader's scrum of April 1, 2005. The question was, “So, is debt reduction amongst your 100 ideas?” The Saskatchewan Party leader's answer was, “I'm not sure. I'm not sure if it is or what number it is.” Mr. Speaker, he doesn't even know his own phony-baloney supposed booklet of new ideas, the Conservative Saskatchewan Party 100 points of light booklet. And he doesn't know if balanced budgets are parts of their ideas. Mr. Speaker, in my lingo, how lame is that?

But I have faith in the people of Saskatchewan. I have faith because at the last election the *StarPhoenix* also said:

Last November, 61 per cent of the population rejected the Sask Party's ideas. It's going to take more than just a new face and little whiteout on the campaign flyer to change that.”

But, Mr. Speaker, we should look at what the budget does for the people of Saskatchewan. We should also once again ask of the members opposite, is there nothing that they can support in this budget?

The member for Carrot River Valley said he wasn't even prepared to vote for buying new firefighting aircraft. He said he had heard about our press release asking him if he was in favour of buying firefighting aircraft and building fire observation towers. He said: “There was nothing in the budget that was good.” Mr. Speaker, the member said:

I said in my years of being in politics, both federal and provincial, almost every budget, almost every budget that comes down the pike, there might be something that you could say, okay it's good; I like that. You might not vote for the budget, but you still could say, well that was a good step. It might have been, didn't go as far as we would have liked to have gone, but at least it was a [good] step.

Yes, he really did, and he continued to say:

I told the reporter last night, I said that there was not one

thing in this particular budget that I could say was a good, solid step . . .

That means that the members opposite don't believe that building fire observation towers is good. Increasing firefighting capacity is not good either, according to the member for Carrot River Valley. What a slap in the face to the people of Carrot River Valley whose homes were threatened by fire in the last years. What a slap to the people of the Prince Albert area. What a slap to the people of Nipawin and Hudson Bay.

I challenge the members opposite to introduce a private member's motion into the House with a list of the things they think we should not have built that are included in this year's capital budget. We have to accept the member's word for it when he's speaking on behalf of his caucus.

There goes the Preeceville integrated health facility, the Cypress Regional Hospital, the highway twinning, the Humboldt health facility. The list goes on. There goes \$326.9 million in total capital spending for schools, universities, hospitals, highway twinning, and other capital projects. There goes \$110.1 million in education property tax relief. There goes tuition grants and the replacement of the 1913 section of the Regina Correctional Centre. The member isn't going to have much luck running for a nomination in Saskatoon when he thinks health upgrades and more cancer treatment in Saskatoon is a bad idea.

Mr. Speaker, these people are so negative and so wrapped up in their blind ideological vision that they can't see anything good. I wonder if the member for Carrot River Valley told the reporter from Missinipi Broadcasting company that he was against 600 training opportunities through the northern skills training program; and against \$3.5 million to expand the Saskatchewan bursary program by increasing bursary assistance for up to 10,000 students; against \$2 million to increase training opportunities through 1,000 additional training seats in JobStart/Future Skills, basic education, and apprenticeship programs.

The members opposite are saying that none of the following are good, solid steps: a \$16.2 million increase for universities, federated and affiliated colleges which includes \$6.7 million for the Saskatchewan centennial university tuition grant; \$4.7 million increase in operating grants; \$3.8 for accreditation at College of Medicine. The member opposite is saying that money to retain accreditation at the College of Medicine is a bad idea; as well as panning \$888,000 for enhanced and expanded nursing programs as well as College of Medicine enrolment expansion; training and recruiting health professionals, including 280 new and 109 continuing bursaries for students in nursing, internships, specialized health fields, and other disciplines; 50 new and 65 continuing physician bursaries. Remember, Mr. Speaker, the opposition does not support physician bursaries as a good, solid step.

\$547,000 for nine new residency seats at the College of Medicine with four of those seats reserved to provide foreign-trained doctors with better access to residency programs. One hundred new nursing education seats in the Nursing Education Program of Saskatchewan, and forty new seats in the northern Nursing Education Program of

Saskatchewan. Total nursing seats will increase to 1,333 for the four-year program. A \$4.75 million increase in operating funding for SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology], which includes \$900,000 for expansion of the Nursing Education Program of Saskatchewan.

The opposition also think building schools in Saskatoon is a bad idea.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition needs to get a grip on reality. They are telling the people of the province that \$3.9 million to fund new childhood vaccines is a bad idea. I will be telling that to the parents in my constituency, Mr. Speaker. \$2.8 million to expand renal dialysis capacity, increasing dialysis treatments by 8,000 procedures, is likewise a bad idea to the opposition.

Remember the opposition said, and I quote from *Hansard*, "There was nothing in the budget that was good." Now we know why the opposition is not government, and why we are still cleaning up their mess. I am pleased to support this government and vote in favour of this budget. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have the opportunity to speak to the budget today.

The people of Saskatchewan had great, great hope and anticipation that because of the windfall revenues in oil and gas, that the budget would address some of the hurt being felt across the province. They thought that the budget would address the increase in PST [provincial sales tax] that was brought in last year's budget. They thought that the budget would address the property tax concerns and they thought the budget would address the crisis in agriculture. They thought it would address the need for municipal revenue sharing, the need to reduce business taxes, the opportunity to address the taxes paid by low-income earners by increasing the personal exemption so that they could have a real increase in their take-home pay.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan were hoping that this would be a budget with a vision and a budget with direction and a plan of action for the future of Saskatchewan. As we all know now that the budget contained none of these things, and I believe if there is one word that describes this budget, it is disappointment. And this is how the people in the Weyburn-Big Muddy constituency feel about this budget, Mr. Speaker.

And I'd like to quote from my local paper, the *Weyburn Review*, and I quote:

The day after the budget, Agriculture minister Mark Wartman visited Weyburn and addressed a sparsely-attended audience on the budget at the McKenna Hall and answered criticisms that there were no new dollars for agriculture in this budget after one of the toughest years ever for the province's number one industry.

Mayor Don Schlosser, who is also president of



Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association . . . expressed disappointment that their group's request for \$10 million more in revenue sharing was ignored this year, increasing the possibility many municipalities will have to hike taxes this year.

And I further quote from the *Review*:

The mayor also noted infrastructure grant monies that used to be . . . one-third split between federal, provincial and municipal governments are now a 50-50 split, where municipalities have to pay half the costs of any infrastructure projects.

And the mayor goes on to say:

"When I looked around the rotunda at the Legislature, in all the years that I'd gone to the budget, that was the most dissatisfied group I've ever seen. With the amount of money available, there should have been some groups coming out of there happy."

End of quote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, \$1.2 billion in extra revenue, and yet most people across the province are asking, where did the money go? And even with \$1.2 billion in extra revenue, the NDP are still running a deficit of \$1.5 million. And at the same time, none of the major concerns facing Saskatchewan residents were addressed in this budget.

Mr. Speaker, this is clearly outlined in an editorial in *The Star Phoenix* on March 29, and I'd like to quote from this editorial:

But the government is only spinning its wheels with the magic of FSF. The budget is not balanced. Total spending is higher than total revenues, period.

Budget time is the government's best chance to demonstrate a serious commitment to the economy. [The Finance minister] . . . has had all year to consult and listen to the opinions of the business community, and it has not been one bit shy about letting him and his government know what it thinks. It's been shouting it loud and proud: Lower taxes and cut regulations! Do it now!

But rather than throwing the truck into first gear and hitting the gas pedal by actually doing what it's been told him, the minister announced with great fanfare in his budget speech that his government will create a new committee to undertake a business tax review.

What? Haven't there been enough opportunities to listen? Hasn't there been enough consultation? Hasn't the business community told him what needs to be done?

This government is just spinning its wheels.

End of quote.

And who, Mr. Speaker, wrote this editorial? It was Todd Hirsch of the Canada West Foundation. Mr. Hirsch was one of the participants of this government's centennial summit. The

government indicated at that time that they were listening to the presentations and that they would act on their counsel. Apparently it did not happen, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the oil and gas industry is very important to our province and certainly to my constituency of Weyburn-Big Muddy. Never had this been more evident than this year when the farming industry has been in such a desperate situation, and many, many people in our province are working off the farm and are working in the industry. But here is what the NDP said, Mr. Speaker, about what was going to happen, I'd like to quote in the budget:

There were 1,743 new oil wells drilled in 2004 compared to 1,875 new oil wells drilled in 2003. Oil drilling is expected to decrease to 1,700 new wells in 2005 and 1,600 new wells in 2006.

They further go on to say, when they're talking about natural gas:

Drilling for new natural gas wells declined in 2004. The industry is estimated to have drilled 1,930 new natural gas wells in 2004 after a record 2,314 new wells drilled in Saskatchewan in 2003.

Just as the number of new oil wells drilled is expected to decrease, drilling of new natural gas wells is also expected to drop in the near term.

Mr. Speaker, this is unbelievable in this province that this is the attitude of this government. And I'd like to quote from *The Globe and Mail* on March 29, and in *The Globe and Mail* it completely contradicts what this government is talking about. And it says:

Even with the rampant drilling activity — more than 17,000 natural gas wells are forecast to be drilled in Canada this year . . .

"And that's with every rig and every farm kid working flat out," said Martin King of FirstEnergy Capital Corp.

And yet in this province, we have the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Industry and Resources planning to fail. This is no different than we had the Minister of Learning who got up in this House, I believe it was about a year ago, and told us that they were planning to have 30,000 less children in this province in the school system.

This government has no idea what it takes to grow a province. And so instead of doing what it needs to grow the province, they're out there planning to fail.

And, Mr. Speaker, the question is, why are we not experiencing a boom when we have the highest price per barrel of oil that we've ever seen in this province? Mr. Speaker, it's about a lack of confidence in this government.

Mr. Speaker, we are experiencing untold revenue from the oil and gas industry and, yet, what does this government do? In their budget under resource taxation issues, they talk about the corporate capital tax surcharge on energy trusts. They call it a

revenue leakage problem, a revenue leakage problem. Mr. Speaker, this is what this government thinks about the oil and gas industry, that they're going to stop a revenue leakage problem.

Mr. Speaker, about two weeks before the budget, the Premier addressed the business community in the city of Regina. And at that time, he talked about making Saskatchewan the energy heart of the nation. Very, very, very good words. But you know where he got those words from, Mr. Speaker? He got them right out of our policy document. And we applaud him.

