



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

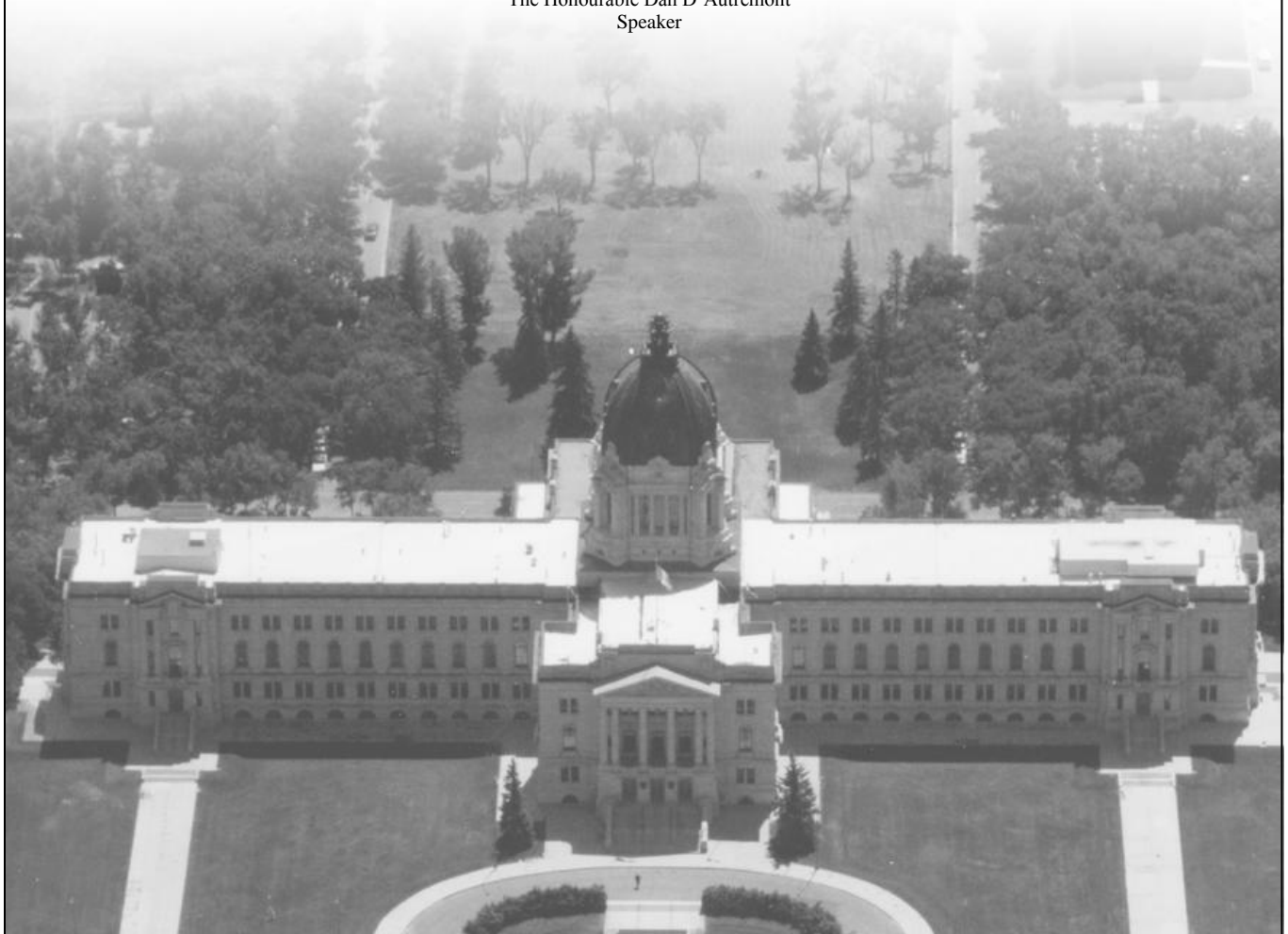
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Dan D'Autremont
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. Dan D’Autremont
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall
 Leader of the Opposition — John Nilson

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
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
Broten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Campeau, Jennifer	SP	Saskatoon Fairview
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Cox, Herb	SP	The Battlefords
D’Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Docherty, Mark	SP	Regina Coronation Park
Doherty, Kevin	SP	Regina Northeast
Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Hon. Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, Hon. D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Jurgens, Victoria	SP	Prince Albert Northcote
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lawrence, Greg	SP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Makowsky, Gene	SP	Regina Dewdney
Marchuk, Russ	SP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Hon. Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Paul	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Moe, Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Parent, Roger	SP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Phillips, Kevin	SP	Melfort
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Hon. Laura	SP	Regina Qu’Appelle Valley
Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Tochor, Corey	SP	Saskatoon Eastview
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
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

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the legislature, I'd like to introduce to you two of my constituents. The constituency of Cypress Hills is quite a ways from Regina. We don't get the opportunity to introduce guests too often. So it gives me great pleasure to introduce the reeve of the RM [rural municipality] of Happyland, Tim Geiger and his wife, Carmen Gill.

Tim's been here many times before. Carmen says her only recognition and remembrance of this place is as a youngster when she was asked to try and pick figures out of the marble in the columns of the wonderful building that we're in now. But they had an enjoyable visit here today already and they're looking forward to a more complete tour a little later. I'd ask all members to help me welcome the Geigers to their legislature.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature, former colleagues of mine and ours. The former Speaker, Mr. Myron Kowalsky, who is now of Saskatoon but formerly of Prince Albert, and he's seated in your gallery. Accompanying him today is Mr. Graham Addley, former member from Saskatoon who now is working for the University of Saskatchewan. Both of these people served well in the legislature but also in the chair that you're sitting in, Mr. Speaker, and I would like all members to welcome them here today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Fairview. Oh sorry, I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — That's fine. Mr. Speaker, I just want to join with the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming the former Speaker and former member, Graham, to their Legislative Assembly.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, and I'm making a bit of an assumption here, but I see a rather august group in your gallery. Right in the middle of this group is Dr. Michael Jackson. And, Mr. Speaker, later this day this Assembly will hear the humble address and we will be taking steps, a first step to honour the Queen's Jubilee, and I'm guessing that we have guests here to witness that very important occasion. Mr. Speaker, may I, through you and through all members of the House, welcome them to their Legislative Assembly as well.

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

Ms. Campeau: — Mr. Speaker, it is my honour today to introduce to you and through you in your gallery, the youngest

member of my campaign team, Denyse-Noel — just there — Denyse-Noel Stone. She helped put signs together and attended as many functions as she could. This future aspiring MLA is a grade 3 student in Ms. Sauter's class at Dundonald School and attends Crazy Dayz Dayhome in my constituency. Denyse-Noel brings with her today her mom, Adrienne Stone, who is my constituency assistant and who will be bringing into the world two new constituents this summer, and her grandpa Stu Coward who is a great party supporter and worked on many campaigns. This is Denyse-Noel's first of many visits to the Legislative Assembly, and I would like to welcome them to this Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to join with the member from Fairview and welcome Mr. Stu Coward to his Assembly. Mr. Coward is a constituent of Regina Rosemont, and it's nice to see him here with his granddaughter and his daughter here today.

And I know I've been known to run into Mr. Coward on the Devonian pathway for a little bit of exercise, but I've also been known to run into Mr. Coward on numerous occasions on the campaign trail, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately his efforts go towards the other side though, Mr. Speaker. But what I do know of Mr. Coward is that he's a straightforward, good person who cares about his province and is a passionate campaigner. I am hopeful that, as we near and approach the next election, that maybe Mr. Coward will have seen the error of his ways and have joined the campaign efforts of the other side. But judging by the gestures I see up there right now, it looks as though he's going to stick with the camp he's been supporting. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in welcoming Mr. Coward and his family here to this Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd want to join with the member from Cypress Hills and welcome Tim Geiger and his partner to the legislature, Carmen Gill. They have made a significant contribution to the seed industry in Saskatchewan dating back a long, long time, started by Carmen's father and perhaps even grandfather, to the industry. And Tim has followed along that path. As a seed grower myself, we've had lots of dealings back and forth over the years. And now that they are taking a different path and kind of winding down a little bit their operation, some would think that that would be good for me but the fact of the matter is, is that won't be good for the industry as a whole.

They have served the industry and agriculture very, very well for a long, long period of time in the Leader area. And they will be missed by the industry, but we would certainly want to welcome them to their legislature this afternoon.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you it gives me great pleasure to introduce in the East gallery

— I'm a bit directionally challenged here; East gallery, I believe — my husband Blair and my four-year-old Ophelia. Hi guys. Ophelia and Blair have joined me throughout my very short legislative career coming down to Regina, but this is the first time that we will be away from each other for the whole session. So they did happen to come down last night and are here today. So thank you. And it was a real treat to get to see Ophelia this morning and have lunch with her, and you too, Blair.

So with that, I ask all members to join me in welcoming Blair and Ophelia to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort.

Mr. Phillips: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I would like to introduce in your gallery, Mr. Cody Gieni. Mr. Gieni is a member of the parliamentary intern program. He is originally from Moose Jaw. He's via the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] in Saskatoon. And last week, or two weeks ago, I had the pleasure of having him accompanying me around the Melfort constituency, and it was a real pleasure to have him with me for the entire week. I would like all members to help me welcome Mr. Gieni to his Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased today to introduce Ms. Laura Hale who's in your gallery today. Give us a wave. Thank you very much, Laura. It's great to have the opportunity to introduce her to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, because I think we're going to be seeing Laura fairly frequently in our halls throughout the next few months.

Laura is the artist coordinator for our new artist-in-residence program, which is one of the programs we have put in place to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Legislative Building. Laura is from Tisdale originally and is a visual artist herself. She has had extensive experience with engaging Saskatchewan communities in art. She's also a kinesiology grad from the U of R [University of Regina] who had a great career playing volleyball. Go Cougars.

Mr. Speaker, in a media event this morning, we announced that Laura will be in charge of selecting eight artists who will work in this building at different times throughout the coming year. I am told that having an artist-in-residence program is a first for Canadian legislatures, Mr. Speaker, yet another first for the province of Saskatchewan.

Our artists in residence will work on projects related to the anniversary, and they are going to engage with visitors and students who come to the building. Please join me in welcoming Laura to her Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, it's my pleasure to also welcome Laura to

her Legislative Assembly. I am looking forward to seeing what she does as the coordinator of the artist-in-residency program. She's done amazing work, I know, in Saskatoon when she was the artist in the community for the Meewasin Valley Authority: if anyone's ever been down to the River Landing, the beautiful tree grates, and the lovely tile mosaics were programs that Laura helped facilitate. So I am quite excited, particularly about the youth arts initiative piece that she will be working on here too. So with that I'd ask everybody to welcome Laura once again to her Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, somebody that is not likely a stranger anywhere, is Peter Voldeng, formerly active in the agricultural business sector of our economy, now living in Saskatoon, and a small-business person. Mr. Voldeng was at one time president of the Saskatchewan Party and is now president of the Saskatoon Southeast constituency, so any of my failings in the electoral future will certainly be his fault rather than my own. I'm pleased to see him and would ask all members to join him.

But, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I'd like to join with the members opposite in welcoming Graham Addley and Speaker Kowalsky. It caused me a little bit of angst earlier today when I saw them both come in together. Early on in my career after the first election I parked next to Mr. Addley, and it was my wish to put a Saskatchewan Party licence plate on the front of his vehicle.

I went to see Speaker Kowalsky, worried that I would somehow be subject to some disciplinary proceedings if it came to light that I was the one responsible. Speaker Kowalsky was quick to join with me and encouraged me to do it and said, you bring his old licence plate to me, and if he's got any problems, he'll deal with the Speaker on it. So I did it. And I think Mr. Addley drove his Toyota back and forth to Saskatoon and to many NDP [New Democratic Party] functions with the Saskatchewan Party licence plate on the front. I suspect it increased the value of the vehicle by many hundreds of dollars. And in any event, I would like to hope that they're not here plotting revenge and would like to thank him for coming today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a young lady just joined us in the west gallery, Marley Kotylak from the Montmartre area. Marley's well-noted for her scholastic ability, her involvement in community, in fact not only in school and sports but also many volunteer efforts. She, through her volunteerism in the community, she was recognized with the Young Woman of Distinction Award in 2011.

Marley has come a long ways to join us today. She's politically active, and she wanted to come and just see how the session is running, but she's come from Minot State University, has a little break. And we want to extend a warm welcome to Marley Kotylak.

The Speaker: — I would like to ask the members to join with

me in welcoming the following guests that are here to join with us to listen to the Queen's message on Commonwealth Day. Sitting in my gallery are Mr. Bert Clarke representing the Commonwealth nation of Barbados, if you would please stand; Dr. Michael Kwesie Bimpeh-Segu and Dr. Michelle Segu representing Ghana; Mrs. Renu Kapoor and Mrs. Rani Bilkhu representing India; Ms. Mavis Ashbourne Palmer representing Jamaica; Mr. Sel Murray representing Trinidad and Tobago; and Mr. Mike Luti representing Uganda.

Also we have members from the Saskatchewan branch of the Royal Commonwealth Society: Dr. Michael Jackson, branch Chair; Mr. Peter Kucherepa, branch vice-president; Reverend Derek Nicholls; Reverend Ted Giese; Dr. Lewis Draper, who is also a former MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Assiniboia, now Wood River; Ms. Isabel Bailey; and Ms. Margaret Asquith-Morrey.

