



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

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The Honourable Don Toth
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. Don Toth
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall
 Leader of the Opposition — Dwain Lingenfelter

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
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Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
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Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
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Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
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Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
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Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
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Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
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Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege and my honour to introduce to you and, through you, to all members of the House members of Canada's Armed Forces Reserves who are seated in your gallery. I would ask that all members join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

They are Major Brad Hrycyna, commanding officer, Saskatchewan Dragoons; Lieutenant Commander Corey Thiemann, commanding officer, HMCS [Her Majesty's Canadian Ship] Queen; Lieutenant Don Mitchell, executive officer, HMCS Queen; and Captain Andrew Curr, adjutant, Royal Regina Rifles.

Later today, Mr. Speaker, I will be introducing *The Commissioners for Oaths Amendment Act, 2010*. It is a necessary part of the duties of an officer in the Armed Forces to administer oaths, but until now, Saskatchewan has only allowed permanent members to administer oaths for their members of their force. So this will put reservists on the same footing as regular members of the force.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the contribution of all members of our military, and we feel it only appropriate and fair that we have our reservists placed on the same footing as regular members. And this Bill will enable us to do that. We recognize and thank them for their contribution. They give up their time for training and other duties. They may be called up for active duty. Some members have lost their lives, most recently in Afghanistan, and I think it's a small recognition that we can give them for the work that they can do and the contribution that they make to our democracy. Thank you and I would ask that all members join in welcoming them.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with the Minister of Justice in welcoming our guests here today. As members of the Assembly know, my son is a reservist and served in Afghanistan in 2008. And I want to assure our guests, through you, Mr. Speaker, that every member of this Assembly understands the important work done by our reservists in Canada, in Afghanistan, and throughout the entire world and that the government can expect the co-operation of the entire Assembly on the recognition that they want made. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, seated in the east gallery here today, I'd like to

introduce to the Assembly a community leader here in Regina, a gentleman by the name of Steve Ryan. And Steve has been born and raised and educated here in Regina. He has a degree from the University of Regina. He was a student athlete, a member of the Regina Rams, a phenomenal football player in fact, and always a very good supporter of community activities in that role as a student leader throughout that time as well.

He currently is employed with Ranch Ehrlo Society as a leader within that organization, supporting youth at risk and building brighter futures within our province. Him and his fiancée, Hayley, support many causes within our fine city. He comes from a fantastic family, Mr. Speaker. And I know his father, Bob — who I knew personally, who was a senior leader within Ranch Ehrlo Society, who made dramatic changes for the better within our community, who passed away just a few years ago — is remembered fondly within our province for his legacy of making a better future. His mother, Barb, is a phenomenal individual who leads within our community in so many ways. And he has fantastic sisters, Mr. Speaker, and a brother that's pretty special himself, who's a punter for the Seattle Seahawks.

And I know it's been said by our leader before, Mr. Speaker, that Steve entered politics for many reasons: to build a better community, to create better futures for young people, to build an economy. But he also ran, Mr. Speaker, I believe, to become more famous than his professional football-playing brother with the Seattle Seahawks. And he's well on his way. He's a hard worker. And I know that he's running, Mr. Speaker, in the seat for the New Democrats in Regina Qu'Appelle Valley. He's going to work incredibly hard to earn the respect of those voters. And I know if he's privileged to serve, Mr. Speaker, he will do so with respect, with sincerity, and will work incredibly hard on their behalf, Mr. Speaker.

I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in providing a warm welcome to Mr. Steve Ryan, community leader.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

Hon. Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would also like to welcome Mr. Ryan to the galleries, and I'm glad to see that we have young people that are choosing to run for elected office.

At this point in time, I'm pretty much enjoying that role for Regina Qu'Appelle Valley, so I think that I will be giving him stiff competition. But I do not know all of Mr. Ryan's family. I do know his sister, Jill, and her husband who is a Tory MP [Member of Parliament] who also happens to be a very good friend of mine and a supporter of mine. So I'm going to enjoy the competition quite a bit. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to reintroduce a person who, although he doesn't want to admit it, is my cousin — Major Brad Hrycyna is sitting in your gallery — and thank him for his work with the military. And I'd like the Assembly to welcome him to his legislature.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of concerned citizens of Saskatchewan who are growingly concerned about the condition and the safety conditions of our highways. This particular petition pertains to Highway No. 10. And I'll read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to construct passing lanes on Highway No. 10 between Fort Qu'Appelle and the junction of Highway 1 in order to improve the safety of Saskatchewan's motoring public.

And in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good folks from Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of eliminating poverty here in Saskatchewan. And we know citizens living in poverty have long identified affordable solutions. Recent national and provincial initiatives, including the Saskatoon health disparities report and the Canada Without Poverty, Dignity for All campaign, call for a comprehensive poverty elimination strategy. I'd like to read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to act as quickly as possible to develop an effective and sustainable poverty elimination strategy for the benefit of all Saskatchewan citizens.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from Saskatoon, Regina, Fort Qu'Appelle, Melfort, Tisdale, and Star City. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition regarding the need for hospice and palliative care here in Saskatchewan:

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that all Saskatchewan people deserve quality end-of-life and bereavement care; that hospice and palliative care is known to help enhance the quality of life for those facing advancing illness, death, and bereavement; that a publicly funded and administered hospice and palliative care system, including residential hospices, would increase end-of-life care options for Saskatchewan people.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectively request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan cause the provincial government to enhance and increase publicly funded and administered hospice and palliative care, including in-home hospice services and residential hospices, in order to ensure that all Saskatchewan people have access to high quality end-of-life care.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition are from the city of Regina. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition in support of occupational health and safety. Mr. Speaker, the true cost of human suffering or loss of human life cannot be measured in dollars and cents. And the government continues to allow fines levied against companies for violations of occupational health and safety to be treated as tax deductible expenses. And now the government also continues to allow companies to treat these violations as fines levied for them as cost of doing business. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to amend the laws so companies will not be allowed to get a tax deduction for fines levied against them under *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* and regulations and remove the existing cap on fines levied against such companies.

And it's in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And the petition is signed by residents of Warman, Delisle, and Saskatoon and I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the unprecedented mismanagement of our finances by the Sask Party. They allude to the two consecutive deficit budgets, the billions of dollars of debt growth that's accruing under the poor stewardship of the Sask Party as it relates to our finances — \$4.2 billion, Mr. Speaker, in just the next four years. That's 55 per cent growth in our debt, Mr. Speaker, all at a time where revenues are at all-time highs and where that reckless and unsustainable spending has simply outstripped that.

Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may condemn the Sask Party government for its damaging financial mismanagement since taking office, a reckless fiscal record that is denying Saskatchewan people, organizations, municipalities, institutions, taxpayers, and businesses the responsible and trustworthy fiscal management that they so deserve.

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

These petitions today are signed, Mr. Speaker, by good folks and concerned citizens of Humboldt and Saskatoon. I so submit. Thank you.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

Diwali Celebration in Saskatoon

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, on Friday, November 5th, I had the great pleasure of attending the Diwali celebrations at the Sikh temple in Saskatoon along with Naveed Anwar, the NDP [New Democratic Party] candidate in Saskatoon Sutherland. It was a busy and festive evening at the temple as hundreds of Saskatoon's growing Sikh community were in attendance.

Diwali is the festival of light, a time when some of the world's great faiths celebrate the triumph of good over evil, and I was honoured to share this important time with Saskatoon's Sikh community. Mr. Speaker, the hospitality of the Sikh community is second to none. Following the religious rites in the upper level of the temple, we proceeded to the lower level and were treated to a wonderful meal. While the food was certainly delicious, Mr. Speaker, the highlight of the evening was the closing fireworks display. Everyone, young and old, enthusiastically cheered with each whiz, crack, and bang as the fireworks lit up the sky. Those fireworks reminded us of the symbolism of light shining through darkness.

I would like to thank the leaders of the Sikh temple for their hospitality and ask all members to join me in congratulating the Sikh community for organizing such a successful Diwali celebration. To all Sikhs across Saskatchewan: Sat Sri Akal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Valour, Hard Work, Determination, and Commitment

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise with great humility. The words that I'm able to say in this House were made possible by the sacrifices of the men and women that we remember today. Mr. Speaker, I, along with all Canadians, look back in awe at the sacrifices that a generation of Canadians made not only for our country but for the world.

The battles of the past, like World War I and II, was where Canada came of age. They gave birth to Canada's identity. Valour, hard work, determination, and commitment — all these qualities were on display amongst the Canadian men and women that served in the bloody battlefields all those years ago. These are the same characteristics the members of our Armed Forces are continued to be known for today.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the sacrifices of the men and women that served in the past and acknowledge a dedication of bravery of current soldiers stationed in places like Afghanistan and elsewhere around the

world. I would like to offer my sincerest gratitude to all soldiers that paid the ultimate price for freedom and give my respects to their families. I, along with all Canadians, owe them all for the great quality of life that we have today. Lest we forget.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Sacrifice and Remembrance

Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we mark the armistice of November 11th, 1918. It brought an end to the hostilities that were called, tragically and ironically, at first the war to end all wars, later the Great War, and then World War I. Some now consider this the beginning of a long war, a war that started in 1914 and didn't end for almost another 80 years, and it continued in many forms but was fought for one purpose — to secure the liberties of free peoples and to preserve if not advance government with the consent of the governed.

Mr. Speaker, whatever the nature of our current conflicts, whatever the extent of our ongoing struggles, it is fitting to remember the sacrifice. But we must also always remember the purpose of that sacrifice, the only purpose that can justify such a sacrifice — to ensure, in the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln, that government of the people, for the people, by the people shall not perish on this earth.

[10:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Canadians Remember

Mr. Chisholm: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On November 11th Canadians remember the men and women who have served and continue to serve our country during times of war, conflict, and peace. We honour those who fought for Canada in the First World War, Second World War, and the Korean War, as well as those who have served since, particularly now in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, more than one and a half million Canadians have served their country, and more than 100,000 have died doing so. We remember because they gave their lives and their futures so that we may live in peace. We remember those who served as they willingly endured hardships and fears so that we could live in peace. We remember those who faced difficult situations bravely and brought honour to themselves, to their loved ones, and to their country.

We remember those ordinary Canadians who made extraordinary sacrifices. We remember the accounts of war and the observations of individuals who witnessed the true nature of conflict. We remember these accounts of war so that we work diligently to prevent them from happening again. We remember on this day by paying special homage to those who have died in the service of Canada. We remember by wearing poppies, attending ceremonies, and visiting memorials. We remember on this day lest we forget why we must work for peace every day of the year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

A Family's Service

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to honour all Canadians and world citizens who have fought for freedom and democracy, especially over the last 100 years. These men and women, over two major world wars as well as countless other world conflicts, have protected democracy. And our peacekeeping efforts have always been respected. We must always also respect our peacekeepers.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of some of the service of my family members, and I want to say that very openly today. I want to recognize them and tell them that I respect them and support them, and of course we love them: my brother, John, who was a machinist in the Armed Forces for 26 years; my older brother, Wally, who was a flight engineer and served 30 years. My sister, Dawna, served three years. My daughter, Taylor, served at the Esquimalt navy program. My uncle, George, was a World War II vet and spent three years overseas and my cousin, Charles, also served.

And we all learned from my father, who was a World War II veteran, that service is really, really important. Mr. Speaker, as a World War II veteran, he was very proud of his sons and his daughters and his families and their service. At one time he asked me, why didn't you serve? You're a hippie. And I told my father, Mr. Speaker, at the time, dad, I chose not to serve; it doesn't make me a hippie. I'm very proud of my family and very proud of you. Mr. Speaker, I'm also very proud of my community. Our mayor, Duane Favel, and the council have always celebrated this very special day.

I ask all members of the Assembly to pay honour to all those who served their countries and sought world peace. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Estevan.

A Hero in Her Eyes

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in November we honour the veterans who travelled abroad to fight for our country and our freedom.

She felt half her heart go with him as he waved goodbye. She prayed every day for him to return to where he really belongs — home. She knew that whatever happened, she would be proud. She is a soldier's mother. She wanted to raise a son who would grow up to do great things, but she never wanted to imagine her life without him. Now she is forced to prepare for it.