We applaud him for taking this initiative. Mr. Speaker, no one, no one was more surprised in this province when that happened than the oil and gas industry; that the Premier of this province — the NDP who have driven the oil industry out of this province for the last 60 years, have done everything to discourage them from expanding — gets up and addresses the business community and says, we are going to make Saskatchewan the energy heart of the nation. Sixty years after the fact, when everyone else in Saskatchewan has known this for 60 years, the Premier finally realizes that we have an opportunity here.

Then, Mr. Speaker, the Friday before the budget, he made an announcement about putting in incentives for enhanced oil recovery. Another good step. He said he's going to awake a sleeping giant. That was the government's press release. Again, everyone else in this province has known about this giant for 60 years and the Premier just realized it. But again, we applaud him for that. We applaud him for finally recognizing that we have an opportunity.

Then five days later when the NDP release the budget, they bring in a corporate capital surcharge on energy trusts — this is unbelievable — to raise \$20 million, when we have the oil and gas industry and other mining industries who have just generated over \$1 billion in extra revenue. This government does not get it. They turn around and they slap the very people that are generating the most economic development in the province and put a surcharge on the energy trusts.

Mr. Speaker, the people in the oil and gas industry and certainly across the province are asking, who has driven our economy? Who has made over \$1 billion in extra revenue? Who is creating hundreds of direct jobs in the industry? Who is creating hundreds of jobs in spinoff jobs from this industry? Who is paying millions of dollars in property tax? Who is paying millions of dollars in utilities, Mr. Speaker? And who more than anyone supports our local communities? The oil industry and the mining industry, by giving thousands of dollars back to our local communities.

Mr. Speaker, in my community, we have oil companies. We have service companies that service the oil industry. We have the coal industry. They give back in cash donations. They give back in volunteer time. They give back in goods and services. And they give back to all kinds of charities and sports organizations that would not be able to survive without their generous contributions.

Yet, the NDP have done everything possible to discourage the development of the oil industry in Saskatchewan. And again,

we see this in the budget when they turned around and put a surcharge on energy trusts.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak about another issue for a few moments and that's the whole issue of addictions in the province of Saskatchewan that I have been very concerned about during my time as an MLA, and prior to that.

Mr. Speaker, most addiction services at one time in the province were under community-based organizations and that was for a very good reason, because they were the most efficient way to provide addiction services. They were provided, in a large part they had volunteers involved. And these people in these community-based organizations are closest to the problem and are able therefore to find solutions to these problems.

But, Mr. Speaker, what has this government done? They have decided to turn many of these community-based organizations, that they have decided to put the services under the Department of Health or under the Department of Community Resources and Employment. And I'd just like to give you a couple of examples.

We had the Larson House in Saskatoon who had worked diligently. That local volunteer board had worked diligently for years to try and get a mattress detox in Saskatoon, tried to get a mattress detox in Saskatoon. And you know who was standing in the way of it? It was this government. This government stood in the way. They froze the funding out of them so that they finally said, you know what? We cannot do this any longer. And who took it over but the government. The NDP government took over the mattress detox and the running of Larson House because they pushed the community organization out.

This happened in Kindersley as well. They pushed the Danny Fisher Centre out of business and put it under the health region. The same thing just recently happened in Moosomin where they closed down the volunteer board and the community-based organization and put it under the regional health authority.

Mr. Speaker, they did the same thing in Regina where they closed down Recovery Manor and they put it under the health district and those people, many of those people had nowhere to go, no place to go.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the answer. There is no organizations that are more efficient and effective and provide a valuable service than community-based organizations.

Mr. Speaker, one of the major concerns with addictions is crystal meth and this drug is devastating communities across Saskatchewan and jurisdictions in Canada and the United States. And governments all across the United States and in Canada are taking action to address the concerns around this deadly drug and the crime that flows from it. This drug, as well as all addictions, tax our law enforcement resources. It taxes the security and well-being of our communities.

Law enforcement will tell you that 80 per cent of all crime is directly related to addictions, that is crimes especially of property, gangs, and domestic violence. Mr. Speaker, children

are the innocent bystanders who are caught up in this unhealthy situation, exposed to physical harm and parents whose focus is on drugs instead of their children.

Mr. Speaker, all taxpayers are touched by drugs, whether directly or indirectly, because of the cost to the health system, the social services system, and the justice system, is they are touched because of loss of security in their communities and in their homes and of the human cost of lost productivity and the drain on our society.

Mr. Speaker, many governments are taking action and in the United States they are enacting stricter laws. In Alberta they have introduced legislation to enable parents to help their children who are caught up in this destructive lifestyle, to bring them actual, real help. In Ontario they've brought in laws to fight organized crime. And a recent report, Mr. Speaker, alarmingly from Iowa, indicates that today's infants that are born in that state, one in ten have been exposed to crystal meth.

And yet what does this NDP government do? They decide to study the issue. This is now six, no it's seven years since, according to the Minister of Health, they found out about the serious and growing problem of crystal meth.

When the Saskatchewan Party brought this issue up — it's a year ago now — the NDP decided to dismiss it and they chose to do nothing. And now the Premier has decided that he's going to do a study. But, Mr. Speaker, this is 20 years after the Premier realized that there was a problem. And I'd like to quote from the Premier in 1986, and he's talking about a treatment centre. And I quote from *The Commonwealth* NDP newsletter:

Calvert called for establishment of a provincial youth alcohol and drug treatment centre in Moose Jaw.

"The time for delay is long past," he said referring to plans by the . . . [Progressive Conservatives] to mount yet another study of drug and alcohol abuse among the province's young people.

Again I quote. He said:

"The time for action is now."

Further quoting the Premier:

"We cannot rest while a whole generation is lost."

Mr. Speaker, those were very, very true words at that time. But sadly it's 20 years later and this NDP government, under the leadership of the Premier who made those quotes at that time, has still failed to take any actions. How many lives will be destroyed before the NDP actually gets serious and take a leadership role to fight crystal meth in our communities?

Mr. Speaker, there's many other issues in my constituency which the NDP have failed to address and I'd like to speak about one, which is the VLT [video lottery terminal] revenue. Including cities of Weyburn . . . included in this in the city of Weyburn and throughout my constituency, there's 100 VLTs which take in \$6.8 million from our communities. And in 1995, the NDP promised that they would return 10 per cent of all

VLT revenues to communities. This would amount to \$681,000 last year for my constituency alone. Another broken promise that has never been fulfilled, while we see organizations that are trying to raise funds to support local communities unable to do so because of the money that is pumped into VLTs.

Mr. Speaker, Highway 35, I asked a written question which I just received the answer to prior to my speaking today. And, Mr. Speaker, I'd asked about what were the plans for Highway 35 to be repaired, and sadly the answer does not give any definitive answer. And this is unbelievable, Mr. Speaker, that this highway was reverted back to gravel last year with the promise that it would be fixed this year and now the government is saying, and I quote:

The length of the surfacing to be completed in 2005 and beyond remains dependent on budget levels, and the performance of the provincial Thin Membrane Surface . . .

Mr. Speaker, again the NDP are pleading poverty and have no intention in this answer of reverting Highway 35 totally back to highway surface as opposed to gravel. This is unacceptable when this is an entry point from the United States, in an area — I might add, Mr. Speaker — where a large portion of the revenue from oil and gas flows into the coffers of the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, there's also the threat of school closures in my constituency, when the Minister of Learning said of amalgamating of school divisions would allow more dollars to be spent directly in schools and less on administration so this should stop further closure of schools. This, obviously, is not the direction that the minister is giving his boards at the local level who are now talking about plans to close schools in my area. Well this is not acceptable, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there's also the whole issue of agriculture that's been going on for some time, but this year more than ever it is certainly having a very devastating effect. There is land for rent throughout my constituency, with many . . . in many instances where there are no takers for this rental. And there are auction sales — very, very large amount of auction sales, Mr. Speaker. And this has all got to do with a lack of commitment by the NDP to fully fund CAIS, to address the issue of crop insurance, and of the high cost of utilities, of a lack of commitment to . . . for property tax relief. Mr. Speaker, the list goes on in agriculture.

There's also the ethanol industry, Mr. Speaker, which because of the interference of the NDP and no firm mandate of what is going to go on with this industry and about them directly interfering and trying to buy equity into ethanol plants, we still have yet to see a plant open in Weyburn.

Mr. Speaker, we also have the issue of health care in my constituency, which this NDP has continually failed the people of my riding. And just last week, Mr. Speaker, I had a gentleman call my office who said I'd just like to give you one more example of the two-tiered system that the NDP has for health care.

In the hospital in Weyburn they have to pay for day surgery. Up until April 1 it was \$400, where health care's free in Saskatchewan, but they're paying \$400 for day surgery. Now as

of April 1, they're paying \$635 for day surgery in the hospital in Weyburn, and yet this NDP government says that we have free health care in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I'd just like to read a portion of a letter from a gentleman in my constituency who has watched and listened and is very saddened by what he sees as the NDP turning their back on rural Saskatchewan, and I quote:

Since our province wants . . . to celebrate Saskatchewan's 100th anniversary. Let us compare our area to a former provincial celebration — Homecoming [in] 1971: [and this gentlemen, Mr. Speaker, is from Bengough] At that time our community had twenty-eight . . . [businesses] and three service organizations. Our population had risen from 575 in 1958 to over 800 in 1971. It is now 2005 and our present businesses can be counted in one set of hands, we have one service club and our population is now under 500. We had a well-run hospital that everyone in the area helped with raising any funding needed for its operation. We now have a health centre with very limited respite facilities.

Our community exists largely on the . . . [agriculture] aspects of the area. As in the rest of rural Saskatchewan the population is aging. At present we do not have enough room in the seniors home to hold our own. Many have either been shipped to another area or were forced to move themselves if still able. The Saskatchewan government has built a policy of paying the care administrators instead of paying the care givers and moving . . . [everyone] to the . . . [city]. This has been quite a change from past policy of low cost volunteer boards and moving people back to their home areas for respite after medical operations.