As well as has been previously mentioned, we have former Speaker Myron Kowalsky, who was the Speaker here in the Saskatchewan legislature from March of 2001 to November, 2007, as well as former Deputy Speaker Graham Addley, who served from May of 2001 to October of 2005. I would ask all members to welcome them here today on Commonwealth Day.

[13:45]

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for greater protection for late-night retail workers by passing Jimmy's law. And we know in the early morning hours of June 20th, 2011, Jimmy Ray Wiebe was shot two times and died from his injuries. He was working at a gas station in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, alone and unprotected from intruders.

But we also know that there are positive statistics showing that convenience store and gas station robberies are down by one-third since 1999, largely due to increased safety practices, including two people working together on late-night shifts. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately enact Bill 601, Jimmy's law, to ensure greater safety for retail workers who work late-night hours.

Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from the city of Regina. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the management of our finances.

The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the Sask Party government to provide Saskatchewan people with the fair, true state of our finances by providing appropriate summary financial accounting and reporting that is in line with the rest of Canada in compliance with public sector accounting standards and following the independent Provincial Auditor's recommendations; and also to begin to provide responsible, sustainable, and trustworthy financial management as deserved by Saskatchewan people, organizations, municipalities, institutions, taxpayers, and businesses.

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

The petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Kindersley and Regina. I so submit.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm presenting a petition today from individuals in the province calling for the Saskatchewan seniors' bill of rights. It reads:

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that many Saskatchewan seniors live on fixed incomes and are victims of physical, emotional, and financial abuse; that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to social and economic security and the right to live free from poverty; that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan enact a Saskatchewan seniors' bill of rights which will provide Saskatchewan seniors with social and economic security, and protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Mr. Speaker, I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of trappers of Saskatchewan. The current regulations being enforced are creating challenges that are a concern for our traditional trappers. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to recognize that the experience gained through practical experience be valued; and in so doing to cause the government to review the current legislation and regulations with respect to trapping regulations and firearm use in consultation with the traditional resource users.

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

It is signed by many trappers and community members in northern Saskatchewan. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

J.J. Kirkpatrick Award Recipients

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the PotashCorp employees and the United Steelworkers for being named the recipients of the United Way's prestigious J.J. Kirkpatrick Award presented in recognition for outstanding leadership in an employee campaign resulting in significant growth of the leadership giving program.

PotashCorp's 2011 campaign doubled leadership numbers to 104 donors and raised over \$700,000 to the local United Way program.

The executive director of the United Way of Saskatoon and Area, Sheri Benson, said:

The winners of this award have proven that they are leaders in every sense of the word during the 2011 campaign. The employee campaign chairs at the head office and mine sites — Patience Lake, Cory and Allan — encourage participation and contributions from their colleagues while raising awareness.

Mr. Speaker, this is one example of several projects of the labour partnership of the United Way of Saskatoon and Area and the Saskatoon & District Labour Council, a partnership that is working to build community together. Labour's commitment to the United Way is about supporting and working collectively to create and foster positive communities.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all members to join with me in celebrating the surpassing of Saskatoon United Way's fundraising goal with a special thank you to the PotashCorp employees and the United Steelworkers for their great achievements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

Agricultural Safety Week

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. March 11 to 17 has been proclaimed Agricultural Safety Week in Saskatchewan. Every single year an average of 16 people die on provincial farms and over 180 are hospitalized due to preventable injuries. Fifty per cent of farm fatalities and injuries are machine-related. Farming is one of the most hazardous occupations in Canada.

With the help of over 200 rural municipalities, Saskatchewan Agriculture provides funds for the agricultural health and safety network to deliver safety initiatives and services for farm and ranch families. To protect Saskatchewan farmers, our government has implemented a farm safety program which offers educational seminars, exhibits at trade shows, and resource materials such as a farm safety guide available in print and online as well as safety DVDs [digital versatile disc] that promote safe work practices and injury prevention.

Saskatchewan Agricultural Safety Week was held in conjunction with Canadian Agricultural Safety Week which is

sponsored by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association, Farm Credit Canada, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Mr. Speaker, farming was the bedrock on which this province was built, and we must continue to strive to reach the very important goal of eliminating injuries and fatalities in the agricultural sector. On behalf of all government MLAs, I would like to extend well wishes and hope that all producers are safe out there this spring and always. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Points Athabasca Northern Spirit Showcase

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize Points Athabasca Northern Spirit Showcase of 2012, which is held in Prince Albert. This musical arts and personal development program was the fifth annual production of the event and included participation of 40 mostly First Nations and Métis participants, ages 13 to 18, from all over northern Saskatchewan that displayed their outstanding singing and musical talents.

The youth were selected from an original pool of 88 participants who participated in the fifth annual Northern Spirits workshop back in November of 2011. Mr. Speaker, the organizers of that workshop were then given the difficult task of choosing which of the youth would produce and perform at the main showcase held on February 18th of 2012. Highlighting the show were performances by Shanda Burns, Tristan Randhile, Hailey Mercredi, Jordanna Toutsaint, Nicolas Gardiner, Kelsey Ethan McIntyre, Dora Corrigan, and Gaylene Ballantyne.

Mr. Speaker, all of the youth did a great job in showcasing the kind of talent we have in northern Saskatchewan. These young men and women put the whole show on themselves, from the stage and set design to emceeing and lighting as well. Mr. Speaker, these youth will take the lessons learned from this live performance back to their home and help to become leaders within the performing arts and their community as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all the members to join me in recognizing event sponsor Points Athabasca Contracting and of course all the performers, volunteers, and parents in showcasing the performing arts talent of Saskatchewan's northern youth. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Fundraising Event for the Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society

Mr. Phillips: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to once again recognize the tremendous efforts of the people of the Melfort constituency. On Saturday evening, March 10th, the first ever STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] benefit fundraiser was held in the province of Saskatchewan in Melfort. The response was fantastic. It was a sold-out event.

Mr. Speaker, we must recognize the tireless efforts of the volunteers. A local woman, Robin Miazga, spearheaded the event with the assistance of RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted

Police] Corporal Bonnie McLean, Fire Chief John McDonald, EMS [emergency medical services] Wayne Therres, and my two CAs [constituency assistant], Peggy Gordon and Laurie Hookway.

We were captivated by Tyson Parker of Leduc, Alberta when he spoke about his own rescue that he had had just outside Leduc. And we were very pleased to have the Minister of Social Services with us that evening. I myself had the honour of introducing one of our own: the former minister of Finance and now executive vice-president of STARS Foundation, Rod Gantfoer. Rod made an excellent presentation to the audience explaining exactly how STARS operates, its missions, and how important fundraising is to this non-profit corporation.

Mr. Speaker, the event showcased the enthusiasm and generosity of the people in support of this worthy cause, and they reached deep into their pocket and came out with \$27,000, Mr. Speaker. I wish to congratulate the people of Melfort and the districts surrounding them on this most successful event.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Landis School Projects

Mr. Weekes: — Mr. Speaker, on November 30th, 2011, representatives from the Landis School took great pride in showcasing their new project-based learning initiative to the community. The presentation displayed student-led projects focusing on horticulture and student leadership and was highlighted by guest speaker Bryan McCrea, one of the founders of 3twenty Solutions, who shared his own experiences and his successes with project-based learning. 3twenty Solutions, a Saskatchewan-based company, builds accommodations, workspaces, and specialty storage spaces using shipping containers for a variety of customers around the world.

Bryan is a graduate of the Edwards School of Business, who in partnership with the Sun West School Division are currently discussing a possible partnership building on the Landis School model. The project-based learning model is based on the belief that students learn the best when they are involved in the process by researching, asking and answering their own questions, and creating something new. Project-based learning involves teams of students researching and learning content as they work to create something that solves problems in their school and community.

Mr. Speaker, the showcase was a great way to inform the community of a new way of learning in a school that is looking forward to an exciting future, highlighting that good projects, guided by a teacher, and completed by the active students cover just as much curriculum as lectures. Landis School students report that it is an awesome and fun way of learning.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

University of Saskatchewan Men's Hockey Victory

Mr. Tochor: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to stand today to congratulate the University of Saskatchewan Huskies men's hockey team on being crowned the Canadian West champions.

The Huskies beat the University of Calgary Dinos on a goal by Brett Ward at 6:33 in triple overtime for a 2-1 win. Ward beat netminder Dustin Butler for the win after both Butler and Huskie goaltender Ryan Holfeld had played fantastic overtime periods. Each goaltender kept their team in the game on numerous occasions with sprawling saves and clear breaks to the net. This triple overtime epic battle marked the longest in conference history.

The work and dedication displayed by these fantastic athletes deserve recognition. The long hours of practice, careful attention to good health, and the life balance required between sport and study are commendable achievements.

The Huskies last won the Canada West Championship in 2007. History is not on the side of the Dinos. They have never defeated the Huskies in five Canada West final meetings.

The Huskies will now compete at the University Cup as the lone Canada West team. The University Cup, hosted by the UNB [University of New Brunswick] Varsity Reds, is March 21st to the 25th in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

I would ask all members to join me in congratulating the U of S champions and wish them well at the University Cup. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Coronation Park.

Canadian Interuniversity Sport Women's Basketball Tournament

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge both Saskatchewan university women's basketball teams for qualifying at the Canadian Interuniversity Sport Basketball Tournament.

The Huskies qualified as a wild card entry as the number 6 seed, while the Cougars qualified for the CIS [Canadian Interuniversity Sport] tournament in Calgary by beating the Brock Badgers at the West Regional Tournament in Saskatoon, a game attended by the MLA for Saskatoon Greystone and his daughter Jacqueline.

The Cougars team was then rewarded for their hard work with the CanWest number one ranking going into the tournament. The Cougars team played exceptionally well all season, posting 23 straight wins before losing the conference championship to the UBC [University of British Columbia] Thunderbirds, and look forward to taking on their opponents throughout the national championship tournament.

As top seeds, the lady Cougars will meet the University of Calgary Dinos in the quarter-final match. The Cougars have beaten the Dinos three times this season but take nothing for granted. The Dinos are an incredibly tough team to beat at

home. Both teams deserve congratulations for their hard work, dedication to health and athletics, and success balancing a tough university sport schedule with intense academic requirements.

I would also like to congratulate my niece, Madi, for her accomplishments in her inaugural year with the Cougars.

Would all members please join me in congratulating our fantastic Saskatchewan women's university basketball teams and wish them luck at the CIS tournament. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Accommodation in Seniors' Facility

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week, Mr. Speaker, I raised concerns on behalf of residents of St. Mary's Villa in Humboldt. These individuals were concerned about the asbestos removal from their facility just after they'd been given an eviction notice of just a few days notice and they were still packing their belongings and trying to find a place to live.

Following question period, Mr. Speaker, the minister had this to say in a scum, "It's my understanding that there isn't asbestos in there." The minister also said, "We haven't been told that there was. The health region says there isn't."

Yet, Mr. Speaker, just moments later, the health region confirmed to media that there was indeed asbestos present and that it was being removed. My question to the minister: why didn't he know this?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I think we all know, the Saskatoon Health Region or any of the health regions are responsible for the delivery of health care within their regions, Mr. Speaker. That not only entails delivering of health care. It also entails working on facilities, repairing facilities, Mr. Speaker.

I was not aware that there was asbestos in the facility when I spoke to the media last Thursday, Mr. Speaker. I found out later that there was asbestos. I have asked the health region. The health region has responded by saying that all the occupational and health safety concerns were taken of, Mr. Speaker. Occupational health and safety has said that the Saskatoon Health Region covered all their bases when they were removing asbestos, Mr. Speaker.

Having said that, we are still looking forward to having the Ombudsman take a look into this, Mr. Speaker, because it's not only just the removal of asbestos. It was the whole process around the notification, Mr. Speaker, and the communication that was conducted, that needs to be looked into. This is one more other factor that the Ombudsman will be looking into.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The health region delivers care, delivers medical care, Mr. Speaker, but the minister is responsible. And when there is an issue of this importance, an issue that has had considerable media attention, it's up to the minister to be asking the right questions and to ensure he knows what is going on. That clearly has not happened in this instance. Even if the minister wasn't listening to his briefings, Mr. Speaker, he at least had the chance to read in his media clippings package, I would assume, about the issues happening at St. Mary's Villa.

Mr. Speaker, the minister was not paying attention to this file. These are individuals in their 80s and 90s being forced out on short notice, trying to find a place to live, then confronted by individuals in protective suits taking out asbestos from the facility.

The minister went on in his quote to say this in the scum:

It's our understanding that there is none. The health region, I mean I just have to go with what the health region says. It's their facility. They're the ones who have been dealing with this. They said that they have no evidence that there was asbestos in there and that's how they moved accordingly.

The minister is responsible for the delivery of health care in the province. It's up to him to ask the questions that matter, to his officials, when there is a matter of great significance. And this, Mr. Speaker, has required a lot of attention. My question to the minister: why, on this issue at St. Mary's Villa, did he drop the ball over and over and over again?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I said before, the health region is responsible for the day-to-day activities. I can tell you that they do a number of activities each and every day. I am not kept up to speed on every issue, whether it's moving a person in or moving a person out, what all the issues are around that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the health regions do a very good job, and Saskatoon Regional Health Authority has done a great job at putting patients first over the last number of years. And, Mr. Speaker, I think, according to the health region and talking to their board Chair, they feel that they have dropped the ball on this one and that's why they're inviting the Ombudsman in as well to look at this particular facility, Mr. Speaker, and the situations around it.