It seemed like only yesterday; he was just a small boy with so much hope, energy, and potential. She smiles as she remembers. He wanted to be a fireman or a police officer. He wanted to make a difference in people's lives. He chose to be a soldier. He wanted to fight for his country, his family, his home. He would make a difference in people's lives.

She could not be more proud of the son she raised. He is a hero in her eyes. If she is lucky enough to see him again, she knew

her heart would be whole and the world would be a better place. If he didn't make it home, if she didn't get to hold him again, she knew he would have made the ultimate sacrifice. She would have made the ultimate sacrifice, and the world would be a better place. Now the whole world remembers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Supporting Our Veterans

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My dad is a veteran of World War II. He served as an airplane mechanic. He's now a resident of Sherbrooke's Veterans Village. He's 88 years old and his fellow residents are much the same age. They cannot share their stories anymore, as they're pretty fragile. And they're not in the home for long, as most of the veterans of that war are sadly dying. My dad is well cared for and respected in his home, but what really upsets me is that not all the veterans of our armed conflicts are being cared for or given the support that they need after serving our country.

We hear so many reports today of lack of financial support from the federal government for our injured soldiers and in our armed conflicts. Men and women who have lost limbs, eyesight, mobility, or have received other life-altering injuries; who have lifelong post-traumatic stress and the subsequent difficulties living with that disorder; families who have lost wives, husbands, sons, daughters, moms, and dads who have to fight for survivor benefits — all of these stories of struggling to live with the consequences of war and struggling to be compensated.

Canada has proudly sent soldiers to war to defend democracy around the world. It is shameful to hear and see the lack of respect for men and women who were and continue to be those defenders.

So on this, the 2010 Remembrance Day, I want us to remember our veterans and all of our soldiers past and present, but to also demand that they be supported financially for the damage that service has done to them and their families. I want all veterans to have what my dad has — dignity and pride.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Foreign Investment in Uranium Industry

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier, and it's dealing with what most Saskatchewan people and Canadians believe to be one of the most strategic resources in this province, our uranium in northern Saskatchewan.

Yesterday the Premier indicated that he was in favour of Bill C-436, which would open up our uranium resources to foreign ownership to a greater degree than they are today. My question to the Premier is this: how is it consistent for the people of this province, who are urging us to have more control over our resources, potash and uranium, why do we choose now to open it up for more foreign ownership of the uranium in

Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the position is completely consistent. We said very clearly to the national government of the people of Canada and Saskatchewan, in the case of the potash takeover, that we welcomed BHP's intention to build a new mine at Jansen Lake. We still welcome that new project. What we do not welcome is the takeover of the reserves of potash in the province of Saskatchewan.

That same logic would also apply to uranium. Mr. Speaker, it is a strategic resource. We have it in abundance. And while it's important that we allow for foreign investment in individual mines, we don't want foreign control of the reserves, Mr. Speaker. And the two things can exist together, just as they can in terms of the potash industry, Mr. Speaker. We want to continue to be open to international investment, but we want to maintain control of strategic reserves for the people of Saskatchewan and Canada.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — But I think, Mr. Speaker, this clearly outlines why the public in Saskatchewan sees inconsistency in the Premier's approach. Because on the one hand he argues that we want more control over resources, and I think probably 80 per cent of Saskatchewan people believe we should have more control. Then on the other hand, flip-flop, now he wants more foreign ownership in an even more strategic resource, uranium.

And even the CEO [chief executive officer] of Cameco is seeing this inconsistency. And I want to quote from today's *Leader-Post* where he says, he said the provincial position of simply eliminating the current non-residency policy, and I quote:

Just failing to understand that so much of the rest of the world regulate their uranium and nuclear industry in a much more closed way than . . . we do today.

This is the CEO of Cameco saying we shouldn't move to more open ownership by foreigners than other competitors in other parts of the world. Given that, why is the Premier choosing today to open up and sell off even more of a strategic resource, that being the uranium in Northern Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan is not in favour of foreign control of the uranium reserves of the country and of our province. The Government of Saskatchewan is in favour of foreign investment, though, in uranium, Mr. Speaker, and in potash.

Well the members opposite are laughing. Maybe they believe this is an inconsistent position.

An Hon. Member: — Yes it is.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well the hon. member for Athabasca says, yes it's inconsistent. Funny that, because it is exactly the

position held by the NDP when they were in office, Mr. Speaker.

In 2007 Minister Cline wrote to the federal government and said we want the non-resident ownership policies — the same foreign ownership prevention he's talking about today — we want them changed, Mr. Speaker. This letter clearly highlights that while he was in the cabinet in 1997, they didn't agree with Mr. Grandey. They believed that foreign investment could occur in a new mine, Mr. Speaker, but the difference is on the control of the reserves, Mr. Speaker.

That's what they believed in '97 when he was in the cabinet. That's what Minister Cline wrote under the NDP to the federal government in 2007. Mr. Speaker, there's flip-flops going on on that side of the House.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Arrangements Regarding Long-Term Care Facilities

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the last provincial election, the Premier and his colleagues promised to be the most accountable and transparent government in the history of the province. But on Monday, they responded to a freedom of information request by blacking out or censoring over 900 pages of the relevant information regarding Amicus.

My question is to the Premier. My question is to the Premier: how can members of this Assembly do their job when the government that he's in control of censors the relevant information? How are members of the public supposed to make informed judgments of the work of their government without the information?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the freedom of information request the member opposite's referring to came from the health region, not the ministry. They have restrictions they need to live by. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House the member referred to the relationship with the Catholic Health Ministry . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Allow the minister to respond to the question placed by the member from Saskatoon Nutana. Order. Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House the member opposite referred to the relationship with the Catholic Health Ministry as cronyism. Mr. Speaker, the Catholic Health Ministry does many good projects around the province. We also have a good working relationship with the Lutheran church through Lutheran Place.

Mr. Speaker, if another faith-based organization or a non-profit organization would like to come forward with suggestions for new, innovative ways of providing long-term care, our government will be happy to sit down, talk to them, listen to

them. Mr. Speaker, we're not afraid to look at innovative ways of providing health care service, Mr. Speaker, unlike the members opposite who closed long-term care beds.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the member believes the answer that he just gave this Assembly, he also believes in the tooth fairy, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, his Ministry of Health had all of the appropriate material redacted.

Now, last spring we learned that Michael Stensrud, someone appointed by this government to the Saskatoon Health Region and also happens to be a major Sask Party supporter, had received the untendered contract to build the Amicus facility. We were assured, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Stensrud had recused himself from any discussions related to the Amicus deal.

So to the minister: what assurances can he give us that Mr. Stensrud has kept that promise, given that the government has censored most of the relevant information in its response to my FOI [freedom of information] request?

[10:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can answer that question with a quote from Mr. Paul Ellis who is on the board of directors of the Catholic Health Ministry, Mr. Speaker. His quote is:

Because we're a private entity that will fully cover the capital costs of the facility [that's fully cover the capital costs, Mr. Speaker] and assume any risks associated with its construction, the government was not involved in the tendering process.

Mr. Speaker, it's obvious the member opposite isn't concerned about long-term care. What the member opposite is concerned about is smearing two well-respected families in this province.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, what the member opposite is concerned about is going back to the dark old days of Grant Devine in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Mike Stensrud's donated more than \$16,000 to the Sask Party. Then his company, Miners Construction, receives the untendered contract to build the Amicus facility.

I'm interested that the minister refers to Paul Ellis because Mr. Stensrud was supposed to have recused himself from any discussions related to this deal. But one of the few pieces of information in the FOI that wasn't completely blacked out reveals that on May 20th — the day there was a bad editorial regarding that government in *The StarPhoenix* — Mr. Stensrud emails to the Saskatoon Health Region staff and board members an advance copy of a letter to the editor written by Paul Ellis of the Catholic Health Ministry.

So to the minister, to the minister: what other discussions related to Amicus did Mr. Stensrud participate in? Is there information related to other discussions included in the blacked out material? What is that government hiding, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite never met a conspiracy theory that she didn't like.

Mr. Speaker, I will read another quote from Paul Ellis. And it says, "We take serious exception to any allegation that any political influence impacted the awarding of this contract."

Mr. Speaker, this is a pilot project, going to be evaluated, and if it works out well, we'll be looking at expansion.

Mr. Speaker, I have news for the member opposite. She's concerned about everyone that she says are Sask Party supporters. Well, based on a recent poll, the vast majority of Saskatchewan citizens are Sask Party supporters.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, the government promised to be the most open and accountable government in the history of the province, maybe the history of the world. But what did we get on Monday? We got 900 pages of redacted material. They try and lay it on the doorsteps of the Saskatoon Health Region. Well I can assure the members: that's not going to work because it was that government that had that material blacked out.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they said that this wasn't a loan guarantee. I want them to answer this question. An email dated May 12th between the Saskatoon Health Region officials contained an attachment entitled, "Saskatoon Regional Health Authority loan guarantee." This is followed by several pages whose contents were completely censored except for KPMG's letterhead.

So to the minister: given all this, how can the Sask Party claim that they didn't sign a loan guarantee? And if this is not a loan guarantee, then why is the information censored, Mr. Speaker? What are they hiding?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, as far as a loan guarantee goes, another quote from Mr. Ellis: "Any suggestion that the provincial government is providing a loan guarantee is false."

Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite is truly concerned about long-term care in this province . . . Mr. Speaker, what is our government doing for long-term care? An innovation project with the Catholic Health Ministry.

Mr. Speaker, we also are providing \$143 million for 13 new long-term care beds throughout the province, regardless of the opposition critic trying to mislead the communities in thinking those projects are cancelled. They're not, Mr. Speaker; they're going forward.

What was their record on long-term care, Mr. Speaker? One hundred and thirty-six beds cut, cancelled. Mr. Speaker, not under this government.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — A good segue, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Highways talked about the Sask Party record on long-term care beds. Well, Mr. Speaker, this year alone, 30 beds were closed at Muskeg Lake, 5 beds in Wawota, 16 beds closing in Canora, 15 beds in Melville, 6 beds in Kamsack, 6 beds in Esterhazy, and 10 beds in Carlyle that I have heard of.

Mr. Speaker, that's 88 long-term care beds being closed because of the Sask Party's deficit budget. That's 88 seniors who need a long-term care bed and don't have one and are being forced to move away from family and friends because the Sask Party is closing beds in their home communities. Mr. Speaker, half a year into this deficit budget, 88 long-term care beds are being closed.

To the minister: how many additional beds will be closed because of the Sask Party's financial mismanagement?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I find it unusual that the member opposite is suddenly concerned about rural Saskatchewan, which they neglected for 16 years. Fifty-two hospitals closed, which she said in her Throne Speech debate the other day that people don't want to talk about anymore. Well, Mr. Speaker, people in rural Saskatchewan do want to talk about that.

Our record for long-term care facilities, Mr. Speaker: 13 new projects announced, \$143 million. We're providing long-term care for our residents.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, not only has the Sask Party closed 18 long-term care beds in this year alone, that's six months of this year, they have broken their promise to build 13 new long-term care facilities in rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I've travelled to 10 of those 13 communities, and there are no new facilities being built. Those facilities and those people are being told that they won't receive money until at least the fall of 2011.

To the minister: with the new Amicus model, why can't all these communities have their long-term care facility projects start right now?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member just said 13 projects cancelled, and yet my colleague from Arm River just informs me they just had a sod-turning for the project there.

Mr. Speaker, unlike the members opposite, when we have a . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I'd ask the members to allow the minister to respond to the question from the member from Saskatoon Eastview. The Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unlike the members opposite, when this government has a sod-turning, we follow through with construction.

Mr. Speaker, that member has toured the province, sent letters to all kinds of communities telling them that their projects are cancelled. That does a complete disservice to health care foundations, like in my community of Rosetown, who are trying to raise money. And then people read those things in a letter saying the project's cancelled, which is not true, Mr. Speaker. Those projects are going forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, get the shovel in the ground. It's freezing up, and people can't live in a photo op.