And this gentleman goes on to talk about agriculture and about BSE and about how farming practices have changed, how the CAIS program has failed, and he ends by saying:

You can go back over predictions by outsiders for this province for the last twenty years. Each prediction affirmed Saskatchewan's promise for the future. Our resources and our people are second to none. Our provincial government has been pushing and campaigning for its people to improve their attitudes towards the future. Why is it then those around us are prospering with less, and our promise is never realized.

Mr. Speaker, this budget, we ask the question, whose lives in Saskatchewan has it improved? Has it improved the ranchers and the farmers in my constituency and their family? Has it improved the lives of business people, students, low-income families and their children, children at risk on the streets, those suffering with addictions, teachers, nurses, young people looking for jobs in Saskatchewan so that they can stay here and make a future here, those on waiting lists, outside investors who would like to invest in Saskatchewan, many of them ex-Saskies who would like to come back here and be part of our future?

Mr. Speaker, is it about community leaders struggling to keep their facilities open? Has it improved CBOs [community-based organization] organizations? Has it improved property taxpayers? Mr. Speaker, sadly the answer is none of the above.

I will not be supporting the budget. I will support the amendment.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I begin my brief remarks to the budget debate this afternoon I first of all want to extend congratulations to the entire government caucus, but a very special congratulations to the member from Regina Dewdney, the Minister of Finance, whose stewardship, whose care, whose attention to detail, and whose vision for the future of this province is recognized and identified in this budget. I want to congratulate the Minister of Finance for the budget that he has laid before the legislature and the people of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — I come, Mr. Speaker, to this debate this afternoon with two documents. I have with me, of course, a copy of the budget of the province of Saskatchewan under debate, and equally I have a copy of the platform commitments, the vision, and the goals that we set before the people of Saskatchewan prior to the most recent provincial election.

In this platform document, Mr. Speaker, we set before the people of Saskatchewan our vision, our goals for this term in government. We believe that as a political movement and as a political party at election time you lay before the people your vision, your goals, your philosophies. And then in government, having been provided the privilege of governing, it is your responsibility to govern under those principles and to govern towards those very goals and commitments that you make in the campaign.

Now this may seem as a novel approach to members opposite. They are not bringing their campaign documentation into this House. They're not talking about their visions. They're not talking about their plans. In fact they're doing everything under the sun to hide from what they said to the people of this province during the last election.

But that's not the way we operate here, Mr. Speaker. We lay before the people a vision, goals, commitments, and we work to build to that vision and those goals with careful planning and careful stewardship.

Mr. Speaker, in this platform when we went to the people of Saskatchewan we identified an overarching goal, an overarching goal that said in this term of government we would seek, that we would seek to build an even better life for the people of this province. That is our overarching goal, and we would build a better life for the people of Saskatchewan, an even better life, through four major visions, through four major goals.

One, Mr. Speaker, to make Saskatchewan an affordable place for families. Secondly, to build in this province the best public health care and the best quality of life that we can possibly

build in Saskatchewan. Number three, that we would build a green and a prosperous economy. And number four, that we would provide opportunities for our young people. We made those four central commitments to the people of Saskatchewan going into the last election.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you go into the election with your commitments. You're privileged to receive the support of the people of the province, and then you go about the task of building towards those goals. And, Mr. Speaker, this budget, this budget under debate is the, is the result directly of that vision. Within this budget are contained, in fact, the building blocks towards that vision and those goals. That's why, Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind I will be supporting this budget. I'll be supporting the Minister of Finance as he concludes his remarks today on this budget.

So let's just reflect a little, Mr. Speaker. Let us reflect just a little about what we find in this budget as it applies to the very commitments that we have made to the people of Saskatchewan. We committed, as I said, to making this province an affordable place for families to live. Well, Mr. Speaker, contained within this budget are the resources to meet our commitment that people of Saskatchewan will enjoy the lowest cost bundle of utilities anywhere in Canada. That is a promise we have made; that's a promise we're keeping.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — And, Mr. Speaker, if you access the budget documentation, you will find, you will find in this budget documentation at categories of income of \$25,000 per year, single person with \$25,000 income, or with a family with an income of \$50,000 a year total income, or in fact a family with \$75,000 total income — all fees, charges, cost of living included — Saskatchewan now is the most affordable place in Canada in which to make your home.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, members, if reviewing these charts of household charges and taxation and all which contributes to the cost of living, members, I invite members to review these charts and note this very salient and important fact, that of all of the provinces in Canada that now enjoy the have status under equalization — that being three: Alberta, Ontario, and Saskatchewan — there is only one province in Canada who enjoys have status and does not charge a health care premium, and that is the province of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — But, Mr. Speaker, this budget takes us even further in making life more affordable for Saskatchewan families because within the context of this budget, Mr. Speaker, are \$55 million, stage one of a \$110 million plan to provide property tax relief for the people of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, we talked in the campaign about quality of life, particularly to building the best public health care system that we could build in Saskatchewan. This

budget takes us to that commitment, Mr. Speaker, because in this budget we are spending a record \$2.9 billion in the provision of public health in Saskatchewan — \$2.9 billion. And, Mr. Speaker, that's \$192 million more than we spent on health care in this province last year.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — And that, Mr. Speaker, is about \$100 million more than is provided in the new federal funding, for which we are grateful. Mr. Speaker, that is the commitment to public health.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what does that kind of commitment, what does that kind of commitment mean in real, practical terms for the people of Saskatchewan? I've been just reviewing today announcements that this government has made just in the last two weeks. Just in the course of this budget debate, here are announcements that this government has made in regard to health care in this province.

We have announced \$12 million for new diagnostic imaging equipment, equipment that will be distributed across the province. We have provided funding, Mr. Speaker, just — and this is just in the last two weeks — to establish full-time, 24-hour, on-site emergency room physician services. Where? In Moose Jaw and in Swift Current, Mr. Speaker.

In just the past two weeks we have provided another \$1 million to help increase the number of physicians working in Saskatchewan and \$400,000 to expand the Telehealth network by adding eight new locations across the province, and that brings us to a total of 26 sites. That's the work that's gone on in just these past two weeks.

A budget of \$2.9 billion — 192 million new dollars. And I challenge the members of the opposition to stand in this House today, if they dare, and vote against that kind of expenditure in public health.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — And, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Speaker, in terms of health care funding that comes from this budget, let me review again, let me review again for the member from Wood Mountain just — Wood River, Wood River — just exactly where health dollars will be expended in this budget year in terms of capital, in terms of building for the future, the facilities and the capital necessary to provide good public health care.

Do you know where we're going? We're building in Swift Current, Saskatchewan. We're building in Ile-a-la-Crosse. We're building in Preeceville. We're building in Moosomin. We're building in Maidstone. We're building in Outlook. And we are building in Humboldt, Mr. Speaker. We are building in Humboldt, and I'll be very interested to see the reaction today of the member from Humboldt. Will she vote for the budget that will provide for a new St. Elizabeth's in Humboldt to be opened in the year 2007 or will she vote against a new St. Elizabeth's for Humboldt in 2007?

There are health capital dollars being expended here in the capital city. There are health capital dollars being expended in the city of Saskatoon. And because of this budget, Mr. Speaker, there will be new opportunities for the Oliver Lodge in Saskatoon. There will be a new mental health clinic in Saskatoon.

We are investing in capital for the provision of public health care services because that is the number one priority of the New Democratic Party Government of Saskatchewan when it comes to the expenditure of public funds.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — But, Mr. Speaker, in my view, health care is often determined by factors that we might not traditionally describe as health care — those provisions of life which we sometimes now describe as health determinants. And significant in providing quality public health care is the opportunity to provide for those in our communities who sometimes we describe as our neighbours in need. And when we are providing new resources for our neighbours in need, we are contributing to their health care and the public health care of the province. Here specifically, Mr. Speaker, I refer to housing.

One of the most significant determinants of health is housing — good, quality housing. Good opportunities to put shelter around our families, to build secure and strong neighbourhoods, to give our children stability in their growing up and in their education — it relates, Mr. Speaker, very much to housing.

Mr. Speaker, there is no part of this budget that I am more proud of than the commitment within this budget to the HomeFirst program, the most innovative housing program in the nation of Canada today.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — New resources, Mr. Speaker, new resources for public housing, new resources to assist family into the ownership of their own housing and their own accommodation. And, Mr. Speaker, in a \$10 million investment, a new rental supplement for our neighbours who are most in need, a new rental supplement, a supplement that will be tied to quality housing. This is innovative. There is nothing like it in the rest of Canada. We are investing in the families of Saskatchewan in this budget, Mr. Speaker.

And for the first time, and for the first time in many years there is in this budget an across-the-board increase in the basic allowance for social service recipients in our province. We're very, very proud of that, Mr. Speaker.

To be fair, the Leader of the Opposition and members of the opposition have called for a basic allowance increase. It's not what they said before the election when they were talking about a \$50 million cut in social services. It's not what they were saying just before the election when they were talking about work for welfare. But wherever they've had the conversion, I appreciate it.

Now they've called for an increase in the basic assistance. The first three days of this session, on a daily basis they were calling

for an increase in the basic level of social assistance. Now today, Mr. Speaker, now today comes the test of the credibility.

Will they stand today and vote against an increase in the basic allowance for the recipients of social assistance in our province? Will they vote against it or will they have some courage in their convictions and stand and vote for it, Mr. Speaker? The test will come in a matter of moments.

Mr. Speaker, we talked in the campaign, as I indicated, about building a green and a prosperous economy in this province because the foundation of social progress is economic progress. The foundation is economic progress and we have committed to the people of Saskatchewan in campaign and in the decision making of this government to build that green and prosperous economy. Mr. Speaker, it's happening. There is a momentum in our economy today that has not existed, if I may say, for many, many years — for many, many years.

We've got a predicted growth rate — the headlines are putting it, the banks are bullish on Saskatchewan — we've got a predicted growth rate this year of 3 per cent, real growth on growth of the years just behind us. We have seen the test of this growth in the monthly reporting on the growth in job numbers in this province — record levels of employment in Saskatchewan today. And one of the truest tests of the strength of your economy is the willingness of investors to invest in that economy. And as the Minister of Industry and Resources reported last week, private sector investment, total capital investment predicted for the province of Saskatchewan this year will be more than double than the national average.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — More than double the national average. Mr. Speaker, that, that, Mr. Speaker, is a sign of the confidence in the Saskatchewan economy, of the momentum that exists in the economy of Saskatchewan today.