I think if you would have read also and listened to what the Saskatoon media person said, is they are handling the asbestos issue according to occupational health and safety guidelines so they felt no need to inform me, the minister.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this isn't the first instance when

we've seen the minister on a different page than the health region. I think to his profit-driven clinic approach. There's been instances there — a different health region, Mr. Speaker, but the same minister uninformed about what's going on in the region.

It would be one thing, Mr. Speaker, if it was just the minister, but it's other members of the Assembly also that aren't paying attention to this important issue. The local MLA, Mr. Speaker, has also commented on this as reported in *The Globe and Mail*. She wrote a letter to the families, and as it's reported in the paper, it said, "I assure you that no residents will be evicted and a reasonable amount of time will be allowed to accommodate what will be best for the seniors involved."

Well, Mr. Speaker, that simply did not occur. The residents were evicted. Moreover, Mr. Speaker, they were confronted by asbestos removal as they were packing their belongings, trying to find a place to live.

It's clear, Mr. Speaker, that members there do not understand the importance of putting seniors first and protecting their rights. Last week I put forward private member's legislation called the seniors' bill of rights to help protect seniors and ensure there is the dignity there for the individuals. My question to the minister: will he support the seniors' bill of rights?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I said last week, each and every day in the health care system, there are tens of thousands of interactions with seniors across the province, Mr. Speaker, through the 12 health regions, through the Cancer Agency. And not all are perfect, and we'll admit that, and we will continue to admit that. There is always more work to do. But the vast majority receive very good care, and that's why it is so disconcerting when you hear a situation around St. Mary's Villa that there was not appropriate treatment, that we need to look into it, Mr. Speaker. But I think it's very important that we let the Ombudsman look into this and do their work, Mr. Speaker.

And talk about being on a different page: the members opposite are on a different page. As a matter of fact, the member from Regina Elphinstone stated last week to the media, he said, "We don't want to prejudge the work of the Ombudsman." In other words, let him do the work. Let's look at the recommendations, and follow through on them.

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

Grain Marketing

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current bidding war over Viterra is happening because multinationals are capitalizing on the opportunity of greater profit, thanks to the demise of the Canadian Wheat Board single-desk monopoly on wheat, which this government lobbied for hard. Viterra has reported that the single desk's demise will mean a \$50 million increase in its annual earnings. We all know exactly where that increased profit is coming from, from out of farmers' pockets.

When questioned in December, the minister had no plan for

dealing with the single desk's demise. To the minister: has he now had a chance to determine how this government will help farmers and not large corporations deal with the post-single-desk regime?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, I think the member is aware that most producers in this province are looking forward to the future without the monopoly with the Canadian Wheat Board. I think we see a number of changes happening out there. I think, Mr. Speaker, the producers have come to the realization that it's happening. I think the Canadian Wheat Board has an opportunity here, Mr. Speaker, by being able to market canola and flax and oats and other commodities that they didn't have that right to market before, that they may end up being stronger than they ever have been in the past. I think the optimistic view of many producers out there is that they have themselves though the opportunity to market their own grain without being tied and locked in under the Wheat Board, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — They're not locked into the board any more. They're locked into the agenda of corporations, Mr. Speaker. This story has no surprises. The destruction of the single desk allows Viterra to "fatten earnings," according to today's *Globe and Mail*. This government pushed to get rid of the single desk without planning for the consequences. Well the consequences have now arrived, Mr. Speaker, and that means less profit for Saskatchewan farmers.

In December the minister suggested that the single desk caused payment delay problems for farmers. He should be more concerned about pay cuts for farmers. Why did this government choose to put ideology ahead of the welfare of this province's background — its farmers?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm looking forward, and I know many producers in this province are looking forward into the future of where the agriculture industry can go. I think there's so many opportunities out there right now and by taking the monopoly away on the Canadian Wheat Board adds another opportunity for producers, especially, Mr. Speaker, young producers that turn on their computers in the morning and can check markets right around the world. Agriculture, as well as everything else and technology, is changing on a daily basis. The Canadian Wheat Board was formed in the 1940s, Mr. Speaker. I think it's time we look into the future, let our young farmers go forward and plan their businesses accordingly.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think we're going to see an awful lot of optimism right across the ag sector as we see how they can market their own grain for themselves, and especially when they pay for those inputs that go into raising that commodity, own the land it's grown on. And, Mr. Speaker, they should have that right. Mr. Speaker, they have that opportunity today.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is not just the official opposition speculating on where the interest in Viterra is coming from. Bloomberg News reported today that Viterra said in January it expected to increase grain volumes and earnings after the board's control of supplies ends.

For decades the Canadian Wheat Board protected farmers and ensured that they received the net benefit, a good price for their wheat. To the minister: will the government now, at the very least, set up a system of price monitoring to protect farmers, something it should have done months ago? What is the plan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, I might remind her that canola has not been under the monopoly of the Canadian Wheat Board, and I think as of today it's around \$12.50 a bushel. I might remind that same member opposite that flax was not under the monopoly of the Canadian Wheat Board, and it's selling for around \$13 a bushel. Mr. Speaker, I would also remind her that wheat was under the monopoly of the Canadian Wheat Board, and it's selling for somewhere around 4 to \$5 a bushel. Mr. Speaker, canola, flax, and a number of the other commodities, the pulses, that were in the open market system have done very, very well on their own.

Mr. Speaker, I would add again though that the Canadian Wheat Board, I think, will be able to function with the new added responsibilities of being able to market canola and flax and oats and pulses and some of the other crops. I think if it's a very good value for the dollar that they're paying out there and competing, Mr. Speaker, competing with other markets out there. I think producers are going to get a better bang for their dollar and for their grains.

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

Possible Takeover of Grain Trading Company

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, as pointed out by the member from Nutana, this Premier and Sask Party government pushed hard to support the dismantling of the Wheat Board here in Saskatchewan and across Western Canada even though market analysts had warned of the takeover of Viterra as a direct result of the dismantling of the Wheat Board. I quote business columnist Bruce Johnstone's article in the *Leader-Post* on March 10th: "Market analysts speculated Viterra itself could become a takeover target with the end of the CWB monopoly."

To the minister: what economic analysis was done to understand the economic impact of dismantling the Wheat Board and one of its results, the potential takeover of Viterra?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Well, Mr. Speaker, to a degree this is a hypothetical situation that I don't think anyone fully understands what's actually happening to this point. We certainly don't have the information unless the member

opposite has something that we don't, Mr. Speaker. But I think in the final outcome that we'll be watching what's best for the people of Saskatchewan and, Mr. Speaker, in this case what's best for the agriculture industry in the province of Saskatchewan.

But I would add, Mr. Speaker, that if we look back to the years — and I think the member opposite might have mentioned this from time to time — when the Pool had a bid to take over Agricore and I think that same concern that the member opposite is voicing here today, what happened in that situation, it ended up being a stronger company. Viterra ended up being one of the most positive companies right across this country. So I think, Mr. Speaker, we'd be well served to wait and find out all the details of what is in the works.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, certainly the opposition concurs with that minister that that government doesn't understand what's going on here today, Mr. Speaker. It seems that this is but another example of ideology trumping common sense.

Viterra, formerly the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, has been an incredibly important part of our economic history as a province and a proud part of our history. And to this day, the large Prairie and Canadian champion has been a powerful and important economic presence in our province and in Regina. This includes corporate office jobs that add significant value to our local economy, not to mention the contributions of these workers to our city and province. These well-paying jobs contribute mightily to our local economy such as, as an important driver of local business — for example, retail sales.

To the minister: with the potential takeover of Viterra and the real and valid risk of losing jobs, what analysis has this government done to understand this impact?

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this day, I informed the media of the province of Saskatchewan, and some are already reporting, that there is a process in place through Investment Canada that we're well acquainted with here in the province of Saskatchewan, a process to evaluate potential takeovers of Canadian companies if they meet certain criteria.

This is all based on conjecture at this point, and rumour, although the rumour mill is heating up certainly. Mr. Speaker, I'll just say what I said to the media to members of this House: this government will use that federal government process of analysis, will do so deliberately and will do so aggressively, to ensure that there is a net benefit to Canada and to Saskatchewan before we would recommend that the federal government approve any takeover, including the one speculated with respect of Viterra.

Mr. Speaker, we're aware of the process. We've just been through it in 2010, Mr. Speaker. If this takeover comes to be in terms of being something more than rumour, we'll take the

same deliberative and appropriate and thorough steps to protect the interests of the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it appears that any thoughtful analysis of the economic impact or the loss of jobs or the impact on community has been scant or non-existent by this government. And in fact, they pushed an agenda without any understanding of the consequences for Saskatchewan people.

As business columnist Bruce Johnstone, as well as financial analysts and experts, have pointed out, these impacts and this takeover is a direct result of this government and its federal cousins. We recognize the challenge this brings to people and families and our communities by way of job loss and of course our economy. But these jobs and this company also contribute to our provincial finances, impacting corporate sales tax, property tax, consumption taxes, personal income taxes — all in a negative way.

Question to the minister: has his government analyzed the negative impact on our provincial finances, our revenues? And specifically how much money could this eliminate from our budget and the priorities of Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP have already given up with respect to Viterra and its offices here in the city of Regina. Mr. Speaker, that ought not to surprise anybody in the province of Saskatchewan because people in this province will not forget the fact that on the day the federal government was going to rule with respect to the potash decision, the leader of the NDP, Dwain Lingenfelter, with support of members over there, he was in Ottawa ready to have a press conference with Jack Layton to throw in the towel on the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, if there is a takeover proposal, this side of the House, this government, will do all of its homework, will do the analysis. And, Mr. Speaker, if we don't take the advice of the member opposite with respect to Viterra, I don't think anyone will be surprised.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, we have just heard the revisionist history about the potash takeover. What we know is this Premier dithered. He didn't know what he was doing. He fought for time. And when the true story comes out, he came at the right position for the people of Saskatchewan; there's no denying that. But he's got to be really careful when he tells this story because there are many people who will correct it for the historians.

Mr. Speaker, this issue in Saskatchewan is of a major consequence for all of us in this province for many reasons. Has the Premier spoken with the Prime Minister or the federal Minister of Agriculture?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the answer is no. We haven't talked to the Prime Minister about a takeover bid that hasn't happened yet. We haven't talked to him about weather in June that hasn't happened yet. We haven't talked to him about the Riders in the playoffs because that hasn't happened yet.

Now, Mr. Speaker, make no mistake. If there is a takeover bid of Viterra by the companies that have been rumoured or anyone else, this government will approach it in the same deliberate and focused and aggressive way as we did the proposed takeover of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we will assemble a team within government tasked to know the deal from every possible angle. Mr. Speaker, we will seek outside advice in terms of its fiscal impact and its economic impact if we believe that is needed. And, Mr. Speaker, we will come to, and then publicly disclose, the position of the province of Saskatchewan, not just to the federal government whose decision this would be, but also to all of the people of this province so that they will know that our interest is their interest. The net benefit analysis is what's prescribed by the federal government. That's what we expect to be used in any potential takeover, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, Viterra is Canada's largest grain handling company. And Bruce Johnstone points out:

One could argue that Viterra — being the largest grainhandling company in the country — is a strategic asset that is in the “national interest” to protect from foreign ownership. If potash is “strategic,” then what about wheat, barley and other grains and oilseeds?

Fifteen months ago, the Prime Minister promised to clarify and define “the national interest” in regards to foreign takeovers of Canadian companies. Mr. Speaker, can the Premier answer whether he has done anything in the last 15 months to follow up with the Prime Minister to define and clarify “the national interest” in regard to the foreign takeover of Saskatchewan companies?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, Viterra and any company that's in the grain business that's going to be a candidate for takeover doesn't actually own the wheat. That's something the NDP doesn't understand. The wheat belongs to the farmers who own the land, who provide the inputs, who grow the grain and now, Mr. Speaker, and now, Mr. Speaker, who will be free to chose how to market the product that they have grown and invested to produce under the new system.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting now that the opposition is in high dudgeon about a deal, a takeover bid that's not yet been announced, because it was their government that presided over the transformation of Viterra from the Wheat Pool to the company that it is today. And the Agriculture minister of the day, Mark Wartman, offered his reservations about their involvement in the market in any way to stop this. He said:

Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister Mark Wartman offered similar reservations, although Wartman

acknowledged that there isn't anything a provincial government could do to stop this acquisition. Nor frankly, would the province have much in the way of regulatory tools to deal with the new Pool.

Mr. Speaker, our view is different than that. There is a net benefit analysis through the Investment Canada process. We expect it to be applied rigorously to any takeover involving a Saskatchewan company or any other company. Mr. Speaker, I think there's a demonstrated record on this side of the House, of this government, standing up for Saskatchewan's interests. That's exactly what we'll do again, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, it's pretty clear that the Premier did not answer my question: has he talked to the Prime Minister about this important issue for Saskatchewan people in the last 15 months? Because we know that this definition of national interest is extremely important. It affects our economy. It affects jobs. It affects many, many, many parts of the province. Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier: what is he waiting for?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, in terms of triggering the process we'll use to evaluate a potential takeover, we would be waiting for the potential takeover. Mr. Speaker, I think that's reasonable. I think that's the process that's served the government and the province of Saskatchewan very well.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government has not yet, has not yet opened up the Investment Canada process to the review that it talked about in the wake of the potash announcement. Mr. Speaker, should it do that, this government is ready to provide a very detailed brief and policy to that particular review process.