But it's interesting the minister talked about Rosetown. I was in Rosetown, and the people in Rosetown did not know about this new Amicus deal. These communities, those 13 communities are out having teas and bake sales and putting on health levy, and they don't know about Amicus and the new deal in town. So in the minister's very own community, why isn't he telling them about Amicus and what it means to that community and giving them that option?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member talked about fundraising going on in the community. That's absolutely right. The citizens of my community are working hard to raise money for that project. And that member . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. The member from . . . Order. Order. Order. Order. The member from Prince Albert Northcote, the member from Prince Albert Northcote will allow the Minister of Highways to respond to the question.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, the member trying to convince people that project's cancelled when it isn't is not doing anyone any good. People of Rosetown recognize for what that is; it's crass politics, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, her new-found care, concern for rural Saskatchewan is almost laughable. I've lived my life in rural Saskatchewan. I saw what 16 years of NDP neglect, in fact disdain, for rural Saskatchewan did. And that's one of the reasons I chose to run for politics, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the people in Rosetown would be happy to hear from this person, who chose to run because of the big record that wasn't there for the people in rural Saskatchewan, why he hasn't talked to them, why he does not talk to them. Why do they not know in Rosetown about the deal that Amicus got in Saskatoon? Why don't they know in Kerrobert? Why don't they know in Kelvington? Why don't they know in Shellbrook? Why don't they know in Prince Albert? Why don't they know in Meadow Lake? Why don't they know?

Nobody on that side, nobody in that government is telling these communities that there's a new deal in town. They don't have to raise 35 per cent. If you're in Saskatoon and you have friends in the Premier's office, you don't have to. So why can't the rest of these communities have their money now and get their projects going?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that member insinuates that somehow we're hiding this. Mr. Speaker, it was in the Throne Speech. Mr. Speaker, the people of Rosetown are well aware of what's going on in this province. They're well aware of what the members opposite did when they were in government. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't need that member to tell me how to communicate with the good people of Rosetown.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

Saskatchewan Government Insurance

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, in October the Sask Party government directed SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] to change its policy so that as of January the 1st of 2011, brokers who sell SGI motor licences and plates will no longer have to carry or sell products from SGI Canada. When asked about it, the Minister Responsible for SGI admitted that the primary beneficiary of this policy change will be private insurers like big banks and out-of-province corporations, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the minister is simply this: why would this government undermine SGI, the people's-owned corporation, in order to benefit private insurers, and the profits go largely outside Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite, I don't want to say he's misquoted me on the floor of the legislature, but the reality is, Mr. Speaker, that when we announced that the requirement that SGI licensing issuers would no longer be required to also sell property and casualty insurance from SGI, when we made that announcement, we met with IBAS [Insurance Brokers' Association of Saskatchewan].

One of their first concerns was that the banks may not have a

fair, may not be a fair competitor. Immediately, Mr. Speaker, the discussion was that that would be something that we would look at. Subsequent discussions, that they would probably not be allowed to sell . . . have a motor licensing issuer in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. So for that member to make that assertion, Mr. Speaker, is not . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. The member from Saskatoon Fairview continues to want to answer the question when I had opened the floor to the Minister of Crown Investments. I ask the minister to . . . to allow the minister to complete the response.

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — So, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to clear that up for the member. I think that one of the primary beneficiaries may be the company, the Co-operators. It was founded here in Saskatchewan. It wasn't until the mid-'70s when those members outlawed the rights of a company from Saskatchewan like the Co-operators to offer this product line. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, this policy change which the Sask Party government made will take away a market share from SGI, and it will affect SGI's bottom line, its financial viability. But there may be some hope, Mr. Speaker. There's a quote from the minister in *The StarPhoenix* saying that the final decision hasn't been made, he'll revisit this policy change. He may even change his mind, Mr. Speaker.

So my question is this: since the final version of this policy change has not been written, and since there is still time to reverse your decision, will the minister reverse his decision and not undermine SGI, the people's corporation owned by every citizen of the province, and not force this change to occur?

[10:45]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite seems to be taking to paraphrasing my quotes, Mr. Speaker, and he does a rather poor job of it. I think if he's concerned about the viability of SGI, I spent the summer touring Saskatchewan, to communities that were ravaged by flooding, Mr. Speaker. We heard repeatedly that SGI was a leader in Saskatchewan, that they were standing up for the people that had insurance policies with them, and really led the industry and ensured that the industry tried to get up to the standard SGI met.

I'm confident that they will maintain market share. They will grow their market share, Mr. Speaker. For that member to talk about SGI losing ground, Mr. Speaker, if we look at the last time those guys were in government, Mr. Speaker, they felt that SGI needed these sorts of protections. They were looking for solutions where the government would step in to protect SGI. I know SGI is a strong company that will stand on its own.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, nothing prevented the Co-operators from also selling SGI products so they could obtain a licence to both issue motor licences and plates, Mr. Speaker. So we're going to allow a company to sell only their own products, Mr. Speaker, where many SGI brokers, in fact the majority, sell various insurances from many, many companies, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, we now have a new Minister Responsible for the Crown Corporations in our province, but the government's approach, Sask Party's approach, hasn't changed at all. The Premier continues to undermine our Crown corporations by cutting off little pieces of them one at a time, reducing their market share, and destabilizing their financial viability for the long term, Mr. Speaker.

And what's most frustrating is that Saskatchewan's people, who own these Crowns, are the ones who are going to pay a price, both now and in the long term, for this Premier's ideological vision and agenda. Why is the Sask Party government so determined to undermine our Crown corporations, and why are they doing so by stealth and not being honest and forthright with the people of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, doesn't recognize that SGI is here to serve the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

If that member thinks that our government doesn't stand behind our Crowns, he is wrong. We have invested more in our Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, in the first three years of our government than they have in several. In the last two years of government, Mr. Speaker, they spent \$1.2 billion investing in our Crowns. This year alone, Mr. Speaker, we will spend \$1.2 billion on the Crowns.

If, Mr. Speaker, they think that there is some agenda to damage the Crowns, Mr. Speaker, that agenda is from the early 2000s when those members made bad investments, Mr. Speaker, in Channel Lake, in SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company], Mr. Speaker. And if you want to know, Mr. Speaker, who was making those decisions, Mr. Speaker, he now sits six desks in on that side of the House.

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. I just want to remind members and the member from Regina Dewdney that when placing questions or responding, to ensure that the words used are words that will really build up the character of the Assembly. And the comment about not being honest is, as I look at the words over the years, does not fit with what Speakers have ruled in the past have been words that are seen as really to be used in the Assembly to uplift the debate. So I'd ask members to be mindful of that in future questions.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 149 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 149, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010* be now introduced and read the first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has moved that Bill No. 149, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010* be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 150 — *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2010*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 150, *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2010* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has moved that Bill No. 150, *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2010* be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 151 — *The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies Amendment Act, 2010*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education and Immigration.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 151, *The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies Amendment Act,*

2010 be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister Responsible for Advanced Education and Immigration has moved that Bill No. 151, *The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies Amendment Act, 2010* be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 152 — *The Commissioners for Oaths Amendment Act, 2010*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 152, *The Commissioners for Oaths Amendment Act, 2010* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has moved that Bill No. 152, *The Commissioners for Oaths Amendment Act, 2010* be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 153 — *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has moved that Bill No. 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010* be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt

the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 154 — *The Provincial Court Consequential Amendment Act, 2010/Loi de 2010 portant modification corrélative à la loi intitulée The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 154, *The Provincial Court Consequential Amendment Act, 2010* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has moved that Bill No. 154, *The Provincial Court Consequential Amendment Act, 2010* be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 155 — *The Natural Resources Amendment Act, 2010*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 155, *The Natural Resources Amendment Act, 2010* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of the Environment has moved that Bill No. 155, *The Natural Resources Amendment Act, 2010* be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 616 — *The Bed Bugs — Right to Know Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 616, *The Bed Bugs — Right to Know Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Massey Place has moved first reading of Bill No. 616 . . . Order. The member from Saskatoon Massey Place has moved that Bill No. 616, *The Bed Bugs — Right to Know Act* be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

Mr. Broten: — Next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 39 through 83.

The Speaker: — Questions 39 through 83 are tabled.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and it's indeed a pleasure to enter the debate on the Throne Speech. And I do want to just recognize and say thank you to a few people before I start my speech.

First of all, I want to say congratulations to the new member from Saskatoon Northwest. I had an opportunity to work in that campaign, and I know that it was enjoyable. And I know the new member did a lot of work and has a very, very distinguished reputation in Saskatoon as a strong council member. And I wish him the best in the Assembly, and I know that he'll do a good job on behalf of his constituents.

I want to say as well that in working that riding I got to know a number of people very well. In fact coming once a week to the constituency, I think I know poll 12 in Saskatoon Northwest probably better than most of the polls in my own riding. So I've got to get back to work. But there are some special people I met while I was working in that riding, and if the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] doesn't mind, I will be back to visit a few of them because we actually got to know each other very well. But I do want to congratulate him on a job well done.

I want to thank as well the staff here in the building, particularly our caucus staff for the work they do in helping us every day getting ready for speeches and question period every day and also to the staff in my office. Fred Kress, who has come to work for me recently, is doing a good job, as well as my former CA [constituency assistant] Pat Porter who worked for many years with the former member, Harry Van Mulligen, and did a wonderful job. I just want to thank both of them for the work that they have done and will do.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, it's a special day for me because it's my father's birthday. He is 94 years old today, November 10th, and I just wanted to recognize him because he . . . obviously one of the pioneers in Saskatchewan. And although he didn't give the nine children very much money, what he did teach us is determination and hard work. And I just want to thank him very much for that on his 94th birthday and to say happy birthday to him.

I want to say as well a special thank you to my family, my immediate family of Rubiela and our five children, who have to put up with the work I do and the many hours. And I know all members of the Assembly can agree on this thing, that our families, without their support and kindness when we go home at night, we wouldn't be able to do our work. So I do want to thank Rubiela and the kids for all their work they do on a daily basis in getting things ready that normally the father or the dad should be doing that they have to pick up.

The other issue that I would say is that without my many sisters that I have, who politic for me . . . And I know other members of the Assembly have the support of their work as well in their constituencies. They're great organizers and I want to thank them also.

But most of all, I want to thank the team here, the 19 members of the New Democratic caucus who have been extremely supportive and work with me on a daily basis. Thank you for your patience and hard work. As I said to the press after the recent poll came out, there's a lot of work to do, and what we

need is determination, smarter work. And I know that we're all up to it. And as your leader, I intend to do just that. And with the right determination, the right amount of hard work, we can do a lot of good things for the province of Saskatchewan.

And I know that being Leader of the Opposition . . . I've talked to Allan Blakeney about the years that we spent together as desk mates. Allan had this desk, and I sat where the now deputy leader sits. And it was an interesting time because we had just been defeated by a young premier by the name of Grant Devine.

[11:00]

And Grant Devine was an interesting person because he was elected leader and didn't have a seat in the Assembly. I believe that was in 1980, and the seat was opened up in Estevan, and the then leader of the opposition ran in late 1980. And Premier Blakeney invited me to go and help with the campaign and manage the campaign that the leader was running in, in Estevan.

And it was considered a safe seat for the Conservative Party. And it was an amazing campaign. And it could be, Mr. Speaker, that you actually were involved in that campaign in one way or the other. Maybe not, never. But the issue is that in a safe seat, the leader of the Conservative Party lost that seat. And so you can imagine the devastation of the leader of the opposition, having won the leadership, then having a safe seat opened up, lost the by-election. And on the night of the election, it was a very quiet party at the Conservative headquarters in Estevan. And I remember going over to greet the leader who had just lost his seat.

But what amazed me was the determination of two individuals.

Grant Devine who then had no seat and was under considerable scrutiny by the press as to whether or not he had any chance of winning the election in 1982 . . . and he was written off by almost all political pundits as being a failure and no way his party could ever come back. But lo and behold, within 18 months, not only did he win government but won 56 of the 64 seats, and it was an amazing comeback.

But even more impressive was the role of Allan Blakeney after the defeat of 1982. And I remember visiting him in his office, and he was there at work the day after the defeat, didn't take any time off. I went to see him. And I couldn't imagine how an individual who had just went from a majority government to eight seats could actually have the stamina and the moral courage to stand up in the House day after day because at that time there were 56 members of government and 8 members of the opposition.