And we can see it all around us; we don't need to travel far anywhere in this province to see the momentum in our economy. I look at the momentum that's happening in the film and video industry right now. I look at the momentum that's happening in the forestry right now, where we've seen the tremendous private sector investment, the tremendous expansion in value-added forestry.

Mr. Speaker, I see the momentum in terms of tourism and the arts community in Saskatchewan. I have just returned from Winnipeg where Team Saskatchewan, the YESK team went, 30 of us strong, and influenced the Canadian music industry. They're looking at Saskatchewan like they've never looked at Saskatchewan before.

Mr. Speaker, I look at what's happening in terms of the housing numbers. I look at what's happening in terms of the mining sector, Mr. Speaker — the mining sector, working at full steam. And we intend to work even closer with the mining sector in the days ahead.

But let me say this, Mr. Speaker. The one sector of the economy that we know holds such tremendous potential, that sector of the economy that we are focusing on, is building the energy sector

in Saskatchewan because this is a province with a future that has energy, Mr. Speaker. I tell you we have a future with energy, Mr. Speaker, and this budget speaks very, very directly to building an energy future for Saskatchewan.

We're building an energy future using the renewable sources, the wind. This budget will place Saskatchewan from a position three years ago of no wind-generated electricity to a position where we will be third in Canada already. This budget will take us there.

This budget has resources now to see the expansion of ethanol. We will see the plant in Weyburn that the member from Weyburn seems to want to criticize today. It's unbelievable. We will see the world's largest wheat-based ethanol plant built in Lloydminster. We will see this province taking, as we have, leadership in terms of ethanol in the nation of Canada.

And just last week the Minister of Industry and Resources returned from Nipawin and talked about the biomass, the tremendous potential in the announcement of the biomass project in Nipawin.

We're taking the green sources of energy, Mr. Speaker, and we're growing them. We've pioneered hydrogen research and energy. We've had here in the province the world's first hybrid hydrogen/diesel truck pioneered, and now the world's first gasoline/hydrogen truck here, built by the researchers in Saskatchewan. There's a tremendous future in the non-renewable . . . in the renewable resources and energy.

But, Mr. Speaker, let us look at this resource that's buried beneath our ground — the coal resource and the potential for coal bed methane gasification. And look, Mr. Speaker, look, Mr. Speaker, at the tremendous resource that's buried beneath our ground in terms of oil and gas.

Now we have seen, Mr. Speaker, as a result of significant changes made in the oil and gas royalty regime several years ago — two, three years ago now, I guess — the expansion of that industry in our province. Mr. Speaker, we know that buried beneath the soils of Saskatchewan today are 35 billion barrels of oil. Already discovered, we don't need to go looking — there are 35 billion barrels of oil buried beneath our ground. But our challenge, Mr. Speaker, is not to find that oil; our challenge is to get that oil out of the ground. Because with the technologies that we have today, only about, only about 15 per cent of that oil is available to us — only about 15 percent. What that means, Mr. Speaker, is we're leaving 30 million barrels of oil in the ground. Now at today's prices, that's worth about \$1 trillion.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to get that resource and make it serve the people of Saskatchewan. That's what we're going to do.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — And we've set out a plan to do just that. It's a plan that involves the research and development capacities to enhance oil production, the kind of research and development that's happening here at the University of Regina, at the Petroleum Technology Research Centre.

We know that we will need to build the infrastructure to make

this happen — infrastructure of pipe lining, an infrastructure of upgrading. We know that we need to get a fair equalization formula and deal with the nation's government. We know that if we're going to develop that energy resource we need to do it in the context of a fair and just equalization formula. We know that we need to train people and we know that we need the right royalty regime.

As I've been very proud in just recent days, as a result of this budget, to announce a regime that we've worked out with the industry over the course of many months, a regime which we've worked out with the industry that will provide for tremendous investment in enhanced oil recovery in our province. It's in the budget, Mr. Speaker. We're voting for this budget because we believe in the future of that industry and we believe in the future of this province. That's why we're voting . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — But, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, the vision of this budget and the priority of this budget and the priority of this government is to invest in the young people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. This is our centennial year when we celebrate 100 years of heart. But we turn our attention as we celebrate this 100 years to the 100 years in front of us because there's a lot of history in this province but, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of tomorrow in this province.

And this, this budget, Mr. Speaker, above all else — above all else — invests in the young people of Saskatchewan, in their future and ensuring, as we said in our campaign, that we would build a future in this province for our young people. And that's what this budget does like no other budget that we've ever delivered in this legislature.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to highlight some of that which is in this budget that is directly, directly to provide opportunities for Saskatchewan's young people. In this budget we are doubling — doubling, Mr. Speaker — the centennial merit scholarship program. We're doubling that program.

We've put in a \$2 million increase of training opportunities. We're going to create 1,000 new training opportunities for the young people of Saskatchewan bringing our total, as a result of this budget, to 27,000 opportunities for young people to train in this province — 27,000.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, we are providing another \$3.4 million to expand the Saskatchewan bursary program, increasing bursary assistance to 10,000 students in our province. This budget will provide for 16,500 student loans.

This budget will reserve 86 seats for Saskatchewan young people at post-secondary institutions across Canada where they can study and bring that knowledge home. We're reserving seats for our young people.

In the North, 600 training opportunities through the northern

skills training program. This year, Mr. Speaker . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — This year, Mr. Speaker, we are increasing the graduate tax credit program to provide that valuable tax credit to those students who will graduate in Saskatchewan and stay in Saskatchewan and work in Saskatchewan, to help them get started in Saskatchewan. And that, Mr. Speaker, is a . . . clearly a promise made and a promise being kept. That's what we're doing.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, there's a 6.8, a 6.8 per cent increase for SIAST which will include \$900,000, Mr. Speaker, for the northern education program, the northern nurses training program.

And, Mr. Speaker, for our universities, our federated and affiliated colleges equally, a 6.8 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker. That's \$16.2 million and, Mr. Speaker, that includes the \$6.7 million centennial, centennial grant to the universities that the universities can freeze the tuition fees while we sit down with the universities and the students to look at the whole question of accessibility and affordability for students.

Mr. Speaker, this is a budget that invests in the young people of Saskatchewan. I challenge the members opposite, will they . . . Well I'll ask the member from . . . or the former leader of the opposition, will he stand and support a budget that provides this for the students of Saskatchewan? Well he's got a lot to say from his seat. Let him get on his feet and we'll know what he's doing in a few moments.

Mr. Speaker, last night, night before last, Saturday evening, I had the opportunity to be at Credit Union Place in Saskatoon. I was there with the Chair of the centennial, the member from Moose Jaw North. I was there with Her Honour, the Lieutenant Governor and with about 7,000 or more other spectators in the stands as we watched the figure skating clubs of Saskatchewan come together to do a centennial gala, a centennial skate show.

Mr. Speaker, I want to report to members of the legislature today that never before in the history of Canada has as large a skating program been assembled as what we observed in Saskatoon on Saturday night.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Never before. Right on the ice, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, right . . . Well the members opposite laugh about the figure skaters in Saskatchewan. That's their choice. They can laugh at the show.

But we're not laughing. We're applauding them, Mr. Speaker, because there was 1,000-plus young Saskatchewan people on the ice at Credit Union Place in Saskatoon on Saturday night — over 1,000 Saskatchewan young people. And at the end of it, Mr. Speaker, they came out and they all were wearing a centennial T-shirt — 1,000 young people on the ice.

And, Mr. Speaker, I saw right there, right there on the ice in

Saskatoon, I saw the future of Saskatchewan. I say when there's a lot of tomorrow in this province, we saw the tomorrow right there on the ice in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that's what this budget is all about. That's what this budget is all about. It is investing in those very people. And the member from Rosetown can harp from his seat and criticize it. The Leader of the Opposition probably will vote against it. This government is going to vote for the young people of Saskatchewan. You make no mistake about that.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, we went to the people of Saskatchewan. We talked about making life affordable in Saskatchewan. We talked about public health care and quality of life. We talked about building a green and prosperous economy. And we talked about investing in the young people of Saskatchewan.

We go to the people of Saskatchewan with a vision. We go with a plan. We don't come up with a new plan every six months like they do over there.

**An Hon. Member:** — Every three months.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Every three months, I guess it is now. We're down to three months. We're *The Way Up* and then we're the way out and then we're Grow Saskatchewan and then we . . . What are we this week? I don't know.

We go to the people of Saskatchewan with a vision and a plan, and we build to that plan, Mr. Speaker. This budget builds to that plan and it builds in a fiscally sustainable, a fiscally sustainable manner, Mr. Speaker. This is the 12th consecutive balanced budget delivered by this government.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — As a result of this budget, Mr. Speaker, as a result of this budget, we now are . . . we now carry the lowest debt that we've carried for 14 years in this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, it is the careful financial stewardship of this government that has earned us consecutive credit rating upgrades for the last 11. And today, Mr. Speaker, for the first time in two decades, this province enjoys a AA credit rating from both major American bond rating agencies, Mr. Speaker. That is fiscal stewardship.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, just before I take my place, I want to point out the kind of fiscal stewardship we've heard from over there in the course of this budget debate.

Although why should I be surprised? I guess, why should I be surprised when a few weeks ago the Finance critic over there was being interviewed about the money that we earned from the federal government last year in terms of making up for some equalization injustice from the past — \$360 million, that's what



we earned — and what is it that the Finance critic across the way called? How did he describe \$363 million? He called it a table scrap. He called it table scraps, Mr. Speaker.

So am I surprised then, on the day after the budge, that very same Finance critic is on the radio while I happen to be driving in the car, budget morning, and he's being interviewed. And the interviewer appropriately says, well you don't like the government's budget; what would you have done? Well in four blocks, Mr. Speaker, in four blocks, that Finance critic over there spent \$1 billion — \$250 million a block. It was just good luck, Mr. Speaker, I got to where I was going and shut the radio off. The province would be going broke. That's the kind of fiscal and financial stewardship you'll get from these folks.

Now I ask myself, why is this? Why is this? Haven't they learned? Haven't they learned? Well you know, Mr. Speaker, there are some I think in this province — I'm not sure in this House — but I believe there are some in this province who have graduated from the London School of Economics. I had . . . Very good, very good school of economics. I had opportunity to graduate from the University of Regina's school of economics — I would argue also a very good school of economics.