Mr. Speaker, we think there are strategic resources and companies that have control over strategic resources. Our analysis would demonstrate the Potash Corporation on one hand and Cameco on the other. Cameco is protected by golden shares both federally and provincially. And unlike the NDP opposite, this side of the House will not give up the golden share on any company it currently holds that, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it seems absolutely clear that this Premier has not talked to the Prime Minister about this issue. We know that it's a situation where he has had the opportunity to work with the information that was received in the whole BHP, Potash Corporation situation. So, Mr. Speaker, his role as a leader in this province is to make sure that we have both the provincial laws and the federal laws in place.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier again: when will he talk to the Prime Minister about this important issue so that we in the province of Saskatchewan can have some understanding about whether food that's produced in our province is just as much in the national interest as the potash that is used to grow that food?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. We're talking about a company that handles the food that the world certainly needs and that we are producing, our producers produce in great quantities. Again I'm not sure how many times I can say this to the hon. member, but I'll try one more time. Mr. Speaker, when there is a proposed takeover for Viterra or any other Saskatchewan company that qualifies to trigger the investment review process, that triggers the net benefit test that we'll be seeking to be applied rigorously to any such deal, until that happens, Mr. Speaker, we won't be going, talking to the Prime Minister or others about hypothetical deals.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important in terms of market integrity and in the interests of the company that these members seem to be wanting to speak to it in terms of . . .

An Hon. Member: — Sell out.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well or sell out, depending on who's asking the question. I think in fairness to that company, we shouldn't be speculating too much about the particular takeover, save to say this, that when it comes forward, if it comes forward, this government will seek to defend the interests of this province. This government will seek that the net benefit test is applied aggressively to the interests of Canada and to the interest of Saskatchewan just as we've done in the past, Mr. Speaker.

MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

The Speaker: — Before orders of the day, I would ask all members to rise for the Commonwealth Day message from Her Majesty the Queen, Head of the Commonwealth:

One of the great benefits of today's technology-based world is the range of opportunities it offers to understand and appreciate how others live: we can see, hear, and enter into the experience of people in communities and circumstances far removed from our own.

A remarkable insight we gain from such windows on the world is that, however different outward appearances may be, we share a great deal in common. Our circumstances and surroundings may vary enormously, for example in the food we eat and the clothes we wear, but we share one humanity, and this draws us all together. The joys of celebration and sympathy of sadness may be expressed differently but they are felt in the same way the world over.

How we express our identities reveals both a rich diversity and many common threads. Through the creative genius of artists — whether they be writers, actors, film-makers, dancers, or musicians — we can see both the range of our cultures and the elements of our shared humanity.

“Connecting Cultures,” our Commonwealth theme this year, encourages us to consider the special opportunities we have as members of this unique gathering of nations, to celebrate an extraordinary cultural tapestry that reflects our many individual and collective identities. The Commonwealth treasures and respects this wealth of diversity.

Connecting cultures is more, however, than observing others and the ways in which they express themselves. This year our Commonwealth focus seeks to explore how we can share and strengthen the bond of Commonwealth citizenship we already enjoy by using our cultural connections to help bring us even closer together as family and friends across the globe.

To support this theme, a special song has been composed for the Commonwealth: “Stronger as One.” There are any number of ways in which that single piece of music alone can be played or sung anywhere in the Commonwealth. And by sharing the same music with our own personal interpretations and contributions, the wonderful human attribute of imagination is nourished, and we gain insights of understanding and appreciation of others.

The Commonwealth offers a pathway for this greater understanding and the opportunity to expand upon our shared experience in a wider world, a world in which paths of mutual respect and common cause may also be explored and which can draw us together, stronger and better than before.

Elizabeth R.

[14:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would request leave of my colleagues in the legislature to move a humble address, that one be presented to Her Majesty, the Queen. And I have some remarks before moving the motion. I would ask for that leave now.

The Speaker: — The Premier has asked leave to present a humble address. Is leave granted.

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

MOTIONS

Congratulations to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the Leader of the Opposition may also wish to address the motion before we put it to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, in her initial address to the Empire, as it was known then, Her Majesty declared to all of us “. . . that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong.”

Over the reign of Her Majesty, we have seen the very shape and structure of our society here and across the Commonwealth change, to be transformed in ways that could only have been dreamed of 60 years ago. However, through this 60-year period, Her Majesty has displayed an unwavering devotion to duty and to service which today we celebrate and we mark, for which

today we wish to express our deep appreciation on behalf of the people of the province of Saskatchewan. It is most fitting that we would do this on Commonwealth Day, that this House would pay tribute to the Queen of Canada through the adoption of a humble address as part of our provincial celebrations in this Diamond Jubilee year.

Since her first visit to our province in 1951, then as Princess Elizabeth, Her Majesty has had a special bond with the people of Saskatchewan. Her subsequent visits in 1973, 1978, and 2005 have only strengthened that relationship. And, Mr. Speaker, long before her first visit, there was a connection between Her Majesty and this Legislative Building when the Duke of Connaught opened the building in 1912, the Duke being the great-great uncle of Her Majesty the Queen.

Whether it was a luncheon in Canora in 1987 which showcased Ukrainian fare or the oil rig demonstration in Kindersley or the 2005 visit to the Canadian Light Source Synchrotron and the ability for the province to showcase our research excellence, or the presentation of a special tablet to the First Nations University in recognition of the special relationship between the Crown and First Nations or, very poignantly, visiting with our veterans at special ceremonies at the War Memorial, Her Majesty has seen what makes Saskatchewan great — our people. And our people have seen what makes Her Majesty great. As a result of our people, Her Majesty has also witnessed the steady growth and development of this province as a vital component to a strong and united Canada and a key player in the Commonwealth family of nations.

It is fitting when we are also celebrating the 100th anniversary of this building, a place that she has visited often, that we are reminded once again that we should never take for granted our system of government or the sacrifices made in defending it. For it is this system of government and the freedoms which it represents that makes our province and our country one of the best places in the world in which to live.

Mr. Speaker, I had the great honour, now just over a year ago at Buckingham Palace, for a brief audience with Her Majesty. It is something I will never forget. Mr. Speaker, I didn't know what to expect, neither did any of us that were going into Buckingham Palace that day.

Our daughter was with us, our oldest daughter was with us. She's an anglophile of the highest order and loves all things Britannia and loves the history of the monarchy. And she was able to attend, at least in the waiting room, while we waited for the audience. And I remember, Mr. Speaker, as the hype was growing for the royal wedding, us being driven in through the front gates and there was a large, large crowd out there, all straining to see who was in this nondescript van driving through the gates. I said to Megan, I said, if they only knew who it was, they'd be so disappointed.

Mr. Speaker, that very brief meeting with Her Majesty was really quite amazing. I had the chance to present her some gifts, heartfelt gifts on behalf of the people of the province of Saskatchewan, which she appreciated. And then we had a chance for a brief conversation where, Mr. Speaker, we canvassed a number of world issues, where she asked about Saskatchewan, asked about our resources and the state of things

here, and demonstrated that Her Majesty is very, very much aware of what's going on in this country and specifically in this province. And it is a moment for which I'll be always grateful and again, as I say, I will not forget.

Mr. Speaker, through this motion and the other celebrations which are planned throughout this Diamond Jubilee year, we are extending our gratitude to Her Majesty for her unwavering devotion to duty over these last 60 years. And, Mr. Speaker, we wish her many more years of happiness.

Mr. Speaker, I would move then:

That a Humble Address be presented to Her Majesty the Queen in the following words:

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY:

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN, QUEEN OF CANADA:

We, the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan in Session assembled, wish to extend our sincere congratulations to Your Majesty, on this year of celebration marking the sixtieth anniversary of Your Accession.

The People of Saskatchewan have been honoured to welcome Your Majesty and other members of the Royal Family to our province during Your reign and have witnessed directly Your inspiring example of devotion to duty and unselfish labour on behalf of the welfare of the people of Canada and in the other nations of the Commonwealth.

We trust that Your gracious and peaceful reign may continue for many years and that Divine Providence will preserve Your Majesty in health, in happiness and in the affectionate loyalty of Your People.

I so move.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Premier

That a Humble Address be presented to Her Majesty the Queen in the following words:

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY:

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN, QUEEN OF CANADA:

We, the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan in Session assembled, wish to extend our sincere congratulations to Your Majesty, on this year of celebration marking the sixtieth anniversary of Your Accession.

The People of Saskatchewan have been honoured to welcome Your Majesty and other members of the Royal Family to our province during Your reign and have witnessed directly Your inspiring example of devotion to duty and unselfish labour on behalf of the welfare of the people of Canada and in the other nations of the Commonwealth.

We trust that Your gracious and peaceful reign may continue for many years and that Divine Providence will preserve Your Majesty in health, in happiness and in the affectionate loyalty of your people.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this Diamond Jubilee year, I would like to add the thanks to Her Majesty from Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, 60 years is a long time. And when I think about it, there's a few of us in this room who have been on the Earth exactly that length of time, and it's a reminder of the strength of this woman who we call our Queen.

When I was growing up, and I guess still to this day, I collected stamps together with my father. And the stamps that I liked the most of the Canadian stamps were the Diamond Jubilee stamps for Queen Victoria that were issued in 1897. And they basically were a huge range of stamps with lots of different colours, from 1 cent, or half a cent actually, up to \$5. And I remember thinking, as you looked through these stamps, about how to celebrate 60 years for a monarch of Canada and of the Commonwealth was an amazing thing.

Here today we get to celebrate 60 years for Queen Elizabeth. And I think it's a marvellous thing that we all need to think about and recognize that the stability of the monarchy throughout the Commonwealth has provided us with an extra gift as we have dealt with the parliamentary democracy in which we're part of.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Queen Elizabeth personally for her service, as well as all of the members of her family. And I wish to express on behalf of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition our thanks and congratulation and best wishes, and we all look forward to celebrating her Diamond Jubilee in great style right throughout the Commonwealth. God save the Queen.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — The Premier has moved:

That a Humble Address be presented to Her Majesty the Queen in the following words:

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY:

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN, QUEEN OF CANADA:

We, the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan in Session assembled, wish to extend our sincere congratulations to Your Majesty, on this year of celebration, marking the sixtieth anniversary of your accession.

The People of Saskatchewan have been honoured to welcome Your Majesty and other members of the Royal Family to our province during Your reign and have witnessed directly Your inspiring example of devotion to

duty and unselfish labour on behalf of the welfare of the people of Canada and in the other nations of the Commonwealth.

We trust that Your gracious and peaceful reign may continue for many years and that Divine Providence will preserve Your Majesty in health, in happiness and in the affectionate loyalty of your people.

All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask for leave to move a transmittal motion.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked for leave to move a transmittal motion. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move:

That the address to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II be engrossed, signed by Mr. Speaker, and forwarded through proper channels.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader:

That the address to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II be engrossed, signed by Mr. Speaker, and forwarded through proper channels.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? All those in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Opposed? Carried. I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave for a number of motions, actually six of them, motions of condolence with respect to former members of this Assembly who've passed away.

The Speaker: — The Premier has asked for leave to present six condolence motions. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. Mr. Premier.

CONDOLENCES

Allan Emrys Blakeney

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very, very much, Mr. Speaker.

This is always an important day in the spring sitting in the life of this Assembly, where we can pay respects and tribute to those who have gone before us, the members who have served in this Assembly, and where we can talk a little bit about that service and about their contribution to their constituencies and the province and the country. And where we can also, Mr. Speaker, through a motion of transmittal let the family members of those members know that this Assembly was thinking of them this day and also marking all that they've done for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we begin today with a motion of condolence for Allan E. Blakeney. Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity, both in this Assembly and then at an excellent memorial service at the Conexus Centre of the Arts, I've had the chance to pay tribute to the former premier, Mr. Speaker. And so I know there are other members in this House who would like to offer a few thoughts with respect to the passing of the former premier and comment on his contribution to the province. And so in respect of this particular motion, I'm going to move right to the reading of the motion that will be before this Assembly with the following comment I don't think that I've yet made.

Mr. Speaker, I did have the chance, as I did mention in the House on the occasion of, shortly after the occasion of the former premier's passing, to read his recent book. And you know, Mr. Speaker, I think — and this will be certainly the case for so many of the members from different parties that we're about to pay tribute to today — the beauty of our parliamentary system which we herald through things like the humble address, the beauty of the system of government we have is the accountability that we saw earlier in question period, and the pointed debate that we can have in question period, with the knowledge that we're all here for the same reason: hopefully to leave things better than we found them, in the case of this Assembly, in the province of Saskatchewan and in our home communities.

And so while we may have differences in terms of the positions held by those that we'll honour today in these tributes, Mr. Speaker, we acknowledge the fact that they were about the business that we're about today — trying to make Saskatchewan a better place. And certainly that was very, very true of our former premier, Mr. Blakeney, with whom I would take exception, with respect, to some of his deeply held beliefs and views as to what was right for the province. But from what I know and what I've been told of Mr. Blakeney, he always appreciated the chance for that kind of debate and certainly the province is so much better for his service.

[14:45]

I'll be moving, Mr. Speaker:

That this Assembly records with solemn regret the passing of a former member of this Assembly and expresses its grateful appreciation of the contribution he made to his community, his constituency, and to the province.

Allan E. Blakeney, who passed away on April 16, 2011, was a member of this Legislative Assembly from 1960 until 1988, representing the constituencies of Regina City, Regina West, Regina Centre, and Regina Elphinstone for

the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and the New Democratic Party. He served as a minister of Education, provincial treasurer, minister of Public Health, minister of Industry and Commerce, and as the 10th premier of the province Saskatchewan from June 30, 1971 to May 8th, 1982.