And we had more government members on this side than we had opposition. There were 8 of us and 15 Conservative MLAs on this side of the House, and it wasn't easy. And people talk about the noise in the House now. I'll tell you, at that time when Blakeney was asking his questions from this desk, most days you couldn't distinguish his voice on the mike because the heckling wasn't coming from that side of the House. It was coming from right here. And they were pretty good at it, and they did a lot of it. But Blakeney was determined, and he

worked hard. And it didn't get better right away.

In fact one of our seats was contested in the Hammersmith seat in Prince Albert where there was a controvert. We had won it on election night, but a year and a half later or two years later, we actually lost the seat pretty convincingly. And we continued what looked like a downward slide, and it was not easy to be leader of the opposition then. In talking to Blakeney over the last few months and to Premier Romanow, they say this is not the most fun place to be, but it's very important work. And that's the attitude I take to this.

And I really urge all of the members of the New Democratic Party and the members of the caucus to understand that life in politics, especially in opposition, can be discouraging. But we need to have strength. We need to have openness, honesty, hard work because the principles that we stand for and the principles that the party opposite stand for are important and the work you do is important. And with that in mind, I just want to thank my MLAs and urge their hard work, understanding, and we will do a great job in finishing off the last year. And with a little bit of luck and good planning, we'll be very competitive when the election comes in November 7th of 2011.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, on the issue of the Throne Speech, and I don't intend to speak long today, but I do want to add some comments about the speech. Obviously the speech had a lot of words but not very much substance, and this was certainly picked up by the media in Saskatchewan who called the new road or the new pathway for the government to be full of potholes. And I think it's true because most of the Throne Speech was backward-looking. And I always have the idea that running a government down the road or running a vehicle down the road while you're looking in the rear-view mirror isn't a very good idea because you may end up in the ditch. And I think that there are many things in this Throne Speech that will take the government in that direction if there aren't new ideas that come forward before the next election.

One of the most discouraging things in the Throne Speech was the lack of any discussion or meaningful assistance for farmers in the province who have been really left out in the cold when it comes to getting assistance from the provincial government.

And I want to say as well that the need for photo identification, the one piece of legislation that is referred to, I want to say that this opposition is going to be fighting any attempt to exclude people from voting in the next election by the use of photo ID [identification]. We're going to fight as hard as we can to stop any kind of legislation that would do that from happening.

And the reason that I want to make that public and make it clear is so that people don't think we're being negative about it. In fact it's a very positive move to oppose this legislation, because it will exclude many of the pioneers like my father who, in long-term care, would find it very difficult to find their way to get photo ID. Many of them for 10, 15 years haven't driven. Many of the elderly women never drove in their lives. They don't have photo ID. They likely never will have photo ID.

And if the thought here is to insist that every senior in every long-term care home has to have photo ID in order to vote in the next election, that there's any intent to disenfranchise

people who have voted all their lives and built this province, and to take the right to vote away because they don't have photo ID, this is wrong. And we will make a point of it and we will fight that legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I refer again to agriculture because I want to spend a little bit of time talking about the devastating flooding that occurred in this province. And many of my colleagues were out and involved with the farming community during this crisis. We met in many communities across the province, but particularly in the central part of the province almost from the centre of the province, or Saskatoon, all the way to Yorkton — a very, very large area of devastation.

And then adding on to that, Mr. Speaker — and you will know because we've chatted briefly about it in your office — the terrible condition of many of the crops in the province. Then to overlay that with late seeding and late crops, with a frost that devastated much of the crop that was still green in the field, and we called on the provincial government, and municipal governments called on the provincial government, to make a payment of \$100 per acre for unseeded, flooded, and those crops that were wiped out because of the terrible condition of the soil because of the rainfall and the terrible amount of water that was accumulating on the land.

And the response from the provincial government was meagre indeed. Although most farmers thanked the government for the \$12 an acre, everyone knows that the cost of combining in the province is at least \$20 an acre. The cost of fertilizer is \$20 an acre. And when farmers start adding up what their costs are, \$12 an acre is not nearly enough from the provincial government.

At a time when the resources of the province are booming, at a time when oil is getting back close to \$100 a barrel, this is not a time to be treating farmers with this kind of disrespect. There's many provinces that have gone through similar kind of circumstances. The auto industry, I take as an example, in Ontario. The Premier there went to Ottawa and demanded to get billions of dollars for the people of Ontario and for their auto industry, and we all shared in that. The money came forward. The money was paid to the auto industry and it survived, and the tens of thousands of jobs involved are still there.

And, Mr. Speaker, our farming community is in that kind of a condition today. They need help. They need much more than \$12 an acre, and I would urge the provincial government, before the session ends, to make a commitment that the \$100 per acre that is needed to see farmers, grain farmers, through this winter, is paid out so that they're in some sort of a position in order to pay their taxes, pay interest, make land payments, pay for crop insurance premiums which are now coming due, so that indeed they will be around in the spring in order to seed next year's crop.

In the area of livestock, I know the government and the minister made an announcement yesterday. There has been a call from APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan] and the cattle producers in the province of a four-point program. And what has been called for is \$150 per head for breeding stock, \$75 a head for the yearling cattle that would be carried over, feed subsidy program, and also a reseeded of

flooded acres.

The program announced by the Premier and the minister yesterday covers off feed assistance, and that's much appreciated. It also covers off \$30 an acre for reseeded of flooded land, but it does not deal with the most fundamental part, and that is \$150 a head for breeding stock so that feed can be purchased to carry the cattle through this winter.

And most analysts predict that if, in fact, this kind of a payment isn't forthcoming from the provincial government and the federal government, that the devastation we've seen in the red meat industry in this province since 2007 will continue. Beef production is down since 2007. In the area of hog production, it's even worse. I think it's now only 50 per cent of what it was in 2007. Half of the hog herd has disappeared, and this is a major part of the economy of rural Saskatchewan.

And so I'm urging the Premier and urging the government and urging all members of the Assembly to understand the devastation and hardship that there is in rural Saskatchewan, and that these kind of payments be made, and that they be made from the profits that we're receiving from the resources that we're blessed with right across this province, and urge them also to make sure that when farmers go to seed the crop next year, that they have the money to buy diesel fuel, to buy the fertilizer, to make the payments so that indeed the agricultural economy, which is fundamental to the province, is there for another year.

Because, Mr. Speaker, while the non-renewable resources are important — potash, uranium, oil, gas, they're very important to the economy — at the end of the day, we are still an agriculture-based economy. And while the percentage of the GDP [gross domestic product] may be smaller than it was 10 years ago or 20 years ago, no one can tell me that if you allow the collapse of the red meat industry and the grain industry in this province, that we are going to have as meaningful a society and economy as we have with agriculture. And we need to get that kind of a payment in place.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to health care, we all know that our health care is the best in the world. Canada has the medicare system that was created here in the great debates that went on in this Assembly during the creation of the medicare system with Tommy Douglas and Woodrow Lloyd. We are the inheritors of a great health care system. And what is sad, as I travelled around the province and the Health critic and Labour critic travelled the province, was the devastation that's occurring and the unravelling of the health care system in many parts of the province. And this is true in places like Leader, where I attended meetings with hundreds of people who had come out to protect their system because they want their hospital and ambulance service to remain.

And the fact of the matter is, because of lack of funding and lack of responsible action by the government, many of the health care systems and health care regions in the province are starved for money and they're having to make tougher and tougher decisions. That means that ambulance service is cancelled. Projects to do long-term care facilities are on hold because they're being forced to raise 35 per cent of the funding while Saskatoon, a new centre, untended, is being built there

without that kind of 35 per cent.

And we're asking for fairness. The same rules should apply in Saskatoon for the construction of a nursing home, a facility for long-term care as happens in the rest of the province. It simply isn't fair that in the 13 communities in rural Saskatchewan they have to hold bake sales and do bottle drives and hold picnics to raise their 35 per cent while the residents in Saskatoon or Regina don't have to raise the 35 per cent.

So we're urging for a level playing field between rural and urban Saskatchewan. And we're going to be making a concerted effort over the coming weeks and months to make sure that every rural citizen understands that there's a two-tier system when it comes to building long-term care homes.

[11:15]

Now others will argue, well that's being negative, that you shouldn't tell the truth about the funding system that's in place. But the fact is that we will insist that this government, if they have one program for urban people which is fair, that they make a change that the resources of the province pay for long-term care. I don't mind them making that change. I think they should make it.

Our policy is that you had to raise 35 per cent, but as we get more money from resources and can afford more, we should get rid of the 35 per cent. But what isn't fair is that you do it for certain people in certain areas of the province, especially when you're using untendered contracts to get there. It's not fair to make rural communities to do something different, and we're going to be making a point of that.

Mr. Speaker, as it relates to the finances of the province, I know that our critic commented a great deal on the fact that when this government was elected in 2007, the economy was booming. And we had record numbers of oil wells being drilled, record numbers of gas wells. Oil production was on the rise. Gas production was rising. Hog production was at a peak. Many of those things have changed and changed pretty fundamentally.

As I mentioned, hog production in the province is half of what it was in 2007. That is not a good sign of good financial stewardship. Oil production is down, from 2007 to 2009, is down by 2 per cent. Now to hear the Premier speak, you would expect that it's up by 20 or 30 per cent or some fantastic number. Oil production is down in this province between 2007 and 2009. Gas production is down by 12 per cent. Gas production between 2007 and 2009, gas production has decreased. Oil wells and gas wells being completed in the province has dropped, between '07 and '09 from 3,500 to 1,500 — half of what it was when Lorne Calvert was premier.

Now these are interesting statistics, and they're ones that the public needs to get to know. Because if they're listening to speeches from the members opposite, they don't hear these facts. And my members and the members of our party have to be ensured that the facts of the oil industry are better known so that we can have policy in place that will get us back to the drilling numbers that were there when Lorne Calvert was premier, and we get the gas production back and higher than it was when Lorne Calvert was premier. Because Lorne Calvert

as premier took the economy of Saskatchewan to a peak that it had never been before and hasn't been since, and he deserves credit for that and the team of MLAs and cabinet ministers deserve credit.

The area of potash . . . We all know the contraction that happened in 2009, and I don't blame that on the Premier or the members of the government. But my point is that they should have known that there was a very big problem when the economy of China and the United States were in a recession and agriculture prices dropped off the cliff. Everyone knew that we were going to take a hit on potash. And the reason we ended up with a deficit was because the minister of Finance at that time and the Premier and the Minister of Energy and Mines simply miscalculated and blew a huge opportunity to be ready for that storm that was appearing on the horizon.

And we all know the result. We know that we were off on our projection of revenue from potash by 1.9 billion. In fact we ended up paying back to the potash companies \$200 million for a net difference of 2.1 billion. That is a pretty big mistake. And I don't know that any other Finance minister or any other premier has made that kind of a mistake and led very directly to a contraction of the economy, not a growth in the economy, but a contraction of the economy of over 6 per cent. The largest contraction of any economy in the country.

Now that's a pretty interesting record. And I never heard that mentioned by the Premier or the Minister of Finance, that the economy actually didn't grow; it contracted by 6 per cent. That is an amazing feat. I'm not sure that if any time in our history in government — I will check the record — but I don't think in any year that we were in government, CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] or NDP, that the economy contracted by 6 per cent. That is a new record, a new record held by the government, the Sask Party Government of Saskatchewan, and it's one we don't want to see again.

And that's why, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to resources . . . And I want to talk for a few moments about the resources of the province and the importance of them to the future well-being of families in this province. It's our opinion that the resources belong 100 per cent to the people of the province, 100 per cent. And our duty as a legislature and the duty of the government is to maximize the return from each and every one of those resources.

Whether it's potash, oil, gas, we need to extract as much as we can for our shareholders. All the oil companies and gas companies, potash companies, they will try to get as much money as they can for their shareholders. That's how it works. That's their responsibility. As boards of directors, their responsibility is not to the general public of Saskatchewan. They're on the board of directors because they want to maximize profits to their shareholders. So let's understand that the role of companies is not to look after the good folks here; their job is to maximize profits.

The role of the Premier and the government of the day is to maximize profits and returns from resources for the people of this province. And what the New Democratic Party is saying is that during this debate around potash, several things have become clear. First and foremost is that regardless of who owns

the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, we need to get a better return and a better deal.