But what we've heard today from the member from Regina is how many members over there were busy attending the Devine school of economics? Quite a few of them, if I may say so. Quite a few of them seem to have learned their economics of public stewardship from the Conservative governments of Brian Mulroney and Grant Devine. That's where they learned their economics.

So is it any surprise at all, is it any surprise at all these folks on a day after day after day will stand up in this House and say cut the taxes, cut the taxes, cut the taxes? You know they say, Mr. Speaker, you shouldn't do a careful review of business taxation, which is recommended by the chartered accountants of Saskatchewan, you shouldn't do a careful review of business taxation; you should just holus-bolus cut everything in sight. That's what they say. Cut the taxes, cut the taxes, cut the tax.

But then what do they say? Spend more on agriculture, spend more on highways, spend more on education, spend more on health, spend more . . . And then they say cut the taxes, cut the taxes, cut the taxes.

You know, Mr. Speaker, there's absolutely no limit to the amount of money they'll spend in opposition and no limit, I'm afraid, they would spend in government because they trained under this Conservative school of economics. That's how they've trained. And that, Mr. Speaker, ought to concern any thinking person, any thinking taxpayer in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we laid before this legislature a budget that is based on the vision and the priorities of this government, a budget that reflects the campaign commitments that we made to the people of Saskatchewan, a budget that focuses on building a green and a prosperous economy, a budget that focuses on building an opportunity-filled province for the young people of Saskatchewan as our legacy from the centennial. That's what this budget does, Mr. Speaker. That is why I will be voting against the amendment and will be voting for the budget.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter the budget debate here today and in so doing, I do want to take this opportunity to again acknowledge the people that allow me to do this job, by and large the constituents of Swift Current as well as my family.

It's always a pleasure to participate in a debate as important as that of the budget. I'd also like to acknowledge the work of the opposition Finance critic, the member for Saskatoon Silver Springs, who's done an excellent job in executing his duties as a critic.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a centennial year in Saskatchewan. We're 100 years old. And not just that, Mr. Speaker, but it is a year when we can look around us in the province of Saskatchewan and see the amazing potential, in very real terms, of Saskatchewan. We look around and we see for example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we see resource commodity prices, and specifically the prices of commodities that we have right here in Saskatchewan, at all-time highs, Mr. Speaker.

We see the price of oil . . . This morning driving in today I think the price of oil, west Texas crude, was trading in Europe at over \$58 a barrel. We see forecasts of that growing over this year. Not so good news for those of us who drive vehicles with V6's or V8's, but good news for the economy potentially, potentially good news for our economy and frankly good news for the treasury of the province of Saskatchewan.

We see strong prices in terms of potash commodity prices, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The same is true for uranium.

And so given the fact that it is the centennial budget, given the fact that we've come through a year where we've enjoyed, the government has enjoyed record revenues from oil and gas and other commodities, I think it's fair for people to have had fairly high hopes for this budget. I think people across this province, those in the economy and others who are waiting for a little relief, frankly, after tax increases from this government last time around in their last budget, '04-05, I think expectations were high.

And there was a little bit of hope out in Saskatchewan that given the fact that this government had a billion two more than they budgeted for last year and at a bare minimum almost a half a billion more already going forward, looking forward to this year, more in revenue than they budgeted for last year. It's about a billion six or seven, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In light of that, I think there was a real hope on the part of the people of the province of Saskatchewan that they could expect something more from this NDP government.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you look at the response to the provincial budget that we saw here after it was delivered, and across the province . . . And by the way, notwithstanding what the opposition had to say; never mind what the official opposition had to say. If you just look at the response to this budget from different groups across Saskatchewan, you have to

ask yourself the question, how could this government fail so badly? How could they manage to do so little with so much, as the opposition Finance critic said.

As I was out in the rotunda when the budget was delivered, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I couldn't believe it, every single group that was interviewed — APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan], farm groups, SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities], groups that represent the urban municipalities of the province of Saskatchewan, School Boards Association, teachers, nurses — they all said the same thing. They all said this budget let them down, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This budget let the province of Saskatchewan down.

You walk a little, you walk around the beautiful plants that are arranged out in the rotunda and listen in on what the business community had to say about the budget. We heard from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. We heard from the taxpayers' association. We heard from different groups who represent both taxpayers and those men and women and co-operatives who create jobs here in Saskatchewan for Saskatchewan families. What did they have to say about the budget? They didn't like it either, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They said there was no long-term vision. There was no long-term plan for the economy. There was no plan to address the important competitive issues in the province of Saskatchewan.

Why? Why would they all say that? You just heard the Premier speak — sounds like he has been maybe on a different planet based on his response to the budget. Everything's sort of sunshine and roses if you listen to the Premier. The people out in the rotunda that represent the people of the province of Saskatchewan, municipalities in the province of Saskatchewan, health care workers in the province of Saskatchewan, they don't agree with the Premier. They think the budget was a disaster, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Why would they think that? Well I think we should try to answer that question. Why does all of Saskatchewan hate the Premier's budget and the Premier loves it so much? It's a fair question.

Start with taxation, perhaps. Let's start with that particular issue. Maybe when we look at this government's taxation policies, we will find out why the people of the province all think the budget's not very good and the Premier quite likes it.

Did this government take the opportunity to lower what are the highest income tax rates for the lowest income families in Canada? Did they take the opportunity to do that? We laid out the case, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Finance critic and other Saskatchewan Party MLAs have stood in this place and said, did you know in Saskatchewan our low-income families pay the highest tax rates in the Dominion of Canada? And did you know that to move in terms of the exemption — even over a multi-year program, if that's what the government wanted; we offered that — the cost, \$90 million, \$90 million.

We asked those questions of the government. The people of the province seemed to think it was a pretty reasonable idea, a pretty good idea to get a little bit more competitive with respect to those low-income families. What did the government do?

Did they give some of the money they took from them in the last budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when they increased the PST last budget? You remember that. I think members on this side of the House remember that. Maybe the Deputy Premier from Yorkton remembers that. I hope so.

I know that he remembers campaigning in 2003, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I know he remembers that because he was intricately involved in that NDP campaign. You'll remember, Mr. Speaker, you'll remember that he cooked up that deal with the . . . [inaudible] . . . taxpayer-paid lawyers in the SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] case to try to get a little political action in the campaign, actually manipulated the courts for their own electoral gain in the last election. You remember that. That was that Deputy Premier right there, the member for Yorkton.

You remember what else he did in the campaign, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he and the other MLAs opposite? They went around the province and campaigned on lower taxes. You take a look at the campaign platform that that Deputy Premier, the architect of the NDP campaign team, must have authorized in addition to these tactics involving the courts, and now we find out, also interfering in collective bargaining earlier today. But also he authorized, he stamped his approval on a platform that said if you vote for the member for Saskatoon Riversdale, the current leader of the NDP, if you vote for me, he said, the Deputy Premier, I'll lower your taxes.

That's what he did. And what happened in the last budget, the first budget for the member for Regina Victoria since he became the finance minister? What happened? They increased the PST, took \$140 million from the pockets of Saskatchewan families, from businesses, and from co-operatives, from municipalities in the province of Saskatchewan, \$140 million.

And then the intervening months occur of course, Mr. Speaker, and we see the price of oil go up, and we see the government coffers swell by 1 billion more than they budgeted for, 1.2 billion. And so those families that had their pockets picked for \$140 million were asking themselves in advance of that budget, are we going to get some back? Will they roll back the PST? Or maybe they'll accept the Saskatchewan Party's idea with respect to low-income families and increase their exemption.

Did they do that, Mr. Speaker? No they didn't do that. The government coffers swelled, but the wallets of Saskatchewan families stayed exactly as they were, as they were after the '04 budget, a budget that came months after they campaigned on lower taxes and then increased the taxes in the budget.

What about other areas of taxation? You know, property taxes in the province of Saskatchewan may be the number one taxation issue. Both the municipal and the school portion of property taxes, it affects business. It affects residences. And you know what it is, Mr. Speaker? It's a capital tax. That's what it is. It's not based on income for the company or the co-operative or the family. It's based on capital. And I think we agree, certainly on this side of the House, and the chambers of commerce agree and those who create jobs and wealth in any jurisdiction where they might be agree that these capital taxes that we have in Saskatchewan — the highest in the country, the highest on the continent — are the most insidious kind of tax

because they tax capital, and they drive investment away, and they drive job creation to other jurisdictions.

So if the property tax is a capital tax — and I think it's fair to say it is — what has the government done with respect to property tax? Well in this budget they do precisely nothing. They re-announce an initiative from some months ago where they said they're going to give back \$55 million of property tax, an 8 per cent across the board relief for property tax in the province of Saskatchewan — \$55 million, Mr. Speaker, almost \$100 million less than what they took in the PST.

And that relates directly to the Boughen report. For that we have to go back to that campaign of 2003 where the Deputy Premier, who's listening carefully now, he was in charge of that campaign, as I've highlighted already, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, in that election campaign what else did he authorize the Premier to say, because I don't think the Premier makes a move without talking first to the member for Yorkton. What else did he tell the Premier to say to the people of the province? He said, tell them that we can accept the recommendations of the Boughen Commission; that was the commission on property tax which said increase the PST but provide equal or greater property tax relief. Remember that? He said to the Premier go out and campaign on that. Say, we can accept that; we can do that, if you just vote for us again.

And the people of the province by the narrowest of margins vote for them again. And what do they do with that report, you know, the one that says, increase the PST but provide property tax relief? What do they do with that report? They threw it in the garbage because they only did the tax increase part. They gave back, they gave back just barely over a third of that in this announcement here. So on this important issue of the property tax, the capital tax in Saskatchewan, they provide no direct relief.

Now there's a form of indirect taxation as well, Mr. Speaker, that can happen with property tax when you refuse to properly or adequately fund municipal partners, municipal governments, when you fail to provide the multi-year revenue sharing as the Saskatchewan Party has proposed. And what did the city of Regina have to say on this count with respect to the budget? It says, quote:

The 2005 Provincial Budget does nothing to address the basic needs of Regina. An increase in . . . [funding] was desperately needed to . . . reduce the heavy reliance [of] the city . . . on property taxes to fund programs and services.