Mr. Blakeney was born on 7 September, 1925, in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia. He attended Bridgewater High School, Dalhousie University, and won a prestigious Rhodes Scholarship to attend Oxford University. Prior to becoming a politician, he was a civil servant providing legal advice to the government financial office, and then he became the chief officer of the Saskatchewan Securities Commission.

Mr. Blakeney is remembered for many contributions to the province, including his role in the implementation of public health care in Saskatchewan, the creation of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, the provincial land bank, the establishment of the first Department of Northern Saskatchewan, and his leadership during the repatriation of the Canadian Constitution.

Upon retirement from public life, Mr. Blakeney taught at Osgoode Hall and the University of Saskatchewan. He was a prolific writer and helped develop the structures for democratic government in Russia and South Africa. He sat on several boards and organizations, including Algoma Steel, Cameco, and Crown Life. He was a badminton champion and was an opera, musical, and film enthusiast.

Mr. Blakeney is survived and sadly missed by his wife of 52 years, Anne, and their children: Barbara, Hugh, David, and Margaret.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy with members of the bereaved family.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Premier:

That this Assembly record with sorrow and regret the passing of a former member of this Assembly and expresses its grateful appreciation of the contribution he made to his community, his constituency, and to the province.

Allan Emrys Blakeney, who passed away on April 16th, 2011, was a member of this Legislative Assembly from 1960 until 1988, representing the constituencies of Regina City, Regina West, Regina Centre, and Regina Elphinstone for the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and the New Democratic Party. He served as a minister of Education, provincial treasurer, minister of Public Health, minister of Industry and Commerce, and as the 10th premier of Saskatchewan from June 30th, 1971 to May 8th, 1982.

Mr. Blakeney was born on September the 7th, 1925, in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia. He attended Bridgewater High School, Dalhousie University, and won a prestigious Rhodes Scholarship to study at Oxford University. Prior to

becoming a politician, he was a civil servant providing legal advice to the government Finance office and then became chief officer of Saskatchewan Securities Commission.

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Mr. Blakeney is survived and sadly missed by his wife of 52 years, Anne, and their children: Barbara, Hugh, David, and Margaret.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy with members of the bereaved family.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise to pay tribute to Allan Blakeney who was a friend and a leader of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Blakeney came to Saskatchewan to work in the civil service of Tommy Douglas at a time when there was much interest in how the CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] could build a Saskatchewan that was maybe a little bit different than some of the other provinces in Canada. And as the Premier indicated, Mr. Blakeney worked as a lawyer in the Finance office. He was clearly a very smart man who was a Rhodes Scholar and had studied in England. And he came to Saskatchewan because of these opportunities. What we know from talking to Mr. Blakeney over the years, those of us who spent quite a few hours with him, was that the skills that he learned in those initial years in the civil service of Saskatchewan served him well all through his career.

And any person who is appointed a minister of the Crown or who is a premier or who is a member of this legislature would be well served to read his books on the role of the minister, on the role of the MLA, on the role of the executive versus the role of the legislature and the judiciary. Because what he did, in a very practical way, is tell the stories that explain how our system of government works. And many times that type of activity is not known by the public in the same way that some of the other very high-profile things that Mr. Blakeney did. But one of the strengths that he provided to many members of the legislature of all of the various parties involved, but especially for us as New Democrats, was to answer questions when there were difficult situations that related to a role as a minister or a

premier or as a member of the legislature. I also venture to say that there would have been quite a number of senior civil servants within the provincial civil service who would also have sought him out in that role as advisor.

It was quite interesting last week when the announcement was made about the new Lieutenant Governor, Vaughn Solomon Schofield. Because when one looks at the role of the Solomons — especially Mr. George Solomon who is Vaughn's father — in Saskatchewan, one of those key roles was to be a catalyst in building IPSCO which is now Evraz steel company. And Mr. Blakeney, as the young lawyer, was working on that file as was Mr. Solomon, Mr. Turvey, and Mr. Harvey, and a number of others in the community, including Tommy Douglas and Clarence Fines.

We could go through most of the events in Saskatchewan history over the decades since the '50s and see the fine hand and mind of Mr. Blakeney as he worked to provide the advice, whether he was on the government side or in opposition or in the civil service.

It's especially heartening for me to remember the clear role and the way that Mr. Blakeney was able to describe how he worked together with Tommy Douglas and Mr. Lloyd and others as they tried to figure out the right balance for the medicare program in Saskatchewan which, through the Saskatoon agreement, eventually became our Canadian national medicare system. He always knew that there were many more parts of that to be dealt with, but he also knew that it was formed out of a crucible of crisis that ended up meaning that it would stay as a key part of our Canadian society. We're going to be celebrating the 50th anniversary of those tumultuous times this year, and I think it's also fitting — and I know it will be true — that we will be referring to Mr. Blakeney and his role in that process as we look back over the 50 years.

In the '70s, we ended up with much controversy around minerals, especially potash and uranium in the North, and Mr. Blakeney ended up taking some very strong positions which have defined much of politics in Saskatchewan since that time. And I think we need to remember that some of the difficult choices that were made in the '70s have had long-term effects in the province but that all the decisions were made in a way that in the long-term have benefited our province. We could go through many, many different aspects of policy and recognize where Mr. Blakeney has contributed.

Mr. Blakeney's family was supportive of him all through the years, and I think it's important to acknowledge their role as they worked with him over the years. I know that his children, Barbara, Hugh, David, and Margaret and their spouses . . . And especially the grandchildren — Victoria Mohr-Blakeney, Stephen Blakeney, Isobel Blakeney, Christopher Blakeney, and Benjamin Piechocinski — all had a special relationship with their grandfather.

I know one of my good friends was Hans Mohr, who shared a grandchild with Allan Blakeney, and he said that sometimes the best times in both of their lives is when it was just the two grandfathers and Victoria Mohr-Blakeney together with them because there was somebody who ended up enjoying these very, very smart people as grandfathers, but recognizing that,

hey, these were people who cared about people and about children.

I had the pleasure in our Regina Lakeview area to invite Mr. Blakeney to come and talk about his years as premier in what we called a fireside chat. This was just a couple of years ago. And it was quite interesting how it didn't take long for the premier to get into full question period mode in answering questions. And I think we all need to remind ourselves about how what happens in this place is part of our lives for a long, long time.

Mr. Speaker, for Allan Blakeney . . . He was a champion for his neighbours. He was a champion for the people of this province. He was a champion for all Canadians. And I want to say thank you to him and to his family for the contribution that he's made to our country. Thank you.

[15:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege to stand in my place today and just make a few comments about former Premier Blakeney. In my observations — now if I understand correctly — I'm probably the only member on the government side of the House who had the pleasure of sitting in the Chamber at the time with Mr. Blakeney. I'm not sure if I should have mentioned that. It might just say a little bit about my age. But at that time, it was an honour to have been elected to this Assembly and to observe other members, whether you agreed with their, their views or their philosophies, but just observing how members participated, interacted in this Chamber.

I will have to say this about Mr. Blakeney. He was a man who was very articulate and knowledgeable. Just having sat here it was . . . and observed his, his participation in the debate, he was an individual that you could just sit back here and you could glean a lot from him as you listened to him in debate.

No doubt Mr. Blakeney was very humiliated in 1982 by the results of the '82 election. I don't know if there's anyone at any time from any political party, when you go through an election of that nature, that wouldn't feel humiliated. But did that keep Mr. Blakeney down? I would have to say that he was humble, but he also was devoted. He was devoted to his views, devoted to the party he represented. And he wasn't an individual who is just going to walk away but he devoted himself to helping rebuild the party. And while I wasn't there from that '82 to '86 period, I know that through that period of time, Mr. Blakeney really worked at rebuilding the party. And as a result, in the 1986 election, when I was elected to this Chamber, the NDP party were back with a stronger force, having elected 28 members at that time period.

But having watched and observed the proceedings in this Chamber and as members across this Chamber from both sides of the Assembly have all indicated in the past, when you first walk on the floor of this Chamber, it's somewhat . . . just sets you back a little bit. You observe the members who've been here for a good period of time and you're humbled, but you're also honoured to serve in this Chamber. And I believe Mr. Blakeney served with humility. He was a servant of this

province. He served in the public sector for a number of years and then for many years he served as a member of this Legislative Chamber.

He was one who spoke his convictions. While many across the province would've not always agreed with him — certainly members of the government of the day weren't always on the same side — but you respected the man. You respected him for his views because he believed in those views and he also shared his views with deep conviction. I never, to my knowledge, can remember or even picture in my mind a period in time where Mr. Blakeney would've spoken out of anger or frustration. He spoke very diplomatically and spoke with conviction. And I'm also told he was not immune from putting his members in their place if he was trying to get a point across and someone was interfering with the debate, at the time of turning to the member and basically asking that member just to be quiet so he could share his views with the Chamber.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say that from my observations, Mr. Blakeney served this province, served his party, served the people of Saskatchewan well, and I want to extend my deepest sympathies to his wife, Anne, their children, and their families, on his passing. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour for me to rise in this Chamber today to pay tribute to one of its most distinguished members, Allan Emrys Blakeney. When he passed away last year, Mr. Speaker, people from across our province and across our country came forward to pay tribute to a great statesman, a great Canadian whose intelligence, integrity, and professional dedication to public service were an inspiration to all. That great record of service continues to inspire me, Mr. Speaker, as I know it inspires all of us here today. And so I am humbled to rise in the Assembly today to say a few words in honour of a man who was a proud social democrat, an exemplary politician, and a true Canadian statesman.

Mr. Speaker, Allan Blakeney's tenure as leader of my party and as premier of our province was marked by a fundamental commitment to the ideals of social democracy — no economic progress without social progress and no social progress without economic progress. Throughout his 28 years in this Assembly, he believed that there was a role for government in advancing economic development and social equality, Mr. Speaker. For as he wrote in his memoir, *An Honourable Calling*, I quote:

... A look around the world tells me that where able and active governments (and there are many) intervene on behalf of people with special needs or lower incomes, society works best.

It was for that kind of society, one that works best for everyone, that he laboured throughout his political life, Mr. Speaker, and his record of achievement here in Saskatchewan remains an inspiration — a vital role in public medicare, a children's dental plan, a prescription drug plan, an agency dedicated to the concerns of northern Saskatchewan, efforts to ensure Saskatchewan people received their fair share of our natural resource wealth, defence and expansion of our Crown

corporations, support for agricultural and livestock producers, and enhancement of occupational health and safety and workers' compensation rules that have since spread across our country. And he did all of this and much more while maintaining balanced budgets throughout his time as premier of our province, Mr. Speaker. Fiscal responsibility, economic development, and social progress — those were the hallmarks of Allan Blakeney's commitment to the ideals of social democracy that our party stands for.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that the Blakeney government's defence of workers' rights in the form of improvements to occupational health and safety and workers' compensation rules have since spread across the country. But that is just one measure of his national influence. He was of course a key figure in the constitutional discussions of the early 1980s that led to the patriation of our constitution and the creation of our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, intended, he thought, to make sure that the rights of minorities and the less powerful were fully respected when they might be discriminated against by a powerful majority.

Canadians across the country, Mr. Speaker, recognize the thoughtful, balanced views Allan Blakeney brought on behalf of our province to those constitutional debates. And we saw a measure of that recognition, Mr. Speaker, at a memorial service in Regina last spring when prominent national figures of every political stripe came to pay tribute to Allan Blakeney at the Conexus Arts Centre here in Regina.

We heard praise from Bill Davis of Ontario and Peter Lougheed of Alberta, both Progressive Conservatives. We heard praise from our own former premier, Roy Romanow, and Ed Schreyer of Manitoba, New Democrats both. And we heard praise as well, Mr. Speaker, from Bob Rae — both Liberal and NDP, I suppose.

We heard as well, Mr. Speaker, from Beth Bilson of the law faculty at the University of Saskatchewan who reminded us of Allan Blakeney's life after politics, both in the academy here in Canada and of course around the world. He was a valued colleague and mentor to the students and professors at Osgoode Hall at York University in Toronto and at the University of Saskatchewan, turning his knowledge and expertise with Canada's constitution and the federal system to good use in the education of our country's next generation of legal scholars.

And it was not only our country that he turned his attention in his life after politics, Mr. Speaker. As we know from his memoir, whether it was post-apartheid South Africa or Kyrgyzstan in the former Soviet Union, Allan Blakeney lent his keen understanding of human nature and a pragmatic, professional approach to governance to peoples around the world who saw themselves in need of change.

Mr. Speaker, I was privileged to have some personal exchanges and meetings with Mr. Blakeney, who was always gracious with his time and advice, and was astute, sharp, and fully engaged in public discourse until the latest stages of his life. I will always cherish those opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, Allan Blakeney mattered to our province, our country, and our world. But he also mattered of course to his

family. Perhaps the most touching moment of last year's memorial service, Mr. Speaker, came when his son, Hugh, speaking on behalf of the family, recited the words of the song, "My Happiness." Mr. Speaker, I know the happiness Allan Blakeney must have brought to his wife Anne and their family, and I thank them all for sharing him with us during the many years he answered the honourable calling of public service.

For that service, Mr. Speaker, I know my party, our province, and our country are profoundly grateful. And so I know, Mr. Speaker, all members will join with me in paying tribute to the memory of our colleague, Allan Emrys Blakeney. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, it's with great honour that I rise today to speak to the memory of Allan Blakeney. My experience with Mr. Blakeney came in my years as a law student in the College of Law at the University of Saskatchewan. Regrettably I never had him as a professor, but his impact on the law resonated throughout the college and certainly was a lot of discussion when the 1992 constitutional talks were taking place, and I was in the college at that time.