And what I want to say, and what we are urging the government to do in this 30-day period before the federal government makes a final decision on whether or not the sale to BHP goes through or not, is that we are clear and consistent in what we're expecting from companies coming to this province. And that certainly isn't clear in the last two days, where we've seen the Premier go from being . . . wanting control over resources and going to Ottawa and around the country giving the speech about control of resources, to now today in the House saying that the uranium of the province is open for foreign ownership.

That is very confusing to the people of Canada, the people of Saskatchewan, and for companies in Australia and other parts of the world to know what is our policy. Because there is a Member of Parliament from Australia, I understand, in Canada today talking to the press about how confusing it is for investors from his part of the world to know what the policy in Canada is on foreign investment. Because at the same time as they're having members of parliament — Brad Trost I mentioned yesterday — travelling to Australia indicating that all the resources of Canada are open for investment, and I know the Premier, doing a good job in terms of selling Saskatchewan in China, I don't think explained to them that certain elements of our resources weren't open for foreign investment.

This comes as a surprise to many people who wanted and thought the province was open for business, that they could come and buy and sell and trade shares and invest in the province. Now we're being told that that isn't the game plan. And I agree with that, that we should have control on our resources. So just when I understood that the Premier had come to that position, we now have a press release saying no, we want to sell the uranium. And the public is naturally confused as to what our position is as a province.

Now you can sell either one of those positions, but it's really hard to sell both at the same time. And we need a consistent message to the public of Saskatchewan, our shareholders, on the resource development and foreign ownership. And we need it for the investors — whether they're from Alberta, whether they're from China, whether they're from Brazil. What is the policy of the Government of Saskatchewan on foreign ownership? They have to be open, transparent, and that's the way it works in many parts of the world.

I had the great opportunity to work for a company in Calgary, a Canadian, one of the largest international energy companies in Canada. And we had the opportunity to go to Norway to open offices and get a project started similar to what BHP was trying to do here in Saskatchewan. And it works this way. You get 50 or 60, probably BHP had 200 people here trying to figure this deal out. What do you do? How does it work? And in Norway, you go there. You read the law. You go to the government and you ask for a lease to drill oil wells offshore. And the same rules applied to Nexen as applied to Petrobras — a state-owned oil company in Brazil — or the Chinese oil company, Sinopec. Everybody plays by the same rule.

There's no shakedown in a back room where you go in and, will you give me \$1 billion? Well you can't do that, Mr.

Speaker, because giving a \$1 billion upfront payment to do a project would be unheard of in Norway. It would be unheard of. And it's embarrassing. It's embarrassing for the people of Saskatchewan. And it's embarrassing for the companies involved because that's not the way they should be treated. If you've been there and say we're open for business, and then they come with their money to invest, you don't then call them in and say, well by the way, there's an extra \$1 billion you have to pay. You need transparent rules.

And in Norway, the rules are that if you meet their standards of labour law, if you meet their standards of human rights, if you accept without question their royalty structure, then you can come in. And some companies aren't allowed in. Some companies have a bad human rights record in some African country. The Norwegian government won't let them in. Or they've had too many accidents on a platform in the Gulf of Mexico. You can't come in if you have bad labour record. Or if you're an anti-union company, you can't go to Norway. They don't want companies there that will fight unions because the platforms in the North Sea are unionized. And companies know that. And do they run away from Norway and say, well we're not going there because they have unions and they have lots of royalties to pay and they have to pay high taxes? They line up in the queue to get into Norway. That's what happens. And only the very best companies in the world in the energy industry are allowed into Norway, even though they have strict union regulation, strict labour regulation, strict environmental law.

And why do companies line up to go there? Because you can make money and it's secure and it's predictable. And there isn't someone shaking you down for \$1 billion. That's not the way to do business. It's not the way to do business here, in Norway, or anywhere in the world. It should not be done that way.

That's why, that's why when we are asking on a daily basis for clarity in what our investment strategy is in this province, it's hugely important. Because I agree with many people who say, if you don't have those regulatory structures in place and transparent, then you do lose investment — not because you have tough rules but because you have inconsistent rules. And you have different tiers for different people, different levels of investment rules for different people. That's not the way a jurisdiction should work.

And what we're urging the Premier and the government is that during this 30-day period, while we wait for the decision from the federal government on whether or not Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan can be sold or not, is to get our house in order, to make public statements about what the rules of engagement are.

And as of today, I think there's even more confusion to the CEO of Cameco and the CEOs of other corporations of what the rules are around investing and foreign ownership of uranium. Well we now know that the Premier believes it's open for business with uranium. Well that's different than it was with potash. And he's now saying today, well even on potash, I now invite foreign ownership wherever it wants to happen in potash. That's a very different story than we were hearing a week ago while the poll was going on that the *Leader-Post* did.

So it will be interesting to see how this plays out, because I think companies and the people of Saskatchewan want a

consistent policy when it comes to energy and investment in the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are many other areas that I want to talk about. The other, on potash and resources, is it's my belief that because we're blessed with so much of the resource of uranium and potash and oil and gas, that we need to have a level of return that maximizes the number of dollars we get in royalty and taxes. And that should be reviewed on a regular basis, and that some of that money, a small amount of it, a small percentage, should be saved for future generations. Not for this generation, not to be used if cattle prices go down or if we get some flooding, but we need a fund for future generations.

[11:30]

And again I go to Norway for the example. The sovereign wealth fund in Norway now has \$450 billion. It's a small country — I think about 4 million people — not greatly different than Alberta, a similar amount of resource, oil, as Alberta. Alberta now has 14 billion in their Heritage Fund. Norway, who have been working on this project about the same length of time, have \$450 billion in their sovereign wealth fund.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that as a society we have a responsibility to future generations that a small stream of money from royalties . . . and whether this is an increase, which I would think it should be because I think there's room, because I know that because the board of directors at the Potash Corporation have granted the CEO of their company . . . They can do what they like because it's their money. They have granted the equivalent of \$450 million in share options to their CEO. And I understand it that their senior executive, if you take their total package, it's about \$1 billion, that there's a little bit of extra we could take for the people of Saskatchewan. And I would take that extra money and put it into a fund for future generations. Call it whatever you like.

But the reason I wouldn't leave it in a rainy day fund is because every once in a while you elect a government — like the Sask Party — who take the rainy day fund when it's not raining and spend it all. Nobody knows what they spent it on, but they spent it all. The 2.3 billion that had been saved for a rainy day is all gone. We don't have a heritage fund. We don't have a savings plan anymore. It's all gone. So all of the resources . . . The burn rate on the money is incredible over on the other side of the House, but nobody sees the result of where the money has been spent.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm urging the legislature over the next months and over the next year or two to establish a fund that would take the stream of increased royalty that we're able to get from potash, uranium, whatever resource it is — after we do that kind of a review — and save it for future generations. And I think that's a responsibility that we as legislators have to future generations, and I want to urge members to accept this kind of a concept.

Finally I want to say to the Assembly and just say in closing, Mr. Speaker, that because of the lack of consistency in this Throne Speech, the lack of a vision for the future, so much looking back through the rear-view mirror and backslapping, I

find it very much impossible to support this Throne Speech.

And I want to close on the note that . . . Because it lacks any support for environmental renewal in this province when it would come to things like CO₂ sequestration, clean coal, reducing CO₂ emissions, a permanent monitoring of potential damage done from the oil sands from Alberta — none of those things are included in this Throne Speech.

It doesn't deal with the need for child care and early learning. They've done some, but when I go to the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon — and my members opposite will know what I mean — 500 names on the list for daycare at one institution, the University of Saskatchewan. For a booming economy and a rich nation it's an embarrassment and we should fix that. Nothing in the Throne Speech.

When it comes to northern Saskatchewan, barely a word mentioned about the terrible situation of housing and roads and the youth suicide rate. Nothing mentioned about this tragic situation that our Lieutenant Governor has spoken to us about at functions. We have no response for that.

It does not deal with the plight of farmers where the government, in the last budget, ripped away \$93 million of support out of AgriStability. That money is not returned and we're worried about that.

It says nothing as well about the whole area of university funding as it would relate to the needs of tuition, housing for students. And there are many other reasons, Mr. Speaker, that I will not be supporting the Throne Speech.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to enter the Throne Speech debate at this late hour knowing that a vote on the amendment and a vote on the original motion are pending, Mr. Speaker.

I want to say that it's important for us on each occasion I believe, at the time of the Throne Speech debate, to acknowledge those who make it possible for us to serve in this particular Assembly. And I do so now, both the . . . Well most importantly, Mr. Speaker, my family for the support that they provide to me and the patience that they have with the vocation that I've chosen. I want to just say on the record again, Mr. Speaker, how much I appreciate them for their support.

I want to thank the people of Swift Current, the constituents of Swift Current, for the honour that I have to represent them at the beginning of another legislative session here in Regina, and we'll work hard to do that, Mr. Speaker. We have a number of priorities in Swift Current as well, as exists across the province. In terms of capital projects, we're needing some education capital projects in our community because it's growing. The number of students, the enrolment in Swift Current is increasing, and that's putting pressure on old facilities that really haven't had the attention of government, certainly for a number of years prior to our government taking office, Mr. Speaker.

Also long-term care in Swift Current is an issue. And I'll be

talking more about long-term care during the course of the debate. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you this, that the people of Swift Current are very interested in the Throne Speech's commentary on long-term care. It was interesting to hear — and I'll get into this a bit more — but it was interesting to hear the Leader of the Opposition in his speech talk about how he does not support the funding divide that exists for long-term care, 65/35 — 65 from the province, 35 from the local area where the long-term care home will be.

He also said he doesn't . . . I would assume then he doesn't support the fact that a similar divide exists for acute care in the province, Mr. Speaker, a policy that was implemented by him and his government or certainly carried out when they were the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, if he now doesn't support that kind of a formula, if it's the position of the Leader of the Opposition, if it's the position of the Health critic, the member for Saskatoon Eastview, that all communities ought to have the same access that our tertiary centres have in terms of provincial funding or at least ought not to have to raise their own money, then that side opposite should stop with the attacks that we've seen in the last couple of days on the Catholic Health Ministry and on the model that we've unveiled for Saskatoon because if we can expand that model to other places — maybe with the Lutherans, maybe with Mennonites, maybe with other faith-based groups, maybe with other non-profit groups — if we can expand that model to places like Swift Current, to places like . . . to rural communities, to places like Rosetown, to places like Kelvington, if we can expand that model, do you know what it means, Mr. Speaker? It would mean that those communities are not required to raise their share, Mr. Speaker. That's one of the advantages of that program.

Mr. Speaker, it's difficult perhaps for members to realize that if they say something, if they say something in the Legislative Assembly, if they raise a question in the Legislative Assembly, someone's writing it down, Mr. Speaker. Someone will write down the things that they say about long-term care in the province of Saskatchewan. And they'll note that on one hand they say we need a model in the province where local municipalities don't have to raise their share, and then on the other hand, they will oppose the very models that are introduced, the innovations that will introduce, that may well achieve that very, very laudable goal, all the while providing better long-term care, Mr. Speaker, for our seniors.

Allowing our seniors to age with dignity, allowing them to age together, Mr. Speaker — this is what we're seeing from the Catholic Health Ministry model. This is why this side of the House supports it. This is why that side of the House should also support the model and stop their attacks on the Catholic Health Ministry, where yesterday I think they referred to them as cronies of the government. Well, Mr. Speaker, we may also do a deal with Mennonites and with the Lutherans and with other faith-based organizations, Mr. Speaker, and those members will stand up and say, I guess they're all cronies of the government too, Mr. Speaker.

We are going to turn around what has been a dearth of long-term care facilities in this province. We're going to turn around a situation where those members opposite refused to

build long-term care facilities, closed long-term care beds, Mr. Speaker. It's our intention through partnerships, through innovation, to deliver for our seniors what they deserve — the dignity of long-term care in the province of Saskatchewan.