And so what will happen to property tax owners in the city of Regina? They are facing a . . . how much is the tax increase they're facing? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . four and a half per cent tax increase. The Premier, maybe he was having fun, I don't know; it looked like he might have been having some fun wondering how members opposite will vote. Well I ask this question, Mr. Speaker, to the member for Dewdney, Regina Dewdney, and the Finance minister himself, the member for Regina Elphinstone. When they vote for this budget, they're voting for another property tax increase for the people of Regina. How will they vote? Will they have the courage of their convictions to vote against this budget?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Wall:** — The lack of new money in terms of revenue sharing . . . even though they've got it, sitting on a billion two; a billion two last year, a half a billion this year, they're sitting on that. They've got that maybe put aside thinking they'll come up with some sort of gimmickry, some election gimmickry next time around, but they're sitting on that money, and what does that mean to the taxpayers of the city of Saskatoon?

Seven per cent just on the municipal portion, never mind the education part, we'll get to that in a moment. On the municipal portion, taxes of a 7 per cent hike, so I'll ask the question again. What will the member for Saskatoon Sutherland do when in a few moments we're asked to vote on this budget, because if he wants to represent the people of Saskatoon Sutherland he'll stand in his place and vote for the opposition amendment and against this property tax-hiking NDP budget, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of taxation, what about the business taxes that we pay in the province of Saskatchewan? For some period of time the chambers of commerce and business groups have been saying we have relied too heavily on taxing the people that create wealth. We've got to stop doing that; there's an imbalance. And there is an imbalance.

In fact, here's what the imbalance is, Mr. Speaker. In Saskatchewan, 60 per cent of the taxes that businessmen and women pay, that entrepreneurs pay in Saskatchewan, is related to something other than income. In other words it doesn't matter if they make any money under the NDP business environment, they're paying 60 per cent of their taxes anyway; 40 per cent they pay based on their income.

Do you know what the Canadian average is, Mr. Speaker, in Canada? Eighty per cent of the business tax revenue collected in the country from businesses across Canada come from income. Twenty per cent comes from capital or investment. Now does that sound like a disparity that needs to be reviewed? I think it sounds like a disparity that requires action, Mr. Speaker.

The Government of Saskatchewan has finally said, well maybe we ought to have a look at this, and so they're appointing another review, Mr. Speaker. But it's hard to take them seriously. It's hard to take them at their word because the last time they reviewed taxes — you remember, that was that Boughen Commission I just talked about, where they talked about lowering property taxes by increasing the PST — we only wound up with a tax hike, Mr. Speaker.

No wonder businesses were in the rotunda. Business groups were saying, you know what? We don't need to review this. We need to do something about it because we don't trust their reviews. We don't trust the fact that this NDP government understands that we've got to do something about this problem.

And do you know what, Mr. Speaker, the proof of that, the proof that Saskatchewan entrepreneurs have no reason to trust all of those members who are listening here today, why they don't have a reason to trust them, Mr. Speaker, is this: because in the same budget that they commit to doing a business tax review, to potentially lowering the dependence on business taxes, what do they do? As the member for Weyburn-Big

Muddy and the opposition Energy critic has pointed out, they increase business taxes by 20 million this year, 40 million next year. They actually increase the taxes on capital. Who would take them seriously? Who in business would take them seriously?

You know, there's other examples of why the business community won't take them seriously. You know, a few weeks ago in this Assembly when the Premier was going to announce his enhanced oil recovery initiative, we asked the same question. Why should they take him seriously?

When in the election campaign a letter, again probably authorized by the Deputy Premier, the member for Yorkton, a fundraising letter from the Premier of Saskatchewan, from the Leader of the NDP to various, I guess, supporters of the NDP, what did he say about businesses in the province of Saskatchewan, those who he now says he wants to work with to grow the province? He said this, and I quote:

Big corporations see a successful provincial economy and want to take over the most profitable parts of it . . . so they finance a political party, in this case the Saskatchewan Party, to get it for them.

That's what they really think. That's what they really think, Mr. Speaker, of businesses. They say they're committed to a business tax review. They increase the business tax and then they send out fundraising letters that say, that accuse the businesses of Saskatchewan of being greedy, of just wanting to take over part of the province of Saskatchewan.

They have no credibility. They have no credibility. And if it weren't for those two examples, we could also talk about government-directed hours, most available hours legislation. And there's the Minister of Labour, when she set the economy of this province back years by musing, musing about that particular initiative before she was driven off her position by the opposition and by these businesses of the province of Saskatchewan.

Well I want to get through the budget. And remember we're answering the question, Mr. Speaker, we're answering the question, why would the government, with so much money, how could they have messed up so bad? Why doesn't anyone in Saskatchewan like it?

Let's turn to health care. Now in health care there are additional resources committed by the NDP — about \$192 million. And the Premier stood up moments ago and took credit for it. He said, we have put in \$192 million more into the budget. But who, who put the money in, Mr. Speaker? The federal government.

In fact, if you look at the Canada health transfer and the equalization money and the . . . or the, actually the specific health care arrangement with the federal government, it more than covers off the money that they claim they put into this budget.

And with respect to health care, Mr. Speaker, I think everybody in the province understands and everyone in the country understands that increasingly it seems more and more resources

are being required of health care — financial resources. But you know what, Mr. Speaker? There's only a few people in this province — or well in this legislature; we'll say that — and a growing number of people in Saskatchewan and Canada that are saying, in addition to those resources, are we taking the right look at health care and is there an indication in this budget the government's prepared to do it, that the government's prepared to ask the question, are we spending the . . . is the money that we're spending getting to the front line or are we spending too much on administration?

Basic questions, Mr. Speaker, that aren't answered in the budget. So we continue to throw more money into health care. And under this government with its plans, its refusal to look at the system, we see health care waiting lists increasing.

Moving along, Mr. Speaker, we know, you know, the Premier talked a little bit about learning. This government, in education, what did they do, Mr. Speaker, to the foundational operating grants? Zap, you're frozen. They froze those foundation operating grants, Mr. Speaker.

What will that mean for school boards in the province of Saskatchewan? They're going to have to increase taxes. And again I wonder how the members for Regina will vote when their school board perhaps increases local taxes, not because of anything the school board has done but because of the NDP government that they support, the budget that they may actually vote for, if you can believe it, here in a few moments, Mr. Speaker.

They cut the student aid program. We heard the Premier talk about all of the, all the good that the government's doing with respect to post-secondary. Is there a long-term, multi-year plan for funding post-secondary? That's the long-term solution to tuitions by the way, Mr. Speaker, that we propose in our party. Did they talk about that? No.

In fact they cut student financial assistance in the budget, the same budget that the Premier says is all about youth. If this budget is all about youth, Mr. Speaker, with its lack of long-term vision and specific measures like cutting student funding, heaven forbid they bring in a budget that isn't all about youth, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the largest parts of this budget, it fails. That's why people didn't like it. It failed on health care; it failed on education.

What about rural Saskatchewan? It completely let down rural Saskatchewan. It abandoned them. It gave them no hope that they'd reverse their changes they made to the farm fuel tax rebate last budget when they said times were tough, even though they're sitting on a billion two and another 6 or 700 million on top of that at a minimum. It didn't reverse anything that they had done. None of the attacks on rural Saskatchewan are reversed. Is there an indication in this budget that they'll even fully fund CAIS? There's nothing in it. Despite all of this money, there's nothing in it for rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Is there any indication in this budget about a long-term plan for the future? There isn't, Mr. Speaker. At our centennial, time

when the government should be talking about the future, at a time when there should be amazing momentum for us to build on, the government is silent on the future.

The only thing they have to say are things that we heard from the Premier last fall when he came back from Ottawa from meetings, and he was asked about the future of Saskatchewan, us being a have province and have-not equalization . . . a have-not province, Mr. Speaker. You know what the Premier said? He tried to lower expectations for Saskatchewan. He said, we'll always be in and out of equalization. Under his leadership, apparently, we'll always need welfare, Mr. Speaker.

That's the bold vision that we get in our centennial year from a government sitting on a billion two. That's it? I think the Deputy Premier's job's not done yet. We know the Premier doesn't make a move without him. I think it's another . . . It's time for another trip to the woodshed for the Premier.

Because we can't afford that kind of lack of vision in the province of Saskatchewan. Because where has it got us Mr. Speaker? We have the worst job creation record in the country in the last five years when we should have this momentum. We have the second worst population growth record in the country in the last two years.

The Minister for Industry and Resources has been talking around the province how we only mentioned a few statistics for the last quarter of last year. It's not true. We specifically talked about in the last two years we've gained 165 people. The government . . . this budget created more public sector jobs than that, frankly, Mr. Speaker — 165 people.

What about the province of Manitoba — 17,000 more people, 100 times greater than the province of Saskatchewan. Now with all due respect to our friends in Manitoba, I think, given the amazing resources of this province, we should every single year outperform our neighbours to the east, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Wall:** — And that day is coming. That day is coming but the government's going to have to change first, I'm afraid. And so on the issue of vision, let me just conclude with this, Mr. Speaker. Don't take the word, the words of the opposition if you don't want to. The members opposite don't have to. Let's review what the newspaper headlines had to say the day after the budget. "Budget lacks path to future." Quote:

The pioneers whose visions and dreams laid the foundation [of the] province would be aghast at the utter banality [banality, I like that] that's [becoming] the guiding spirit of Saskatchewan a century later.

Here's another one. Budget missing grand visions. Underwhelming, by the Federation of Labour, President Larry Hubich; disappointing, by Marilyn Braun-Pollon, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

Mr. Speaker, last Friday the headline on the front page of *The StarPhoenix* was, and I'm quoting, "Calvert and Co. walking blindly through [the] term". And here's what he had to say:

We are now in the second year of a four-year financial plan, but there's no clear picture of where the government wants to be at the end of it. The budget brought down Wednesday by Finance Minister Harry Van Mulligen continues the trend with a mish-mash of new spending initiatives, half starts and partial responses to political pressure . . . This is a government that campaigned on . . . lower taxes, but can't find its way . . . to [even] roll back last year's tax hikes even at a time when . . . enjoying a purse-busting surplus.

Finally, Murray Mandryk, a columnist at the *Leader-Post*, says:

. . . you truly have to wonder about a wealthy government that think not raising taxes is actually a budget highlight.