His effect, I think, on our province and beyond is just by the few catchwords that we can talk about: the nationalization of potash, for example, that impacted this province incredibly; uranium development; his devotion to First Nations rights in the North; the land bank — my brother was one of the beneficiaries of that back in the '70s. And he established the Provincial Court, he established the Ombudsman, and he also established the Human Rights Commission. So his impact on the province is far-reaching and quite wide.

As the new Agriculture critic for this session, I found some words of his about agriculture quite interesting and I'd just like to share those with the Assembly right now, just a little bit about what he said he thought his accomplishments were in agriculture. Allan Blakeney said:

... the major industry in Saskatchewan was [and is] farming. The chief products of the farms — wheat, barley, oil seeds, beef, and pork — were sold largely outside the province and often outside Canada ... [since] these products are sold under international market conditions over which neither the people of Saskatchewan nor their government have any control, and at prices which are notoriously volatile. Economic stability for farmers was always sought after and rarely achieved. The uncertainty is added to by the unreliability of moisture and other weather conditions.

A number of possible approaches to these issues were open to the government. Most of these were tried and:

They included steps to deal with commodity price fluctuations; steps to deal with adverse weather conditions for field crops; steps to make farms and small towns more satisfying places to live and bring up children; steps to help retiring farmers sell their farms for cash so that they would have a secure retirement and allow people to enter

farming who did not have the cash to buy a farm.

Here we see the interweaving of the objectives of improving economic security and strengthening the sense of community:

With respect to achieving some price stability, we worked with the federal government to get price support and supply management programs in place for dairy, poultry, and egg producers.

It was good to see that they worked with the federal government there.

We provided financial assistance for farmers to get into these areas of agricultural production so that Saskatchewan's quotas under national programs would be fully used and these relatively stable areas of agriculture would provide secure incomes for increased number of farmers.

We encouraged farmers to broaden their production base from field crops to include livestock production. Livestock products are sold primarily in North America, where price fluctuations are not as dramatic as they are with grains that are sold on worldwide markets. We provided a measure of price support for producers of beef and hogs through beef and hog price stabilization programs. The price supports sheltered farmers from the worst drops in prices, at the sacrifice of not being able to take advantage of some of the peaks, and provided a significant level of stability for both farmers and their bankers. One of the many adverse consequences of the boom and bust cycles in agriculture is that it can sometimes be very difficult for farmers to obtain credit from ordinary financial institutions. Credit is a necessity in highly capitalized industries like modern agriculture, especially for younger farmers, and price support programs greatly improve access to credit . . .

Major steps to improve economic security for farmers were the reshaping of a federal-provincial, farmer-financed crop insurance program to guarantee against loss of yields because of weather conditions. The greatly improved crop insurance plan proved to be an absolute godsend to farmers in the 1980s. The other major effort was a federal program to provide broad general support for the western grain economy in times of depressed prices through the Western Grain Stabilization Program. With these programs, one year of drought or even two was not a financial catastrophe for most farmers; nor was a year or two of depressed prices a disaster.

Mr. Speaker, you can see here through these words from Mr. Blakeney that he was a visionary and that he was deeply concerned about the social improvement of our province. And he wasn't scared to try things and come up with new programs and innovation to make our province a better place to live.

But my personal contact with Mr. Blakeney, again, was through the work he did in repatriating the constitution in 1982, which was a hot topic when I entered law school in the early '90s. And I think the most important thing — and it's difficult to find a lot written about it; it's a fairly technical aspect — but it's the work

he did on section 92(a) of the *Constitution Act*, which was the one where provinces secured the control over their natural resources. I think it's largely unknown to most people that he made such an effort. And the exciting times of the 1982 patriation were not publicly known widely. Much has been written about it. But it was something that was really stressed when I was in law school as one of the most significant achievements for Saskatchewan in the constitutional talks of 1982. Certainly he was involved in other levels in the constitutional talks.

[15:15]

He was very involved in organizing the eight premiers who stood down Pierre Trudeau. And in fact one article said that during the constitution debate of the early '90s he, of all the premiers, was portrayed as Pierre Trudeau's intellectual equal and the one who steadfastly insisted that the rights of the provinces not be ignored. So although he was a federalist and strongly believed in a strong federal government, he was also one who was keenly interested in protecting the rights of the provinces. And I think that's a heritage that will bode Saskatchewan well for many, many more decades, and I think for that he should be honoured and recognized.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to close my comments on this condolence notice. And I would like to express my condolences to the family as well and have them know that Mr. Blakeney was one of the very most important Saskatchewan politicians that we've seen since we became a province. Thank you.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed an honour to join in this time to reflect on Mr. Blakeney's passing and his contributions to our province. And I too want to echo many of the comments that have been made by both sides of the House in terms of his contribution to our province and to our country and to our communities throughout Saskatchewan. He indeed was a man who meant so much to so many people in Saskatchewan.

I just want to talk about a couple of things that others haven't touched on. And I think that they're important to be on the record because I think in many ways they were important, clearly important to him, clearly important to how he viewed a province in what it could do and what it should be doing for the people of Saskatchewan.

And one of the things clearly that I've learned to appreciate in the last few years is, in my role as housing critic, how much he contributed, how much the government of the '70s contributed to housing here in Saskatchewan. In fact in my own riding, I can think of the high-rises downtown that Saskatoon Housing Authority administers and what a role Mr. Blakeney and that cabinet, that government did in making sure that people were appropriately housed. And of course, it all stemmed from a piece of legislation that I thought was visionary, and that was *The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation Act* which I think back . . . And I had the privilege to talk to Walter Smishek about that cabinet and how important Urban Affairs were in Saskatchewan at that time because . . . And Saskatchewan continues, as we're

experiencing right now a major transition, a major transformation about what our cities are like, what our towns are like, as people are moving here.

In many ways the same thing was happening in the '70s. A transition was happening and of course Urban Affairs was a huge, huge thing. And it was very amazing when you look back and you think about the kind of things these folks were doing at that time and how Mr. Blakeney truly was a visionary at that time. And so I just want to acknowledge and thank him for his contributions there.

But the other one that was interesting was the fact around the urban parks, the urban conservation parks. Wascana, Meewasin are clearly gems of our two largest cities. But in his book, his recent book, he talked about how he was disappointed that we were not able to do the same thing in Prince Albert or North Battleford or, I believe, Weyburn. I want to make sure I get this right. But I had the opportunity to assure him that actually now, all of those city parks, the main city urban park in those cities now receives core funding from the province and is recognized in the same way as Meewasin and Wascana. So Prince Albert, North Battleford, Weyburn, Swift Current are part of, and Moose Jaw, are part of that network. And it's a very, very important network speaking to conservation.

So clearly there was a lot happening in terms of environmental initiatives in the '70s, but he was part of that, took a lot of pride in that. So while he could see to the big picture around medicare and the Constitution, he also made sure to take care of the little details. And a colleague talked about the labour initiatives around labour, particularly around *The Trade Union Act*. And the occupational health and safety legislation were landmarks in terms of North America and the work with that. So I just want to acknowledge that.

And you know, I just have to say one of the last times I think I heard him speak in public he was talking about an anniversary of the Sturdy Stone Building in Saskatoon, which is truly a beautiful building that has some unique art features to it. And that was part of his beliefs, that architecture should be beautiful. You know, when governments build buildings, they should not be plain and boring, but they should be attractive and really contribute to the urban landscape. And he was able to do that. And so I was really, I really appreciated that. He was a phenomenal man in terms of his thinking and how he could talk about any issue, but with authority. And he was always a pleasure to hear.

On a personal note, I do want to share this because I thought we all have had our, many of us have had, personal connections with Mr. Blakeney in different ways. And just a couple of years ago, it was interesting. We were down at financial services, and quite often we'll see families go through with a tour guide, taking a look at the building. And we were down there — actually a member from Moose Jaw was with me — we're handing in our forms, and there was the family. Who was the family, but it was the Blakeney family going through because some of the Blakeney grandchildren have not been in the building for many years. And I thought it was very interesting that Allan Blakeney should be taking a tour of this building which he knew probably more than any of us, inside out. And he could probably tell stories that I would like to take a tour

from. But it would be interesting to be the tour guide telling him about the history of this incredible building.

The other one, and I think the Premier actually alluded to this a bit, about how he truly believed in advocacy and rigorous debate. Back in 1975 or '76 — I was trying to think of the actual date of this — there's a magazine in Saskatchewan called the *Briarpatch*. And it's on the left side, and it's quite an advocacy for progressive thought. And actually it may . . . I don't know what many members would think, but I actually worked for that magazine back when I was 19 or 20 years old, back in the early '70s.

And at that time, the magazine was produced by a mimeograph, a Gestetner. And we were a burr in the side of this, of the NDP government at the time. And of course at that time, social services were going through big changes as well. But we had applied for some core funding because how do you produce a magazine like that. There weren't a lot of advertisers who wanted to support us. And lo and behold, we got support from the Blakeney government, a three-year grant. I couldn't believe it. But here I was, some 19-year-old or a 20-year-old, part of this small group — there were three of us — and we got the grant.

And then you fast-forward this 20-some, 30-some years, and I happen to be in cabinet. And you get to appreciate the inner workings of government. And you know, you do have a tough time with people who are burrs in your side, and I have to say that I appreciated that government having the willingness to fund an advocacy group that they knew was going to be tough on them. And it's not easy to do that.

And we always think the government can do anything; it's pretty well straightforward. No, there's a lot of tough choices, and they always weigh the pros and cons of some of their decisions. And I just want to put on record that I think Mr. Blakeney clearly showed a lot of forethought, or you know, I'm not even sure if he was the one responsible. And I understand he was a very meticulous guy, so not much would get past him if he did know about this. And so that was really important.

I heard this quote last week, and I think this really applies to Mr. Blakeney. The quote is, "Politicians plan for the next election, but great statesmen plan for the next generation." And I really think that's Mr. Blakeney. It just speaks to what he believed Saskatchewan could be, both in terms of the land and the economy, but more the people. And I know many more people speak this afternoon about his achievements, so I just want to say that in terms of his work, I'm a huge admirer. And it is too bad that he's passed on, and we will miss him.

I just want to do a quote from a poem by William Wordsworth, "Character of the Happy Warrior." And it goes like this, Mr. Speaker:

This is the happy Warrior; this is He
That every Man in arms should wish to be.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And it is indeed an honour to participate in this condolence motion for the Hon. Allan E. Blakeney, somebody who has obviously had an effect on those that knew him and those that had come to serve with him in the legislature.

And I just wanted to relate very, very quickly a number of instances where I had the opportunity to interact with Mr. Blakeney. The first was back in, I think it was 1971. It must have been right after he became premier. And I was a child — not too much different than the young child we have in the gallery today — and had an opportunity to hear him when he came, as a new premier, to Blaine Lake, a small town. And it's a big deal when a premier came. And I can remember sitting in that hall and listening to his fiery speech and not understanding all of it but sensing then, at a very early time, his passion for his province and his vision in what was an interesting time in our province, to say the least, Mr. Speaker.

The next interaction that I had was a little bit later in life and when I decided to launch my political career. It was around the time of the 1999-2000 period when there was a minority government in place and it looked like we may have an election. And I chose to run for politics and was seeking to sell memberships in the Saskatoon Meewasin constituency because that was the constituency that looked like my residence would be in as well. Since that time, redistribution and Silver Springs was created.

But I can remember going door to door in North Park in Saskatoon using a voters list and looking through it, and going from door to door and then finding the next door that I was going to was Allan and Anne Blakeney. Well, I thought, my chances of selling a membership at that house aren't very good, but it might be an interesting conversation. So I knocked on the door and the former premier came to the door and we had a nice . . . I told him what I was doing and we indeed had a nice chat about my political ambitions, and his caution towards me if that was really what I wanted to do — in a joking way. But it indeed made for an interesting conversation.

I had a chance to . . .

An Hon. Member: — Did he buy?

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — No he didn't. He didn't buy the membership. Many did. Many did. I think maybe his neighbours on each side. Well I can't even say that. But I did sell quite a few that night I'm sure.

Had an opportunity to read his book, and it was a book that talked about many things in politics and serving in this legislature. And I think that it would hit home with each one of us in what he chose to talk about — the interaction, I remember, of his family and life in politics and what it meant to his family life and how he made up for it in certain times as well.

One of the most interesting discussions I had with a person, a young nurse who had the opportunity to serve Mr. Blakeney when he was in the hospital in the very, very last days of his life. And she relayed a story to me where she was working in the hospital, her very first job, recently graduated, and had the opportunity to have a discussion with her patient who she didn't

know who he was. And she asked him what he did and he said, well I dabbled in politics a little bit. It wasn't long after that he did pass away and she came to know who her patient was. And she relayed that story to me, and it just shows to me and to all of us what a humble individual indeed he was and how he had an opportunity to use humour. And she told me that he later told her what he had done and some of his accomplishments in the province. But certainly it was again an opportunity to understand what kind of an individual Allan Blakeney was.