And it is an issue in Swift Current as well, so again I want to acknowledge the constituents of Swift Current for the honour that I have to represent them here in the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech painted two pictures of Saskatchewan. It painted a picture of the new Saskatchewan which has been built principally by the people of Saskatchewan, by the business community here, by a brand new attitude that they have in Saskatchewan. It painted a picture of that new Saskatchewan, one that's growing, one that's leading the nation in growth, one that's experiencing greater population growth than we have in 50 years, Mr. Speaker, one that chartered banks will say it will lead the country again next year, not second or third or in the middle of the pack but will lead the country next year in economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, that new Saskatchewan that the Throne Speech speaks of then — a growing Saskatchewan with a broader tax base because more people are moving in than ever before — that new Saskatchewan then can provide a better quality of life for our residents because the tax base is broader. It means that new Saskatchewan can provide the long-term care beds we need. It means that new Saskatchewan can say we have to fund more training seats for doctors because there's been a decade's long . . . a shortage of doctors and shortage of residency positions in the province that have led us to the position we're in today. Well that new Saskatchewan with a broader tax base and a growing economy can make investments in front-line workers, can actually achieve the goal of hiring 800 new nurses one year ahead of schedule, something that members opposite said was impossible.

Mr. Speaker, in that new Saskatchewan that the Throne Speech references, we can actually improve emergency care for Saskatchewan people. We can work with Alberta, with the Alberta STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] initiative, Mr. Speaker, to bring STARS [shock trauma air rescue service] to this province as well. Mr. Speaker, in the new Saskatchewan we're going to have the capacity and companies are going to have the capacity to support something that's long been needed in Saskatchewan, an alliance with a great road ambulance network, an alliance with rotary winged emergency care. And, Mr. Speaker, the people of the province of Saskatchewan are very much looking forward to this, and I'm very grateful that the former minister of Finance, the member from Melfort, is going to be leading our efforts in this regard.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I think he's already ahead of schedule. He's had some great meetings with companies. We know that Crescent Point has stepped forward with a very significant commitment to support STARS. I think certain mining companies are going to be very interested in wanting to support STARS. We're going to see broad-based fundraising initiatives.

And by the way, you're also going to see the Government of Saskatchewan support this as well. Mr. Speaker, we are going to co-operate in the delivery of STARS with the existing road

ambulance network, with the existing fixed-wing ambulance service which provides an outstanding service to the people of the province. And I want to say on behalf of the government how much we appreciate the work, the work of those public servants, public sector workers, public sector professionals that provide the fixed-wing ambulance services to the people of Saskatchewan. It's going to be even better, Mr. Speaker, that . . . [inaudible] . . . augmented with helicopters.

Mr. Speaker, in the new Saskatchewan, because of the fiscal capacity that is here, because of our growing tax base, we can invest in more child care spaces in Saskatchewan because we know that parents need more child care. And we're going to be doing that, Mr. Speaker, in the months ahead.

We can invest in more affordable housing units, Mr. Speaker, through Sask Housing. And we're going to be able to do that. And then through some innovation, we're going to be able to bring about — and this was also referenced in the Throne Speech — a brand new initiative to create more housing opportunities in this province, to create a greater opportunity for people to move from being renters, thereby freeing up those accommodations, Mr. Speaker, but to give them the chance in an affordable way to become homeowners in the province of Saskatchewan. We look forward in the months ahead to laying out the details for that plan.

With a housing shortage, you can attack that problem at a number of points in the continuum, Mr. Speaker. For example, if the government were to attack this challenge at that point on the continuum where student housing is an issue, that will help, Mr. Speaker, because of course it frees up rental accommodations in Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw, P.A. [Prince Albert], where we have a large number of post-secondary students coming every year.

Mr. Speaker, on this point — and this is very, very important — on this point, for the first time in 30 years maybe, there is brand new student housing being built in the province of Saskatchewan. It's been needed for a very long time, and it's happening.

Mr. Speaker, I've had people tell me that the official bird of Saskatoon should be the crane, the construction crane, because of the facilities that are being built on the east side, not just the student housing but the Academic Health Sciences centre as well. Mr. Speaker, we're making the important investments in housing that is going to free up rental accommodations.

[11:45]

Mr. Speaker, just earlier this week this government, on-reserve, I think in an unprecedented way, announced together with Chief Bear and the people of the Whitecap First Nation a brand new housing project on Whitecap First Nation, Mr. Speaker. And of course this is going to help with respect to the continuum as well. I believe this is precedent setting, Mr. Speaker, because in the past, in the past when First Nations would come — as they would have come from Muskeg Lake — and said let's do a long-term care facility in Muskeg Lake on-reserve, we can help First Nations people and we can also relieve some of the pressure points in terms of long-term care needs in non-First Nations communities around there, when

they came to the previous administration with that, the government said no, it's the federal government's jurisdiction. Go see them. I'm sure when First Nations have come in the past to the previous government to say let's do a housing project on a First Nation, no, that's a federal jurisdiction. Go see them.

Mr. Speaker, First Nations people in this province cannot and ought not have to wait for that kind of deflection, Mr. Speaker. They ought to be able to go to the provincial government who will work with the federal government to try to deliver these things together. If it's important for First Nations to have that long-term care, to have accommodations, then the Government of Saskatchewan said we're going to be there. We're going to be a part of that. And, Mr. Speaker, it's also part of our housing plan that was referenced in the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, there are some other things that we'll be able to do because of this new Saskatchewan's growing economy, and I hope because of the will and the effort of members on this side of the House and . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . and maybe with the support of the member from Regina Rosemont who's shouting from his seat again.

We hope that all members in this Assembly will say, look. In this new Saskatchewan, where we have increased fiscal capacity, where we have great post-secondary institutions, engines of research in the province, where we have a public health care system . . . In that Saskatchewan, we can say that those who have MS [multiple sclerosis], that unlike any other jurisdiction in North America that we're aware of, we are prepared to lead in the development of the research around liberation treatment to at least get questions answered for the residents of this province.

And I have neighbours and friends — I'm sure every member in the House have family members, neighbours, and friends — who are part of fundraising. There's bake sales going on. Churches are raising money for people because, born of hope, they're wanting to travel far away, spend thousands of dollars of their own money to try this liberation treatment. They've seen the same anecdotal evidence that we have seen. It's mixed, Mr. Speaker. But in almost every anecdotal case, there's signs of hope. There's some symptom relief. In some cases, there's a lot of symptom relief. So in this new Saskatchewan, we'll look at that issue and say . . . You know, unfortunately we have the highest incidence of MS in Canada, probably on a per capita basis on earth. If not here, then where, Mr. Speaker, in terms of answering the research questions around liberation treatment?

Well the Government of Saskatchewan is working hard with the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation to answer that question. We believe it should happen here. We are prepared to lead. And I've had people in the media ask me, well how do you feel about the fact that no other province is going to join with you in this research? How do you feel about the fact that you're alone in this? Mr. Speaker, we are not alone. We have doctors. We have researchers who have stepped forward who want to work on this. We have proposals coming in, Mr. Speaker. Most importantly we have the family members, and we have the friends of those loved ones who are afflicted with MS. And we have, most compellingly of all, MS patients who are standing with the Government of Saskatchewan. We are not alone on this new road in terms of MS research and will carry it

through, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in this new Saskatchewan, with a growing economy and an expanding tax base, there's some other important things we can do. We've worked hard as a government, as a new government, to try to keep the promises that we made in the election, Mr. Speaker — over 100 already kept. But there's a couple that are left remaining. Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech lays out what those are and commits that we will keep the promises that we've made in totality, all the promises that were made to the people of Saskatchewan. Two of the major ones that remain are phase 2 of property tax relief, education property tax relief, Mr. Speaker, and phase 2 of municipal revenue sharing. Those will be big items in the budget upcoming.

But I want to say for the record here, as His Honour read the Speech from the Throne for the record that day and as we've indicated by ministers and MLAs in the months, in the weeks previous, I want to say unequivocally, those promises will be kept by this Assembly.

And when they are, and when they are, I have hope, I have some hope that members opposite, maybe the member from Regina Rosemont will stand in his place and say, you know, we believed in a long-term plan for municipal revenue sharing too. We were trying to put it together in the dying days, in the dying days of our administration. And I hope, Mr. Speaker, that that member and other members in this Assembly will stand up on that day and say — notwithstanding partisan politics — they kept a promise. The municipal sector needed it. SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] wanted it. SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] want it. They want fair revenue sharing. Just like, you know, obviously the provinces want it from their national government, Mr. Speaker. And I hope they will say we acknowledge that the government has done the right thing. I hope they do.

When we deliver on the final phase of meaningful education property tax relief in this budget, I hope we'll hear the same kind of generosity and common sense from members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting. In the election campaign, I remember the two competing property tax plans. Members in this House ran under different property tax plans, but both of them wanted to provide some property tax relief. Members opposite had a plan for some long-term property tax . . . Well it wasn't really long term, it was more rebates, which we know are very temporary and a bit of an administrative problem, frankly. In the long term, they're pretty cumbersome. But that was their plan, and they had some property tax relief in their platform.

Something was missing though from that plan. I'm not sure if members know what was missing from the plan, but that plan didn't include the group that's hardest hit by education property tax. It ignored them completely. And those are the farmers, those are producers, those are ranchers, the people of rural Saskatchewan who pay a disproportionate share of education funding through this tax. Mr. Speaker, that was their plan. Mercifully, it wasn't the plan that was selected by the people of Saskatchewan.

The plan they chose was a longer term solution, Mr. Speaker, which is not an easy thing to do, to replace basically the education property taxes system with a province-wide mill rate. But we made that decision, we chose to do that, to implement it, and it has been the right thing. It has meant tax relief for people whether they live in the city or the country, north or south.

And phase 2 is coming. And again maybe it's naïve hope, but I'm clinging to it, that the members opposite, the member for Rosemont will say, you know, we don't agree with everything the government does, but boy they've done a good thing by farmers and by the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

I'm not sure . . . The hon. member has asked from his seat, can we pay for it, Mr. Speaker? I can assure the members opposite that what will come forward in the spring budget is a balanced budget, another balanced budget, Mr. Speaker. In just a few more sleeps, we're going to have the mid-term report of the Government of Saskatchewan. In just a few more sleeps, that member who's chirping from his seat is going to see the mid-term financial report for the province of Saskatchewan.

And I don't want to give that report away. All the work's not done yet, Mr. Speaker, but I have a feeling his question as to whether or not we can continue to have fiscal probity in the province and balanced budgets and keep promises will be asked and then answered when that mid-term report is tabled here in the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of specific issues I want to address. And I know we're anxious to get to the vote. I'm anxious to get to the vote. There's a little bit of suspense as to who's going to win, Mr. Speaker, and I want to find out what happens with the Throne Speech vote and the amendment here in a moment. But I do want to touch on some important things in terms of the Speech from the Throne and this new Saskatchewan, this new road that we're on.

Mr. Speaker, you know the economy of Saskatchewan is obviously perhaps the most important part of the analysis of this new road, the most important part of the temperature taking that sometimes speeches from the throne will do as to the state of the province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you this — and again it's not from me, it's from others; it's from economists, it's from the economists of chartered banks, it's from different groups across the province and business groups — the state of the economy of the province of Saskatchewan is strong, Mr. Speaker. I've already touched on it a bit. We have unprecedented population growth in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker. In so many different categories we continue to lead or we're in the top three in the country in terms of wholesale trade, in terms of building permits issued. Mr. Speaker, in job creation, we rank amongst the top tier of the provinces with the lowest unemployment rate in the country, Mr. Speaker, and month after month, more jobs created.

In fact this economy, you know, it wasn't the government but this economy set a job creation or an employment record when, Mr. Speaker, in August of 2009, in the middle of the bash-your-teeth-in recession that the rest of the world was facing, this new Saskatchewan set its employment record.

By the way, at that same time, Mr. Speaker, there were billboards being paid for by the taxpayers, erected by the NDP caucus, that decried Saskatchewan's future, that said that the economy was in a bust, that said the economy was in a free fall. Those are the words of the Leader of the Opposition. At the same time that he was saying that, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan happily ignored what they were saying and went about setting their employment record — the highest number of people employed ever in the history of the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, the state of the economy is strong, but we need to continue to do more, Mr. Speaker. And our growth agenda is going to continue unabated. That's certainly part of the vision that we have for the province and for our government. And that means that we have to continually look to reduce taxes, and again more on that in the budget upcoming.