Mr. Speaker, you also don't catch a cold from this budget. Maybe that's a budget highlight. And if you're careful, you won't get a paper cut from the budget. Maybe that's also a budget highlight, Mr. Speaker. The truth is, you can't find any highlights. There are more highlights from the NHL [National Hockey League] season that we've just witnessed, Mr. Speaker, than there are in this budget.

And the sad reality is, we can't afford that kind of lack of vision — not one moment longer, Mr. Speaker. And it's why the people of this province, it's why the people of this province are saying, bring on the election. Bring it on. It can't happen soon enough.

In the meantime, in the meantime, we can do our part and members opposite can do their part, Mr. Speaker. They can vote against this budget. And that's what I intend to do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. I notice that the Minister of Finance is rising to speak. I would like to bring to everyone's attention that if there's any other members that wish to speak to this budget, the debate, they should rise and take their place now.

The Chair recognizes the Minister of Finance.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the few minutes that I have available to me to close debate on the motion, I'd like to begin by thanking my family, my friends, my constituents, my colleagues for their support of this budget. I was honoured to stand in the House and deliver the centennial year budget on behalf of this government. I am proud of how this budget builds upon the tradition of supporting Saskatchewan priorities while at the same time reflecting a balanced, responsible approach.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, this budget builds on our key commitments, the commitments that we outlined in the last election campaign; the commitments that we talk about in all our budgets, in all that we do. This builds on providing the

best health care in Canada, making Saskatchewan an affordable place to live and raise a family, building a future here for our young people, and building a green and prosperous economy.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to quickly deal with each of those areas, those key commitments, and to talk about how this budget — and I can't do it exhaustively in the time I have available — but how this budget deals with those key commitments, and also to reflect on the debate that has taken place on the motion with respect to the budget.

First, Mr. Speaker, respect to health care. Our plan in health care is the action plan on health. This is a plan that we put forward a few years ago. It outlines our plan to deal with the major challenges in health care, provides a comprehensive framework for improving our health care system.

That action plan includes four goals. Goal one is to improve access to quality health services. This budget provides money for surgical services, reduced waiting time for diagnostic services, expanding primary care services, enhancing home care services, additional funding for the cancer agency, money to support the cognitive disability strategy, money for an alcohol and drug strategy, catastrophic drug coverage, capital equipment, and capital construction.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Those are specific commitments in this budget in support of that particular goal to improve access to quality health services.

Mr. Speaker, our second goal is effective promotion of health and prevention of illness. We have expanded the childhood vaccination program. We're putting new money in for a provincial public health laboratory, and we're expanding public health capacity. Those are specific measures in this budget to support our plan, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to goal number three, retention and recruitment of health care providers, we are providing for additional College of Medicine seats. There are 280 new, on top of 180 continuing return service bursaries for nursing, specialized health technicians, and other health disciplines. There's 50 new, on top of 65 continuing return service bursaries . . . [inaudible] . . . positions. And 68 additional nursing seats and, Mr. Speaker, efforts to ensure safer workplaces, that is the prevention of needle stick injuries. With respect to that specific goal, again there are measures in this budget that support our plan.

Our action plan has a fourth goal of efficient, accountable, quality health services, information technology, operational system reviews, energy conservation initiatives, and again our budget provides support for those initiatives in our allocation for health care, Mr. Speaker.

So when it comes to the area of health care, which now represents 44 per cent of our operating revenues, 44 per cent of the, if you like, the activities of government, we have a plan. We have a plan.

The question is, Mr. Speaker, the question is, Mr. Speaker, what is their plan? What is their plan? Mr. Speaker, as I listen to them, as I listen to them, Mr. Speaker, they have no plan. They have no plan. Perhaps criticism of the plan that we have is their plan. Non-ending criticism of health care, Mr. Speaker, is their plan.

And when I listen to their criticisms of health care which is usually done in the context of putting before the Legislative Assembly the details of someone who's fallen through the cracks in the health care system — very few I might add — but providing the details of that, I get the sense that what they're trying to do is to undermine public confidence in the public health care system. That is their plan, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, their plan is to undermine public confidence, their plan is to whet the public's appetite for more radical reforms of the health care system because they have a different vision for health care. They have a different plan for health care, but they won't talk about it in public, Mr. Speaker, but we know that's where they're going, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — They're hoping, Mr. Speaker, that by throwing out a few ideas here a few ideas there, that all of it you can masquerade that somehow as a plan. Well I can tell you a point here and a point there doesn't add up to a plan, Mr. Speaker. They have no publicly announced plan for health care, have never had one and I don't know if they'll ever be . . . whether they will ever have the fortitude, Mr. Speaker, to publicly announce what their plan will be in anticipation of an election campaign.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, we have a plan, they have no plan, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, could I just, could I just summarize in listening to some of the debate on this motion and their comments with respect to health care, it's instructive now that they say that the additional funds that the government of Saskatchewan is putting into health care is all federal dollars, doesn't reflect any commitment on the part of the people of Saskatchewan. Well all I can say, all I can say is that if you go, if you go to the budget and you see there that there's an allocation for health in the area of \$1.9 billion . . . \$2.9 billion, \$2.9 billion.

And then you go to the other page and you see there the — you go, yes and you go to the other page and you see the allocation, the revenue item for the Canada Health Transfer, the Canada Health Transfer. And then you put the Canada Health Transfer on top of the budget for health care and you multiply it times 100, you get a percentage figure, Mr. Speaker.

You get a percentage figure and that figure, Mr. Speaker, is 19 per cent, 19 per cent versus 50 per cent that we had a decade ago. What we really need from this opposition is their support as we tackle Ottawa on these tough issues, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, this budget is also about ensuring that Saskatchewan is an affordable place to . . . for people to live and to raise their families. This budget provides another \$55 million in property tax relief, Mr. Speaker.

This budget too, or this budget year, we remain committed to providing the lowest cost utility bundle of utility services for the people of Saskatchewan as we did in the last fiscal year. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to utility prices we will be there for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — And, Mr. Speaker, if the members would take care to simply understand how it is that our social services system worked, they would also appreciate how the shelter allowances that we have announced provide significant support for low-income people in Saskatchewan, very significant support, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this budget is about youth and the Premier went through a long list of initiatives with respect to youth. I just want to reflect on one thing and that is when I read the debates and I listen to the members opposite and their contribution to debate, and especially when it comes to the K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] system. They can only talk about K to 12 education in the context of property tax payers. They can only talk about property tax payers.

Not once, not once did the words quality of education ever cross their lips. Not once. There is no concern over on that side, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the quality of education that we provide for our young people. That surely should be our number one objective when it comes to education.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — That's our objective, Mr. Speaker. That's why we're prepared to show leadership on issues such as school district restructuring and they simply provide followership — leadership over here, followership over there. Mr. Speaker, we remain committed to a quality education for our young people, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, speaking of not saying certain things, Mr. Speaker, and speaking of a green and prosperous economy, one of the amazing things in this legislature is how it is that members opposite, members opposite simply cannot say the words green. They can't say the word green. The word green never crosses their lips. It's like it's some dirty word or something, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to them get with the real world. Everyone on this planet is concerned about the environment. They want to see governments provide leadership. In this budget we are providing leadership. All they can do is criticize and live with their people who would deny global warming and their funny scientists who . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, whether it's the point-of-sale purchases of Energy Star appliances, funds for the Great Sand Hills environmental review, abandoned uranium mine cleanup, Mr. Speaker, money for the Office of Energy Conservation, employment for young people on our Green Teams, continuing with our plan to increase energy generation from wind power, Mr. Speaker — this government has a plan not just for a prosperous economy but to ensure that in the future and now we will have a green economy, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, speaking of a prosperous economy, there are some things that you just can't hide, some things that you can't hide. We can't ignore and we can't hide the reality of what's taking place in rural Saskatchewan, that our agricultural producers are suffering.

But I tell you, Mr. Speaker, we will be there for our producers. We will be there for rural Saskatchewan. We won't be there simply with rhetoric, as is the case of the members on the other side. No, Mr. Speaker, we will be there with cold, hard cash. Have done that before and will be there again, Mr. Speaker. Again, not with words, but with real demonstrable support, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Also can't hide what's taking place in the urban economies in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Booming, booming urban economy in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Growth last year that was 3.2 per cent that I know that the Leader of the Opposition, that's never enough. But 3.2 per cent last year on top of — what was it? — 4.5 per cent the year before. And the projection for this year is 3 per cent above the Canadian average, Mr. Speaker.

This is tremendous growth and this is growth that's borne out in unemployment that's low, in employment increases that are high, Mr. Speaker, investment intentions for next year which is double the national average. But still, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition says, oh we're not doing enough.

Well all I can say is that all the arm waving in the world, all the arm waving in the world and all the gnashing of his teeth can't hide the fact that what is taking place in the urban economies of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And just . . . and he can't, he can't hide, he can't hide for example what we see in *The Southwest Booster* in his own hometown where the headline is "Economic boom expected." In this case to drive transit improvements. And this is a study that's done by people in Swift Current and they say the primary case for improved transit in the city is the current economic boom. The current economic boom.

In presenting their report, the chairperson noted economic activity is occurring on several fronts including new businesses, expansion of existing businesses, regional projects, and downtown, residential, and industrial development. He can deny it. The reality is right there in his hometown, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I could go on at great length of what's taking place in the hometown of the Leader of the Opposition. But in the time that I have available, Mr. Speaker, I don't think I've got time unless you're prepared to give me an extra hour, Mr. Speaker. We could certainly get into it.

Let me just say, Mr. Speaker, that when it comes to economic development our record, our record, the record of the NDP in Saskatchewan is much, much better than any record that we have from the opposition members — much, much better.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, very briefly I'd like to touch on the issue of fiscal management and debt and credit ratings. And I guess all I would say to the people of Saskatchewan is this. We are politicians. They are politicians. They are elected here for their political analysis and the people of Saskatchewan can rely on what it is that they have to say about our fiscal management.