I had an opportunity to attend the memorial service, and as many here I know have as well. And I remember driving back to Saskatoon after that and, you know, to relate to the stories that were told by members of all political parties from provinces across the country and from the federal government as well, and thinking back in my drive back to Saskatoon that that's what's good about politics. That's why we choose to do what we do and to follow in the footsteps of people that have built this province before us. And I'm proud to say that I consider Allan Blakeney as one of those people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[15:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm also pleased to stand today to pay tribute to our former premier. There's no question in my mind that many of the kind comments and many of the tributes that are being expressed today will certainly be appreciated by not only his family but many of his followers and, I would dare say, fans that watched Mr. Blakeney over the years. Our former premier certainly served his province well and served the people well, I might add.

Mr. Speaker, coming from northern Saskatchewan, as a young child, we didn't really follow too much of politics. We certainly remembered people like Lawrence Yew, you know, one of the people that I often make my hero. I often tell people that some of the few folks that I looked up to during my time as a young lad was Lawrence Yew. And I knew Lawrence worked very closely with some very gifted people and some great people, people like Allan Blakeney. And over time you'd begin to hear that name, as a young person, and you don't know who he is, but you certainly know that he's an important guy.

And after you look back at it as a person that's been here for a while, I look at the history of what Mr. Blakeney had done for northern Saskatchewan, and certainly he had a co-operative federal government in terms of trying to establish a partnership and to recognize the challenges of the North. And to this day, I can see new houses being built, Mr. Speaker. To this day, I can see water and sewer projects being put in many of the northern communities that prior to that had no water and sewer. To this day, I can see roads being built. And certainly I can see the mining sector beginning to evolve and begin to form in our part of the country.

I think Cluff Lake was certainly one of the few, first few mines that ever popped up in northern Saskatchewan, and you can see all the activity as a result of some of the work being done at that time by an entity called the Department of Northern

Saskatchewan, DNS. And in those days DNS was active in many, many things, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, there's water and sewer projects. There's training programs. There's road programs. There's housing construction programs. And I think the era that Blakeney served as our premier was very exciting for northern Saskatchewan. It was a great opportunity.

So I say that, certainly from my experience and certainly from where I'm standing today, to the family of Allan E. Blakeney, our former premier and our former leader, I sincerely thank you. No words can express to you in any way imaginable how we can eloquently say the things and the service that he's done for the people of northern Saskatchewan with them. I think the only way I can say it as eloquently as I can with great meaning and with great gratitude is use the word thank you.

Mr. Speaker, DNS [Department of Northern Saskatchewan] was certainly a fairly large organization and it impacted northern Saskatchewan in many ways. And today you see the benefits of some of that work — whether it's water and sewer in the communities or whether it's a road that has gone somewhere, whether it's paving or somebody living in a house — there's no question that Blakeney's policies and his thoughtfulness, and certainly the philosophy that he shared that northern Saskatchewan is not just a wasteland, a place that you can extract all the resources from and leave the people to their own battles. He felt that it was important that we create a brand new northern Saskatchewan, a northern Saskatchewan that beholds great promise for the young and for the old alike.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think if you look at some of the points, like why would he do that? What was important for him when it came to northern Saskatchewan when there were so many other challenges in the province? And I think it goes to his intuition. It goes to his intelligence, his perseverance, but more so his thoughtfulness and respect for other human beings. I think that's really, really important. And I think it also made great sense for him to do some of the things that he thought were fair and just to do. And in that resolve, Mr. Speaker, it's not something that he assumed would happen over time but was certainly an important aspect for many people in northern Saskatchewan, and that was to reduce the amount of dependency the people of the North had on their governments.

I think it was important that people had the respect of a job, of a decent home, of kids going to new schools, of travelling on highways and having the basic fundamental life skills of having a nice home, a strong family, having safe water and sewer. These are some of the things that many people in Saskatchewan took for granted but the northern people fought for for many years. And today now you can see some of the benefits. And many of the older people, Mr. Speaker, they pay tribute to people like Allan Blakeney, and they spoke of his great love for the North and the fact that he visited northern Saskatchewan on many, many occasions.

So there's no question that northern Saskatchewan was not some distant place from our former premier, that certainly from our perspective that we knew that Premier Blakeney certainly had northern Saskatchewan's interests at heart and showed it in many, many ways. And as I mentioned at the outset, having new homes and having a job and having safe communities, safe roads — the list goes on as to what DNS has done for northern

Saskatchewan.

One of the things I think is important for us is not the new water and sewer systems or not the jobs or the homes. Those are important, but the thing that really, really struck me, Mr. Speaker, was during the time of Blakeney's government from 1971 to 1982 the annual wage of northerners increased over 154 per cent and welfare dependency dropped from 47 per cent of the population to 14 per cent of the population — which is a significant accomplishment, Mr. Speaker, when you go into an area of northern Saskatchewan and providing opportunity in their own backyards and their homes. So again, Mr. Speaker, I'll point out that welfare dependency dropped from 47 per cent of the population to 14 per cent of the population, which is an incredible, incredible achievement.

And, Mr. Speaker, you look at the economy, the history, the economic history of Saskatchewan. You'll see on every occasion in Blakeney's term and time was no different, that the economy's going great; things are happening, and certainly it was under the NDP rule, Mr. Speaker. I think history will judge fairly some of the great leaders that we've had in our party and certainly one of the greatest leaders we've had of course is Mr. Allan E. Blakeney.

Mr. Speaker, the few comments that I want to point out in my involvement with Mr. Blakeney, of course, when he retired from politics was 1988 — that was the same year I became the mayor of Ile-a-la-Crosse — and you know as he left, you know, I joined into the political life so to speak. And after, it wasn't until a number of years later that I had an opportunity to speak with him. It was actually in the city here. And one of the questions that he asked me, which I thought it was really profound and really had a lot of impact on certainly how I perceived things from my perspective in terms of what northern and Aboriginal people need and want. So the question he posed to me, and it's always a tough question, he said to me, what is it truly that the Aboriginal people want? What's the number one thing that the Aboriginal people want?

And I gave that question that he posed to me some great thought, and a lot of folks would say, yes, we need decent roads. We need decent housing. We need jobs for our young people. And we need access to the resource opportunity.

And I couldn't answer him at the time, because obviously he was a very thoughtful man. He was very intelligent, and people knew that of him and I knew that of him. And one of the things that I didn't want to do is to give him an answer that I hadn't thought out thoroughly enough. So as a result of that question that he posed to me, I didn't have an answer immediately. And I'd been pondering that answer for a number of months. And I do have some concept of what I think is the number one thing that the Aboriginal people need and want, and I'm not going to disclose it today. But he was the first one that certainly posed that tough question to me and gave me a lot of time to think about it.

The second point that Mr. Blakeney raised to us after we lost the election in 2007 . . . I don't think anybody was taking a defeatist attitude. We obviously lost the election. We needed to look at that and certainly talk about what happened. And at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, it was Allan Blakeney that gave

the address at the convention in a very optimistic way, in a very strong leadership manner, in which he said, now you take the time to reflect what kind of ideals and certainly what kind of policies that you need to reinvent yourselves as a party — not forgetting your roots, your history, and the basis of why you're here, but to reach out to people to reinvent your policies, to bring forward innovative and exciting ideas, and to really begin the process of rebuilding and not to quit.

It's an excellent opportunity, is how he described what he thought was the future for the NDP. And it really lifted a lot of folks' spirit. But I always knew that he was very strong when it came to leadership and to vision, and that just reaffirmed what I always believed in some of the work that he'd done in the past and certainly how he saw some of the losses that we would go through.

There's no question that some of the involvement that we see in northern Saskatchewan, the impact that he's had on our lives is something that is greatly appreciated. It's long-lasting. You look at the uranium development as one particular opportunity, and it really affected and benefited northern Saskatchewan.

Some people thought the DNS was way too big, way too expensive. But many, many others, the vast majority of people in the North said, yes, DNS was big, but it served a lot of purpose. It created a lot of opportunity, it created a lot of . . . It addressed a lot of social problems that existed in northern Saskatchewan. And the first premier to come to the North and recognize that and come on a constant basis — and not just come to visit, but come to make a real difference — was the then Premier Allan Blakeney. And I certainly remember him as a young child, coming to our community. Never spoke with him before because as a young person, you know, you'd let our leaders do the talking and you'd just simply watch from a distance. And certainly Mr. Blakeney came to Ile-a-la-Crosse and came to a number of other northern communities. And those visits were always sincerely appreciated.

The final few points I will make, Mr. Speaker, is that we spoke about potash, we spoke about uranium development, you know, we speak about a number of resources. And I had the opportunity of listening to CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] Radio today and I listened to some of the comments made. And the big question is that you have to look at the future. And when you look at that kind of challenge we have in the future, after all the resources are extracted, after all the uranium mines have shut down, and if potash takes a tumble, you know, if all of a sudden the oil and gas starts drying up, what then? That's the big question that was on CBC Radio today. The big question was, what then?

And I think it's important when I listened to my colleague from Saskatoon talk about, is building for the future generations was one of the thrusts of the comments that he attributed to Mr. Blakeney. And that's something that also piqued my interest today. And that's why it's important we take care of the problems today, that we address the long-term future of Saskatchewan today, and that we begin looking at the legacy, the future. The legacy fund was one concept we had. But the future, to make sure that our resources are extracted fairly, that we extract as many benefits off the resources as we can, that we be inclusive, not exclusive, inclusive of all people of

Saskatchewan so that we're able to see the benefits spread fairly throughout the regions, and certainly northern Saskatchewan being a big part of that, and I think Mr. Blakeney would have liked that. He would have liked that particular statement because that's what he epitomized, and certainly that's what he believed in and that's what he practised. So I think it's important that the fairness perspective and certainly the legacy.

[15:45]

And the final point I would make, Mr. Speaker, is that a lot of folks had mentioned this to me as I entered politics, is that Blakeney built a fine bureaucratic system in our province. And it's an amazing system. And if you look back at some of the intelligent choices that he brought forward, some of the concepts and some of the protection he afforded the bureaucracy, and he actually built a system that was the envy of Canada in terms of civil servants, not only the skill level and the commitment, but the intellectual capability of many of the people that were involved with government services and people that delivered programs on behalf of the government.

So Blakeney was known to be a very sharp, true politician, a taskmaster to his cabinet and his MLAs, but more so he was, he was peers with the bureaucracy. They considered him one of their own, which is an incredible accomplishment, and he also treated them with respect. And I think that's really, really important. And today, over the last number of years, thank goodness for people like Allan Blakeney. They came and made Saskatchewan their home, built a solid system based on trust and faith and confidence, and involved all the people — but more so, brought in some very, very capable, intelligent bureaucrats, if you will, to come and help build that brave new province that he envisioned.

So all these points I would make. I want to make sure that people understand that I had a great amount of admiration, respect for him. And as I mentioned at the outset, I want to thank his family for his service to northern Saskatchewan, to my people. I recognize some of his great, great achievements within our province and to say that, as we say at many, many funerals, to Allan E. Blakeney, that may he rest in peace. His work on earth has indeed been well done. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a real privilege and an honour to be part of this saying thank you and being part of this condolence motion for Mr. Allan Blakeney. I didn't know him well but on the few occasions that I did get to meet him, they were always memorable.

I can tell you the first time I met him was about eight years ago and I was dragging my oldest daughter around. I was responsible for getting Mr. Blakeney's signature on a picture for an NDP fundraiser. It was a picture I had all of the four Saskatchewan premiers and Mr. Layton. So I was running around . . . So what had happened that day . . . So I'm on the university campus. I had called Mr. Blakeney up because I needed his autograph on this paper. It was the strangest thing because I knew he kept regular hours at the law office but you

don't really believe that the former premier of Saskatchewan, that you're going to call him and he's going to answer the phone and then you're going to be there within a few hours chatting with him. So I had to drag my . . . I had great admiration for Mr. Blakeney, and here I am with my daughter, dragging her from one side of the university to the other because I had parked very far away from the law library. This is my hero, Mr. Blakeney. He is, as a social democrat, this is a man who has inspired the need to put forward good public policy, sound public policy that's meticulously considered, and so this was an opportunity to meet a bit of my hero. So I was a bit stressed and anxious and hot and sweaty from running across the university campus in the middle of winter and dragging my poor daughter there, trying to help her understand the importance of this meeting.

And so I get there and I knock on the door. And he's there and I get his signature. And he was very kind and I felt he was the epitome of calm and cool and collected, and although I'm sure he had moments where he wasn't, but here I was in a total flap, but he was just the most lovely and gracious man. And I got my signature and raised lots of money with this particular picture.

But on the second occasion I had the opportunity . . . I had just been elected an MLA, and in Saskatoon Riversdale we have an annual fundraiser at Chinese New Year. And the organizer of the event had sat Mr. Blakeney and his wife, Anne, at the same table as me. And again, here I am very excited about the prospect of sitting with Mr. Blakeney, but feeling a bit stressed about . . . This is a Rhodes Scholar. This man is amazing, the things that he . . . his contributions to Saskatchewan. I know my colleagues have talked to them, talked to his many contributions, but he's a man who looms large for those of us, particularly I think for many of us, but those of us who have grown up as social democrats and know — or those who have studied history — his contributions to Saskatchewan.

So here I am sitting at this table with Mr. Blakeney. And we had great conversations. It was, like I said, a bit daunting at first but I loved it. We talked about badminton, of all things actually. I'm a former badminton player and I learned at that point in time that Mr. Blakeney, when he was back in Nova Scotia, badminton played a large part in his life. And we realized we had a bit of a connection. My brother-in-law, his roots are from Nova Scotia, and my brother-in-law was a former badminton champion as well, but so was his mother and his grandmother. So we made some connections there. And so here I am talking with the former premier of Saskatchewan about badminton. It was lots of fun.