Of course the education tax is a capital tax, and there isn't much more insidious on an economy than a capital tax, so we'll reduce that a little bit more and replace it with funding from the General Revenue Fund, Mr. Speaker.

And I think we need to start having a debate in this province about other taxes — personal income taxes, even corporate income taxes — where we're not as competitive as we could be with provinces nearby. We should start having the debate now about whether or not there is room to improve our competitiveness in terms of these taxes. I think it'll be an interesting debate because what we've heard from members opposite is their plan now for royalties, for example. The most important tax in terms of the ongoing development of our resources and the job-creating effect of investment in these resources; their plan is to increase royalties. They've been very clear about that. They're going to increase royalty taxes for the province.

I think in the months ahead, we're going to hear from women and men who are in business in this province and others who want to be in business in this province to a greater extent. We're going to be happy to tell the people of Saskatchewan that, should those folks ever get their way; if they ever become, heaven forbid, the Government of Saskatchewan, and they jack up the royalty rates of this province and they create royalty instability like we saw in Alberta, Mr. Speaker . . . I think, I think that debate's going to happen. And they'll want to categorically reject that plan from those members opposite because they'll understand that those kinds of job-killing initiatives that we've seen from the NDP in the past have no place in the new Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition continues to talk about increasing royalties. He did it again today. Increase royalties in potash — also nationalizing; that would be good for the economy — and increasing royalties in the oil industry. But you know, Mr. Speaker, he didn't always believe that. He didn't always believe that.

He used to be a junior assistant VP [vice-president] at Nexen, and he would work with governments on their own royalty structures. And the Leader of the Opposition, in his previous role at Nexen, at a large oil company which used to be, by the way, a Crown corporation . . . And that Crown corporation, when it was privatized there was a golden share for it, Mr.

Speaker, by the way. And it was held in this legislature. And the golden share said, the golden share said, the head office can't leave Regina. That's what it said.

And then the Leader of the Opposition, by the way — and this is a bit of a digression, but I'll get right back to the issue of royalties and the Throne Speech — the Leader of the Opposition then leaves government and takes a job with what used to be that Crown corporation. It became Nexen. Then he comes back, and he lobbies his NDP government, old government friends. I bet the member for Lakeview was lobbied, Mr. Speaker. And he says, we need to release Saskoil, Nexen, of this obligation of having a head office here. We need to change the golden share.

So there was a debate in the House. And our very good friend, Ben Heppner, stood up and asked the minister of Justice at the time, Mr. Axworthy, and said, does this legislation mean that the head office for Nexen will leave for Calgary? It's a matter of record again with *Hansard*. The point, Mr. Speaker, is that they write everything down that's said in the Assembly. And so the answer came: no, no, the head office will stay.

What happened after the Leader of the Opposition, then with Nexen, lobbied the government to gut the golden share? There was promises that the head office jobs wouldn't leave, including his job, the Leader of the Opposition's job he had at the time with the oil company. What happened, Mr. Speaker? Those offices were packed up in boxes — including the Leader of the Opposition's office — packed up in a box and moved to Calgary because the legislation had been gutted.

So now let's fast-forward to a time when the Leader of the Opposition was engaged quite rightly in the discussion of royalties. And the Speech from the Throne is all about the new road and the prosperity we want for the province and the debate that'll be pending in this session about the royalty structure in Saskatchewan. You know, Mr. Speaker, I think the Leader of the Opposition used to provide very good counsel to governments on the issue of royalties.

[12:00]

I think it's changed a little bit based on what I've heard in speeches, because we've gotten a hold of, we've gotten hold of, it's a PowerPoint presentation from Nexen to the government of Alberta for their royalty review in 2007. I expect — I don't know for sure and maybe he can confirm it — I expect the Leader of the Opposition himself made this presentation because that was his job in government relations. And his view, by the way, in terms of potential changes, any changes in the royalty structure was this recommendation, and I quote, "The existing regime is working as intended and should be preserved." Mr. Speaker, that's what the hon. member advised governments then, and I think wasn't bad advice. I think the government's actually returned back to its previous regime in that province.

Mr. Speaker, we think that that same advice should be heard today, should be heard in benches opposite and in the benches here because, Mr. Speaker, what industry needs the least today — what the men and women working in the oil and gas sector need least today, what the families employed in the potash

sector need least today, what companies supplying the uranium mining industry in the province need least today — is talk of royalty shock, is talk of you just wait for a year. We're going to get elected, and your royalties are going to go up, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, nothing could be more damaging to our economy. Right now we can say to the world, unlike almost any other jurisdiction, that we have royalty stability. And it's paying off for us, Mr. Speaker, in oil and gas land sales and in job creation. And we're going to fight any move by the NDP to increase royalties in Saskatchewan . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Speaker, so the member's hollering restructure. Now he likes it, because by asking rhetorically, well whose structure do we have right now, he's saying it's his structure. Then he ought to send a memo to his Leader of the Opposition saying, stop advocating that we change our structure. He might want to do that, if that's what he believes. Or maybe he should just skip the formality and come sit over here if he believes that the royalty structure shouldn't change . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, once again the member for Lakeview is anticipating the mid-term financial report of the Government of Saskatchewan.

And I'm looking forward to him having a chance to read it as a Member of the Legislative Assembly because I think he's going to appreciate the fact that . . . I'm betting, I don't know, I'm betting though that the balance in the Growth and Financial Security Fund will be up, Mr. Speaker. The general debt of the Government of Saskatchewan will remain down almost 40 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

Will there be a surplus? Will there be a surplus? I don't know that. We can't know that. But I am looking forward to an opportunity for all members to hear from the mid-term financial report when Finance officials . . . And then the worry that's plaguing the member for Regina Lakeview can kind of dissipate. He can stop worrying about it and know that, as has been the case for three years, the fiscal health of this province is in better shape than almost any jurisdiction in North America. And I think it'll move up. If it's not number one, it will be number one in the months ahead, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we've touched a little bit about the economy. I did want to talk about health care and have done that in the context of our own constituency. But I do want to return, if I can a little bit, to the member or to the Leader of the Opposition's speech and the debate we should have in the House. I think we're actually in agreement on this one.

But he referenced the fact that the current system of local communities having to raise money for their health care facilities is two tier. And right now in the province of Saskatchewan, we know for tertiary centres in Regina and Saskatoon, 100 per cent of the funding comes from the government. That's always been the case.

We also know that, for example, when a new hospital was announced for Swift Current — something that I congratulated members opposite on and the then minister of Health, the member for Lakeview — we know that when that was announced, money had to be raised in Swift Current. There is a fee on my tax bill every year and the tax bills of everyone in Swift Current because we have to raise our share of that. That

two-tier system was their two-tier system, Mr. Speaker.

And again I want to repeat, I want to repeat that in the case of long-term care, I hope those members will put down the ideological blinkers and realize that partnering with faith-based organizations to provide long-term care, better long-term care where couples can stay together, I hope those members will vote in favour of a model that in all likelihood will afford those communities who want long-term care the chance where they will have it completely funded by that partner and not have to raise money locally, Mr. Speaker. It's one of the advantages of this model we're pursuing. It's a potential advantage, and it's something they should be speaking in favour of and supporting. And I expect that they will. Again I have great hope that they will in the weeks ahead.

Mr. Speaker, so in terms of health care, I'll perhaps leave that subject right now except to say that we're going to see continued work. And the Throne Speech highlighted the fact that front-line health care workers are very important obviously to the system, to us to reduce wait-lists for people in Saskatchewan. We're going to continue to invest in training seats for doctors. We're going to continue to invest in new residency positions. We're going to continue to say you don't just have to do residency training in the two major centres. We can take that out around the province.

There's residency training happening right now in Swift Current. And it gives us — and I met those young doctors, Mr. Speaker; a couple of them are from Atlantic Canada — it gives us a better chance to keep those doctors here when they're done. That was my first question when we chatted at the announcement of the residency program, and the Minister of Health was there.

Those young residents were asked by myself would we have a chance to keep you because you're a long ways from home? And you know what they said, Mr. Speaker? They said what so many others have said. Newcomers to our province have said yes; we're a long ways from home, but we kind of like it here, Mr. Speaker. And now we have a chance to keep those doctors there, so we're going to continue to make those investments in front-line health care.

And we're going to continue down the road of our surgical wait times initiative, Mr. Speaker, that was also referenced in the Speech from the Throne. The NDP will continue to oppose it. They have said quite clearly that they believe the public system should do all the delivery. Even if you have some private clinics that can help with the backlog within the public system, even if you can make sure that nobody can use a credit card to jump the queue, if you can do all of those things and it can be at least at the same or perhaps a lower cost to the public, Mr. Speaker, even if you can do all of that and deal with the wait list and give people the surgery they need — they're going to oppose it, Mr. Speaker. We will continue with that initiative.

I can tell you of a great exchange I had at an event in Yorkton. The member for Yorkton will remember this and so will the Minister of Advanced Education because he was there to hear the story. A gentleman came up to me after the evening was pretty much concluded and said, you know, and I might have my timelines wrong here, but he said I had an accident in

January — I think it was — and hurt my knee badly and knew there was something pretty wrong with it. But finally went into the doctor and finally got in to see a specialist. I think sometime in September he saw the specialist. And the specialist looked at his knee and said you need surgery; you're going to need arthroscopic surgery.

And so the gentleman, aware of the decade's-long history of wait times in our province, the gentleman asked, "well when?" expecting quite a late date. And the doctor, the specialist, said we think we can do the surgery in November, sometime in November. And the gentleman said okay November 2011. He was convinced that it would be, you know, 14 months hence because that's how long wait lists have gotten to be because of . . . Well we won't get into that right now, Mr. Speaker. And he was shocked when the doctor said no, no, no — not November 2011.

He said, because of the Omni clinic, because of the fact that we have private partners delivering health care in a public system, because of the fact that they can come in and use facilities here and to help us take care of the wait lists, he meant November of this year. I expect just in a few weeks he's going to get his knee scoped. He's going to get the knee surgery that it would have taken 12 months, 14 months to get under the previous ideological regime. In a new public system, with new private partners, he's going to have it done in a couple of months.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker? He's not really interested in ideology from those members opposite. He'd like to get an operation, and we'd like him to get it too.

And, Mr. Speaker, I don't know how they're going to build support for their position. I don't know how they're going to tell that gentleman and others like him that — oh, by the way — because we ideologically believe that nothing but the public system can deliver that surgery, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well now the member from Rosemont is saying that's not true. Have they changed this position as well? His Health critic has come out opposed to our wait times initiative. The Health critic has said only the public system should deliver these surgeries, Mr. Speaker. That's what they've said.

What will they say to those people who are being told they don't have to wait 12 months anymore, Mr. Speaker? They can wait one or two or three . . . and they can have the pain relief they want. And they can move around like they want because those surgeries and child dental surgeries, for which there's a long wait list, are happening in a much, much shorter period of time, Mr. Speaker.

We will continue to deliver that kind of surgical care for the people of the province. We will achieve our objective because we are a goal-setting government. We will achieve our objective of reducing surgical wait times, Mr. Speaker, so people aren't waiting more than three months. We'll achieve it within four years. If the past is any indication of the future, we'll get there ahead of schedule, Mr. Speaker, partly because of the Throne Speech and the budget that's coming out.

Mr. Speaker, what about rural Saskatchewan? The Speech from the Throne, obviously to the extent it talks about education

property tax, it's obviously weighing in pretty significantly on a rural issue. And again it's worth pointing out that members opposite can talk about agriculture, but the proof for producers, the proof for rural Saskatchewan is in the question, what did you do when you had a chance to help? And what did you say in a campaign when you had a chance to present a plan for education property tax?

The New Democratic Party was pretty honest. I give them full credit, pretty upfront when they said our education property tax plan does not include farmers, Mr. Speaker. Well here again . . . and I'm covering some ground I've already covered, but in the Speech from the Throne, we're saying something else, that in the new Saskatchewan, education property tax relief from this government most assuredly includes farmers and ranchers in Saskatchewan as it does people in the city.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne made reference to the flooding this year to up to — and the final numbers I don't think are in yet — but up to 12 million unseeded acres in the province. Mr. Speaker, in an unprecedented way, in terms of the time for it took for governments to react, the federal government and the provincial government came together, put together a plan, and delivered that plan to those producers, Mr. Speaker.