On the other hand, they might also want to pay attention to what it is the credit rating agencies are saying about what is taking place with respect to fiscal management in the province of Saskatchewan because then you get a completely different picture. Where it's nothing but doom and gloom and nitpicking from their side, the credit rating agencies present a very different picture of what is taking place here — the same credit rating agencies that have increased Saskatchewan's credit ratings 11 times in the last 10 years. Why? Because of sound fiscal management here in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — We have credit rating agencies that like our sound financial management. They like the moderate tax supported debt. They like the increasingly diversified economy — not to be confused with the political analysis, Mr. Speaker, from the people on the other side. The credit rating agencies, we shouldn't forget, they make it their business to know about our finances. That's how they make their livelihood, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, our debt, our debt, they can speak about debt all they want, but the reality is our debt as a percentage of our gross domestic product has gone from 69 per cent when it peaked in 1993 — all because of the efforts of the members opposite — is now down to 28 per cent of GDP [gross domestic product]. This is a phenomenal improvement, Mr. Speaker — a phenomenal improvement.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Everybody in the whole world sees it but not the members opposite of course, Mr. Speaker. And of course now our debt is at the lowest point, our lowest point, in 14 years. And, oh yes, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan, one of two provinces in Canada in the last nine years to actually pay down on its government supported debt. That's very significant, Mr. Speaker.

And again one of the reasons that the financial community outside Saskatchewan says, you know, that Saskatchewan government, they know what they're doing; they provide sound financial management. But you would never, never hear that from the opposition, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, again I think our record on financial management, our record of financial responsibility is a good record.

I'll let them speak to their own record, Mr. Speaker. Do they have a record, because some take the position that they're a brand new party and they have no record. Well, that's a record in itself. But just when I get to think that then the member for Souris Cannington reminds us that they have a record because he's busy in the debate on the budget defending the record of Mr. Devine; that same Mr. Devine that racked up our debt, Mr. Speaker, and left us struggling at times to cope with the fiscal challenges that we have.

Mr. Speaker, there were, there were some comments in this budget about apprentices. There are two apprentices on the other side — the Leader of the Opposition and the opposition Finance critic, both of whom served as apprentices under the Devine administration. They've learned well. Mr. Devine says, promise the people the stars, the sun, the moons, everything — anything to get elected. That's what they're doing, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this budget addresses itself to the fiscal realities of Saskatchewan — something they will never do. It's a good budget. It's a budget that deserves to be supported. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Order. Order, please. The House will come to order. Order.

The Minister of Finance has taken his seat. It is the duty of the Speaker at this time to put the budget motions. Before the Assembly there are two questions, first of all the original budget motion put by the Minister of Finance, the member for Regina Douglas Park, and seconded by the member for Moose Jaw North:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

and then the amendment to that main motion put by the member for Saskatoon Silver Springs and seconded by the member for Canora-Pelly, which reads:

That all words after "That the Assembly" be deleted and the following be added:

disagrees with the general budgetary policy of the government because the Premier and cabinet have betrayed low- and modest-income earners by not increasing the basic personal exemption for . . .

Order, please, members, order.

. . . for people who earn less than 35,000 a year, have not included indexation to the food allowance for people living on social assistance, have predetermined the



outcome of collective bargaining for teachers and nurses, have frozen funding for K to 12 education, have not committed to fully fund the province's share of the Canadian agricultural income stabilization program, have not addressed revenue sharing with municipalities, and have not laid out a long-term vision for the province for the next 100 years, therefore this provincial government does not enjoy the confidence of this Assembly.

Members, we will now vote on the amendment to the main motion, the amendment put by the member from Saskatoon Silver Springs, seconded by the member for Canora-Pelly.

Those who favour the amendment, say aye.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Aye.

**The Speaker:** — Those who oppose the amendment, say no.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — I believe the nos have it. Call in the members for a recorded vote.

[The division bells rang from 16:33 until 16:36.]

**The Speaker:** — The vote we're about to take is the amendment to the main motion, moved by the member for Saskatoon Silver Springs, seconded by the member for Canora-Pelly. Would those in favour of the amendment, please rise.

**[Yeas — 27]**

Wall	Toth	Elhard
D'Autremont	Krawetz	Draude
Hermanson	Bjornerud	Stewart
Wakefield	Chisholm	McMorris
Eagles	Gantfoer	Harpauer
Bakken	Cheveldayoff	Huyghebaert
Allchurch	Brkich	Weekes
Kerpan	Merriman	Morgan
Dearborn	Hart	Kirsch

**The Speaker:** — Those who oppose the amendment to the main motion, please rise.

**[Nays — 29]**

Calvert	Addley	Lautermilch
Hagel	Van Mulligen	Serby
Atkinson	Cline	Sonntag
Crofford	Prebble	Forbes
Wartman	Belanger	Higgins
Thomson	Nilson	Beatty
Hamilton	Junor	Harper
Iwanchuk	McCall	Quennell
Trew	Yates	Taylor
Morin	Borgerson	

**Clerk:** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the amendment, 27; those opposed, 29.

**The Speaker:** — I declare the amendment defeated. We will now take the vote on the original motion as moved by the member for Regina Douglas Park, seconded by the member for Moose Jaw North, which reads:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Those who favour the motion, please rise. Pardon me. Pardon me. Pardon me. I'm anticipating incorrectly. Those in favour of the motion, say aye.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Aye.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — I do believe that the ayes have it. Call in the members for a recorded vote.

[The division bells rang from 16:39 to 16:40.]

**The Speaker:** — We'll take the voice vote on the ... individual vote on the original motion, the motion moved by the member for Regina Douglas Park, seconded by the member for Moose Jaw North:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Those who favour the motion, please rise.

**[Yeas — 29]**

Calvert	Addley	Lautermilch
Hagel	Van Mulligen	Serby
Atkinson	Cline	Sonntag
Crofford	Prebble	Forbes
Wartman	Belanger	Higgins
Thomson	Nilson	Beatty
Hamilton	Junor	Harper
Iwanchuk	McCall	Quennell
Trew	Yates	Taylor
Morin	Borgerson	

**The Speaker:** — Those who oppose the motion please rise.

**[Nays — 27]**

Wall	Toth	Elhard
D'Autremont	Krawetz	Draude
Hermanson	Bjornerud	Stewart
Wakefield	Chisholm	McMorris
Eagles	Gantfoer	Harpauer
Bakken	Cheveldayoff	Huyghebaert
Allchurch	Brkich	Weekes
Kerpan	Merriman	Morgan
Dearborn	Hart	Kirsch

**Clerk Assistant:** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 29; those opposed, 27.

**The Speaker:** — I declare the motion carried.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I ask leave of the Assembly to move several motions in regards to referring certain estimates to the various policy field committees.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Finance has requested leave to make several motions. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Finance.

## MOTIONS

### Referral of Estimates to Committee

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the following estimates and supplementary estimates being:

vote 34, Chief Electoral Officer;  
vote 76, Children's Advocate;  
vote 57, Conflict of Interest Commissioner;  
vote 55, Information and Privacy Commissioner;  
vote 21, Legislative Assembly;  
vote 56, Ombudsman;  
vote 28, Provincial Auditor;

be withdrawn from the Committee of Finance and referred to the Standing Committee on House Services.

I move, seconded by the member from Melfort.

**The Speaker:** — The motion moved by the Government House Leader, the member for Regina Douglas Park, seconded by the member for Melfort. Will the members take it as read?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the following estimates and supplementary estimates being:

vote 36, Community Resources and Employment;  
vote 73, Corrections and Public Safety;

vote 27, Culture, Youth and Recreation;

vote 3, Justice;

be withdrawn from the Committee of Finance and referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

I move, seconded by the member for Melfort.

**The Speaker:** — Motion moved by the member for Regina Douglas Park, seconded by the member for Melfort. Will the members take it as read?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the following estimates and supplementary estimates being:

vote 26, Environment;  
vote 12, 18, 175, 176, 177, Finance;  
vote 23, Industry and Resources;  
vote 20, Labour;  
vote 35, Saskatchewan Research Council;  
vote 71, Fiscal Stabilization Fund;  
vote 165, Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan;  
vote 151, Municipal Financing Corporation of Saskatchewan;  
vote 154, Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation;  
vote 152, Saskatchewan Power Corporation;  
vote 153, Saskatchewan Telecommunications Holding Corporation;  
vote 140, Saskatchewan Water Corporation;  
vote 150, SaskEnergy Incorporated;  
be withdrawn from the Committee of Finance and referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

I so move, seconded by the member from Melfort.

**The Speaker:** — On the motion just read by the member for Regina Douglas Park and seconded by the member from Melfort, will members take it as read?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I move:

The following estimates and supplementary estimates

being:

vote 25, First Nations and Métis Relations;  
vote 16, 17, and 145, Highways and Transportation;  
vote 75 and 163, Northern Affairs;  
vote 43 and 144, Rural Development;

be withdrawn from the Committee of Finance and referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:48.]

I move, seconded by the member for Melfort.

**The Speaker:** — Regarding the motion moved by the member for Regina Douglas Park, seconded by the member for Melfort, will members take it as read?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the following estimates and supplementary estimates being:

vote 74, Information Technology Office;  
vote 13, Property Management;  
vote 33, Public Service Commission;  
vote 53, Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation;

be withdrawn from the Committee of Finance and referred to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

I move, seconded by the member for Melfort.

**The Speaker:** — The motion moved by the member for Regina Douglas Park, seconded by the member for Melfort, will the members take it as read?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I move the House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.



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## **CABINET MINISTERS**

Hon. L. Calvert  
Premier

Hon. P. Atkinson  
Minister of Crown Management Board  
Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

Hon. J. Beatty  
Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation  
Provincial Secretary

Hon. B. Belanger  
Minister of Northern Affairs

Hon. E. Cline  
Minister of Industry and Resources

Hon. J. Crofford  
Minister of Community Resources and Employment  
Minister Responsible for Disability Issues  
Minister Responsible for Gaming

Hon. D. Forbes  
Minister of Environment  
Minister Responsible for the Office of Energy Conservation

Hon. D. Higgins  
Minister of Labour  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. J. Nilson  
Minister of Health  
Minister Responsible for Seniors

Hon. P. Prebble  
Minister of Corrections and Public Safety

Hon. F. Quennell  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Hon. C. Serby  
Deputy Premier  
Minister of Rural Development

Hon. M. Sonntag  
Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations  
Minister of Highways and Transportation

Hon. L. Taylor  
Minister of Government Relations

Hon. A. Thomson  
Minister of Learning  
Minister Responsible for Information Technology

Hon. H. Van Mulligen  
Minister of Finance

Hon. M. Wartman  
Minister of Agriculture and Food