And we had calls for much more assistance from members opposite; that's true. But, Mr. Speaker, again those calls fell a little short in terms of credibility because again, when they were the government and they had a chance to do something, sometimes they'd be there with their share of a per acre payment for those same flooded farmers, but sometimes they wouldn't. It just depended, Mr. Speaker. I guess it depended on — what I don't know — who the minister of Agriculture was at the time or maybe how close they were to an election.

I don't know, Mr. Speaker, but I can tell you this, that as for this government, as for the members on this side of the House, we don't look at, we won't look at a calendar to decide when we help farmers who need it. We won't necessarily look only at financial considerations when we have to consider to help farmers who need it, Mr. Speaker. We won't look at the political implications of helping farmers. Mr. Speaker, if they need help, we're going to help farmers when it's needed, Mr. Speaker. And that is also dealt with in the Speech from the Throne. And I want to acknowledge the leadership of the Minister of Agriculture in delivering that prompt assistance to the farmers in our province.

Mr. Speaker, there's other important rural Saskatchewan issues that we need to deal with. I'll deal with them very quickly if I can, and again they're referenced in the Speech from the Throne. One is Highways, Mr. Speaker. I know there's a lot more projects to go. We hear about the projects that are still needed from MLAs a lot because that's their job: to make the case for important projects in their area. But even as they make the case and even as their mayors and reeves make the case that we need to do more in Highways and it's the right case to make, even as that case is made, there is an acknowledgment that we are seeing highways investment and construction in this province like we have never ever seen it in the past in our province, Mr. Speaker. In this government, again there is a government determined to deal with the deficit that we

inherited.

The CAA [Canadian Automobile Association] said the deficit in terms of road construction, our highways in our province, the automobile association said it was a billion-dollar pothole. Well, Mr. Speaker, that's a pretty big pothole, and it takes more than three years to fill it and fix it. But, Mr. Speaker, we're getting there and there's going to be more, not less, of that kind of work across our province. And I want to acknowledge all the members for making their case on behalf of their constituents, on behalf of their mayors and reeves. And we'll see in the budget more commitment to highways in the province.

And in rural Saskatchewan, health care is pretty important, Mr. Speaker. And we know there are challenges out there with doctor recruitment and retention. We know there are challenges out there with long-term care, and I've covered that ground already. But, Mr. Speaker, I think the people of rural Saskatchewan understand that again they have a government that's listening, Mr. Speaker, a government that's willing to pursue innovative solutions, a government that is prepared to fund, a government that is prepared to say that closing 52 rural hospitals, as members opposite did, is probably not going to help health care in rural Saskatchewan. And so we are seeking, together with them, solutions. I know that we have challenges out there, and we will meet those challenges together.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to conclude, if I can, by just touching on the potash debate that we've had in our province. It too was referenced in the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Speaker, we had incredible news come to this country and this province from the Minister of Industry nationally when the federal government agreed with Saskatchewan's position to say no to the hostile takeover attempt of BHP Billiton.

And beyond that, Mr. Speaker . . . because we're not done the process yet. There is a 30-day waiting period we're in the midst of. But beyond that 30-day wait period, we've also signalled to the country that Saskatchewan wants to lead in the debate that we have as a country as to what changes should happen to Investment Canada rules for these takeovers. We've said, Mr. Speaker, that we think Canada has some resources that are very strategic, both in the supply of them that we have and in the end use of those resources and that we'll be coming forward quite publicly with our plan and our vision for the country and for our province as to which resources are strategic, as to which resources might require of government a bit of a different approach than what we would otherwise.

[12:15]

Mr. Speaker, while we make that case, though, we're going to continue to make the case that Canada and Saskatchewan is a great place to invest, whether you're a company from Australia, whether you're CNPC [China National Petroleum Corporation] from China — with whom we have an MOU [memorandum of understanding] on oil and gas development and potentially oil sands development — whether you're Mosaic headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, whether you are the PotashCorp headquartered in Saskatoon, that we welcome investment. We welcome new investment in the province of Saskatchewan.

There's been some debate on uranium here recently in this

Legislative Assembly on the issue of resource ownership. And I really think it's important we have that debate because, Mr. Speaker, when the Leader of the Opposition was in the cabinet in 1997, he called on the federal government — he did; his government called on the federal government — he called on the national government to relieve the province of the national government's non-resident ownership policy.

And then in 2007, after the Leader of the Opposition had helped move the head office of Saskoil to Calgary so he could get a job there, Eric Cline was the minister, the NDP minister, again on this issue of resource ownership and protection. And Eric Cline sent another letter, similar to the one they sent when the Opposition Leader was in the cabinet, sent another letter to the federal government. Let me tell you what the Opposition Leader used to say about uranium investment when he was in government.

He said this: "The Government of Saskatchewan . . ." This is the NDP now. This is the New Democratic Party, the same party that the member for Dewdney, who is shouting from his seat now, is running for, maybe the last time he'll run for them. I don't know, but he's certainly going to run for them one more time. Here's what the letter says:

The Government of Saskatchewan remains strongly opposed to a policy that impinges on its ability to develop mineral resources and promote economic development through further processing of those mineral resources in the province.

The Government of Saskatchewan has raised concerns over the non-resident ownership policy numerous times since its establishment in the 1970s. More recently, the Government of Saskatchewan promoted its elimination in 1988, [that's the previous government, and then when?] and, again, called for its elimination [not an amendment to the NROP; the Leader of the Opposition called for its elimination] in 1997, supporting concerns expressed by uranium mining companies.

Mr. Speaker, the letter goes on to say, "The impacts of this . . ."

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I'd ask the member from Regina Rosemont to just allow the Premier to continue his comments.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP used to believe, just before the election in '07 . . . In this letter it says, "Foreign companies such as AREVA," who are currently vested in the province — I assume the members welcomed them here — that:

Foreign companies such as AREVA, are unwilling to make a long-term commitment to Saskatchewan when they do not feel they have a long-term assurance of access to uranium resources . . .

This was the case that the Leader of the Opposition forgot he made in 1997 and that members opposite forgot they made in 2007 when they stood up in question period today.

Because, Mr. Speaker, this is not what they're saying today. Again today on the issue of resources, and let's be very clear, the Leader of the Opposition stood up and said that in addition to royalty hikes, in addition to nationalization by stealth, they also now support a position where there is no foreign direct investment in the province of Saskatchewan.

Interesting that, Mr. Speaker, because I remember the Leader of the Opposition, and the Resources critic, the member for P.A. Northcote said . . . We were at the Husky Oil announcement when Husky unveiled its new building. I had the good fortune to attend there too, and the Leader of the Opposition was meeting a lot of people and talking to oil executives, Mr. Speaker. He was talking to them . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, they did forget to introduce the MLA for P.A., but I wanted to make a point of doing that.

Mr. Speaker, Husky of course is controlled principally from where, from what country? Right, from China. But he was at that press conference, to welcome that new foreign investment to the province. Today he said in the House he opposes foreign direct investment in the province. That means he opposes mines that Mosaic has built. That means he opposes Areva's investment. That means he opposes oil investment in the province of Saskatchewan. He wants to jack up their royalty, Mr. Speaker.

I can tell you this. I can tell you this: that those folks are never going to get a chance to implement those ruinous policies in the province because of the new road we're on, Mr. Speaker, because of what's in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. And this side of the House will make the case for a growing economy, for royalty stability, for a competitive economy, because we know it pays for the quality of life that we seek for the province of Saskatchewan. I believe that's why people across this province have made their choice. They're saying we like where we are going now, and we don't want to go back to that old road where we've been. We choose this government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue. Through the plan mapped out in the Speech from the Throne, we're going to continue to work very hard to earn the support of the people of the province, to provide service to the people of the province and to create a growing, dynamic province that is the pride of the Dominion of Canada, that is a leader in North America, Mr. Speaker. The Speech from the Throne keeps promises we've made and paints the vision of a new Saskatchewan on the new road. That's why I'll be opposing the amendment, and I'll support the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The question . . . Order. Order. The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member from Melfort, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Northwest:

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

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

May it please Your Honour:

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

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

An Hon. Member: — No.

The Speaker: — Those in favour of the motion say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion say nay.

Some Hon. Members: — Nay.

The Speaker: — I believe the ayes have it. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:22 until 12:26.]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. The question before the Assembly is the motion by the member from Melfort. Those in favour of the motion please rise.

[Yeas — 34]

Wall	Morgan	Bjornerud
Norris	Draude	Krawetz
Boyd	Eagles	Cheveldayoff
Duncan	Huyghebaert	McMillan
Harpauer	D'Autremont	Harrison
Hickie	Reiter	Hutchinson
Brkich	Elhard	Hart
Stewart	Allchurch	Weekes
Ross	Wilson	Gantefoer
Michelson	Wyant	Ottenbreit
Chisholm	Bradshaw	Tell
Heppner		

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

[Nays — 19]

Lingenfelter	McCall	Belanger
Harper	Trew	Higgins
Junor	Atkinson	Nilson
Forbes	Vermette	Brotten
Furber	Yates	Iwanchuk
Taylor	Quennell	Wotherspoon
Chartier		

Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 34; those opposed, 19.

The Speaker: — The motion carries. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move the House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This Assembly will adjourn until Monday afternoon at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:29.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Morgan	5967
Quennell	5967
Wotherspoon	5967
Ross	5967
Bradshaw	5967

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Harper	5968
Forbes	5968
Brotten	5968
Iwanchuk	5968
Wotherspoon	5968

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Diwali Celebration in Saskatoon	
Brotten	5969
Valour, Hard Work, Determination, and Commitment	
Brkich	5969
Sacrifice and Remembrance	
Quennell	5969
Canadians Remember	
Chisholm	5969
A Family's Service	
Belanger	5970
A Hero in Her Eyes	
Eagles	5970
Supporting Our Veterans	
Junor	5970

QUESTION PERIOD

Foreign Investment in Uranium Industry	
Lingenfelter	5970
Wall	5971
Arrangements Regarding Long-Term Care Facilities	
Atkinson	5971
Reiter	5971
Junor	5973
Saskatchewan Government Insurance	
Yates	5974
McMillan	5974

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 149 — <i>The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Krawetz	5975
Bill No. 150 — <i>The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Krawetz	5975
Bill No. 151 — <i>The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Norris	5975
Bill No. 152 — <i>The Commissioners for Oaths Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Morgan	5976
Bill No. 153 — <i>The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Morgan	5976
Bill No. 154 — <i>The Provincial Court Consequential Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
<i>Loi de 2010 portant modification corrélative à la loi intitulée The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Morgan	5976
Bill No. 155 — <i>The Natural Resources Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Duncan	5976
Bill No. 616 — <i>The Bed Bugs — Right to Know Act</i>	
Brotten	5977

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Weekes	5977
--------------	------

**SPECIAL ORDER
ADJOURNED DEBATES
ADDRESS IN REPLY**

Lingenfelter	5977
Wall	5982
Recorded Division (main motion)	5990

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Brad Wall
Premier of Saskatchewan
President of the Executive Council

Hon. Bob Bjornerud
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Crop Insurance Corporation

Hon. Bill Boyd
Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Telecommunications

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations
Minister Responsible for Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Gaming Corporation

Hon. June Draude
Minister of Social Services
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission

Hon. Dustin Duncan
Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Minister of Education
Provincial Secretary

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of Enterprise
Minister Responsible for Trade

Hon. Darryl Hickie
Minister of Municipal Affairs

Hon. Bill Hutchinson
Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
Capital Commission

Hon. D.F. (Yogi) Huyghebaert
Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing

Hon. Ken Krawetz
Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance

Hon. Tim McMillan
Minister Responsible for Crown
Investments Corporation
Minister Responsible for Information
Technology Office
Minister Responsible for Information
Services Corporation
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor and
Gaming Authority

Hon. Don McMorris
Minister of Health

Hon. Don Morgan
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Workers'
Compensation Board

Hon. Rob Norris
Minister of Advanced Education,
Employment and Immigration
Minister Responsible for Innovation
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for Uranium
Development Partnership

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Highways and Infrastructure
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Transportation Company
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority

Hon. Laura Ross
Minister of Government Services