We talked about something that is near and dear to my heart — women in politics. And that's something I believe I know quite well. I know the research. I know how we've done as a province. And so this was my area of comfort. But still talking to Mr. Blakeney about women in politics was a bit, it was a daunting task but he was incredibly thoughtful, and I think he . . . I may have sensed a bit of lamentations that the government couldn't have done a better job or they could've done a better job than they had done. He talked about having a lack of pool of women at that point in time, or women . . . It was a very different time when he served as a premier, and things had started to change about the time he was around. But I did sense a sense of lamentation that he thinks things could've been

better. And I think today that knowing all the research that's out there around having more balanced legislatures, I think he'd be on the side of making sure that we do our best to ensure we're electing more women to our legislature and to the House of Commons as well.

One of the reasons that Mr. Blakeney, for me, was such a large figure in my life is I've always aspired to public service. I wasn't sure in my life that I'd end up here, but I knew that I wanted to serve. And I saw my role very much perhaps it'd be a bureaucrat in the public service. And it was Mr. Blakeney's time prior to being a politician that I looked to, and I think the time of Tommy Douglas and where you are thinking about not just the next election but the next generation. And for me that's what Mr. Blakeney inspired, both in his time as a civil servant and as a premier. So he really, really was someone for whom I had great admiration and someone, as I said, myself who dreamed of either being a civil servant or a politician — and here I am today as an elected representative. So I wasn't sure where I'd fall, but Mr. Blakeney loomed large for me.

Also as a student of public policy, when I was doing my master's degree, and one of the required books was the Borins-Blakeney book. And that for me, that's a book that all of us in this Legislative Chamber should read. It was like a handbook about being a minister, being an MLA. So I think that it would be a good tribute for all of us to get a copy of that book and read that. It's, I think, would be advisable for all of us to know some of his thoughts and ideas.

A few weeks ago, again at a Saskatoon Riversdale event, that same Chinese New Year, I had the opportunity to sit with Anne Blakeney again. And Mrs. Blakeney had pointed out, just a week before his death he was still, or just a few days before his death he was still presenting to students, talking, educating. As I said, he had kept regular hours at the College of Law. It was still his goal to make sure that he was sharing some of his insights about the world with the rest of us. And even not long before his death he was still doing that. So again it's very humbling for me to have the opportunity to speak about Mr. Blakeney. But I just want to say thank you to him and to his family for their contributions to our province. Thank you.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour for me to have an opportunity to say a few remarks today on the condolence motion for Mr. Blakeney. There's no question in my mind that Allan Blakeney is the standard by which politicians should be measured, and I think he set that standard very high. As elected representatives and as human beings in general, we all have a different set of skills and abilities and character traits. And I believe it's Mr. Blakeney's combination of his skills and traits that made him to be such a formidable politician, a strong leader for our party, and a good human being, from a family perspective and from simply caring about his neighbours.

Mr. Blakeney was both a visionary and pragmatic. He had this incredible combination of intellect and compassion, wisdom and humility, courage and humour, determination, and a deep sense of integrity. And I think as we've listened to speeches this

afternoon and heard about different occasions when people have had interaction with Mr. Blakeney, or occasions when through his political career he offered leadership and offered an approach that was well grounded and proved to be very successful, we know that this is true.

He was also very generous with his time and genuinely took a real interest in people. And we've heard . . . Everyone has a story. At least I think many people in the broader context of our province who had interactions with Mr. Blakeney can remember special moments of interaction. And for those of us that are involved in the New Democratic Party, we all have our own stories about times when we were, we benefited from Mr. Blakeney being generous with his time and offering his insight to us.

But it's also important to remember that that spirit of generosity and that genuine interest in people was combined with a very strong intellect. And it was his laser-like focus on making life better for people in this present day that truly many people remember. And that is his policy contribution to building a stronger and a more fair Saskatchewan and a better world. And the legacy of programs and the legacy of policies that have benefited all Saskatchewan people speaks to that laser-like focus that Mr. Blakeney had.

I recall a good friend of mine, Marcus Davies making a comment around the time of Mr. Blakeney's passing. And the comment that he stated was, "Allan Blakeney didn't think in sound bites. He thought in generations." And I know that's a reminder for every elected official through the ages, on both sides of the House, that the activity that we're involved in here is about generations. It's about the long-term effort to building a better, a more fair, and a more generous province. And I think no one has done a better job of that task than Allan Blakeney.

I had the pleasure of getting to know Premier Blakeney once I was elected after the 2007 election. He and Anne lived in the neighbouring constituency, and there'd be a number of occasions when we had the opportunity to get together and visit. And I remember one time we were sitting at the restaurant just down the road from my constituency office, sitting in a booth, and it was one of the first times where we had a longer sit-down meeting and had a chance to talk about some of the issues going on in the province. And I remember he ordered a chef's salad — for some reason that sticks out in my mind — and we were sitting and talking, and again his generosity in telling stories and sharing wisdom was very clear on that occasion.

And my grandpa served in the legislature at the same time as Mr. Blakeney, and so there'd be . . . He was kind enough to pass on some stories about discussions around the caucus table and some humorous things that occurred that I didn't know about or hadn't heard about as a grandson. And I appreciated him taking the time to pass on those stories and to share some of that information.

But personal stories aside, during our conversation, as it always was, he was completely 100 per cent up to speed on the issues that mattered. He had questions and he asked questions that cut straight to an issue at hand. And he was very willing to offer his insight but not in a pushy or a dogmatic way, but simply in a very rational and calm manner in describing what a possible

approach could do, how it could benefit the situation. And I'm most grateful for those occasions when we had the opportunity to sit down and visit and to hear from him as an elder statesman in our party and within our movement.

While there are public accomplishments and there's a strong public record that has been written about in many books, and many members in the Assembly here have commented about earlier on today and at the time of the remembrance service that occurred for Mr. Blakeney, the accomplishments that he performed for this province are well documented and will be a lasting legacy. But as importantly they are also the accomplishments and the record of how he lived his life as an individual: what it meant for him as a parent, as a partner, as a husband, and what it meant relationally to the other people that he dealt with.

[16:00]

I think of other incidents when Mr. Blakeney's generosity in spending time with people was very clear. In our constituency we have an annual barbecue — sometimes in the spring, sometimes in the fall — and we would always invite Allan and Anne to come to the barbecue, and no real expectation that they would come, but they always showed up when they were able to. And I remember on one of the first barbecues, we had some cold beverages and I think we had a coffee urn going as well and people were having some hot drinks. He was interested in tea though, so we got the kettle from the kitchen and plugged in the kettle and found some tea bags and were able to make him a cup of tea. Probably not entirely to his satisfaction as a quality cup of tea is determined, but of course there was simply a thank you and appreciation for doing that. And in the subsequent barbecues, we always had a kettle and tea on hand as we awaited the arrival of Allan and Anne, hoping that they would come.

And I know it meant a tremendous amount to my constituents, especially to some of the people who have been around a little bit longer and have strong memories. They very much appreciated the opportunity to sit in the backyard and talk about anything really and ask questions. And it was also important for younger generation of individuals who maybe don't have the first-hand familiarity with the distinguished track record under Allan Blakeney and had a chance to learn and a chance to hear.

So I want to thank him for all those occasions of making the time to come to an event when it wasn't needed, it wasn't required. And I would like to thank Anne for the tremendous role that she has played over the years in the events of this province, both big and small, from large events of huge significance in a historical view to the small little things that some would say don't always matter but mean so much to individuals. I'd like to thank Anne for her generosity and her work as well over all of these years.

I will always be grateful for his encouragement and guidance and for reminding all of us of what we can accomplish together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And it's with a pretty massive sense of humility that I rise to participate in this debate of the condolence motion for Allan Emrys Blakeney.

As the member from Moosomin had said at the start about serving in the House with him, I guess something that I think we all maybe have experienced as new members of the legislature is that thrill that comes with getting sworn in and the signing of the roll. And certainly for different people on sides of this House, perhaps the member from Thunder Creek was thrilled to look through the roll and see the signature of Ross Thatcher, or you know, or Tommy Douglas or pick your person. But for me, I was thrilled beyond measure to flip through that roll and see the signature of Allan Blakeney because of course, Mr. Speaker, the Blakeney's, the Blakeney's, when they were active in politics from '71 on, they represented my home constituency. I was born in 1972, Mr. Speaker, and Allan Blakeney was not just the premier of the province of Saskatchewan, but he was the MLA for Regina Elphinstone.

And I guess certainly I got my political start when I was old enough to reach the mailbox, as sometimes happens in political families. When I was 10, along with my younger brother and my older sister, we got enlisted into going out to do leaflet drops in the '82 campaign. Now I don't think you can blame the '82 campaign results for the NDP on the McCall kids, but certainly we did our best to hold up our end in the Elphinstone campaign. And I still have, hanging on my wall with great pride, Mr. Speaker, a letter from Allan to the McCall kids thanking us for our contribution in the campaign, saying that obviously we'd hoped for a different result and worked for a different result, but that the fight would go on.

And as also was remarked on by the member from Moosomin, I guess I've not been party to being taken from government down to eight seats, but I have some idea of what it's like to go down to nine seats and be part of a caucus that's in that circumstance. And I guess when they'd gone from, you know, having won the '71 election, the '75, '78, and then you know, the constitutional battles and all the things that were going on in and around the '82 campaign, and the way that the then leader of the Progressive Conservatives, Grant Devine, captured the public's imagination — and that election, of course, was referred to as the Monday Night Massacre — you know, the next morning Allan Blakeney got up early and came to work and set about marshalling that road back for the NDP. And you think about the kind of determination and devotion that's involved in an effort like that, and I guess it's pretty inspiring. And you know, every now and then, Mr. Speaker, you come across patches in this political life where you could use some inspiration, and I think that has certainly stood out for us.

Also, something that was interesting about that campaign has been remarked on in other speeches. You go through a lot of soul-searching as to what happened and what went wrong and this, that, and the other. But on election night, the then press secretary for Allan Blakeney, Dick Proctor, had come up with a line about, you know, well when you lose . . . We don't know quite why we lost. But when you lose this big, you know it had to have been a team effort. And I guess, for me, that always sort of stood out for the kind of guy he was.

Here was this brilliant man, a Rhodes scholar, had come to Saskatchewan and played a pivotal role in a civil service that, I would argue, helped to build the modern machinery of government in Canada in many ways. And certainly two of Blakeney's contemporaries at the time, Mel Johnson and Tommy Shoyama — our public policy school is now named for those two individuals — and certainly Allan Blakeney was a contemporary of theirs and operated on that level.

But he had felt that call for public service, and he felt that call to get involved. So it was not just as an admirable, able public servant that he made a contribution to the province of Saskatchewan. But of course in 1960, he sought nomination and was elected in the city of Regina. And of course not long after, went into cabinet and was there for the — served under Tommy Douglas in cabinet and then Woodrow Lloyd — and was there for one of the most pivotal moments in the history of this province in terms of the medicare fight and dispute.

And again, some of the fights that you go through in politics, you think about, you know, maybe you have your ups and downs. But I think it's pretty fair to say that a dispute like that and the kind of stakes involved and the kind of pressure that was brought to bear on these individuals would have tested any number of people. But the kind of fortitude and the kind of determination that was brought to bear by the Douglas and then the Woodrow Lloyd government and the way that they persevered and stayed the course and brought in medicare, which has come to be recognized as a touchstone of the Canadian identity, it had a lot to do with the perseverance and the determination and the intellectual power of someone like Allan Blakeney.

I guess one of the things I want to remark on, others have talked about the way that he played a role in the federation, in the debates around natural resources in the '70s, the Constitution and the patriation thereof, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. He was integrally involved in many of those things, but some of the things I think need to be enumerated as well is in 1976 he was one of the people that played a key role in getting the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies going in partnership with the then FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] chief, David Ahenakew, and working with the then federal Liberal government to see that accomplished, not just the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies but the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College as well.

The role that he played around the foundation of something like the Gabriel Dumont Institute, the role that he played around making sure that there was a place for First Nations and Métis people and working in partnership and respect with First Nations and Métis people, I think that was a hallmark of Allan Blakeney's approach to public policy.

The way that he had played a pivotal role in the founding of the University of Regina, Mr. Speaker, of course becoming its own campus in the early '70s, or becoming its own university in the early '70s, breaking away from its status as the Regina campus of the University of Saskatchewan but becoming a university in its own right, the University of Regina. The way that in so many different aspects of life in Regina you can see the handiwork of Blakeney transcending the time that he was an active public servant: the work that was done around

downtown, the work that was done around the founding of IPSCO, the work that was done around bringing together of the Wascana Centre Authority. There are a lot of these things that Blakeney played a role in and we are, I would argue, the better for it.

I guess others have talked about the role he played as a brilliant public administrator and the fact that for a time and certainly in the Calvert cabinet, working ministers would be issued a copy of *Political Management in Canada*, which contains the speech on public administration. The way that Allan Blakeney continued to be engaged in public life and in political life was remarkable. And that was an engagement that carried on up until he passed on. But after retiring from public life in '87-88, the way that he went to teach law school at Osgoode but also to be involved in the work in the federation being established in Russia, the work that was done around South Africa, and the work that he had done in other sort of circumstances, continuing to make that contribution to public life.

I guess where I got to know Blakeney I think best was through Dennis Gruending's tremendous biography of Allan Blakeney, *Promises to Keep*, but also through following the different things that he would say around public policy. And I guess sometimes in political life when I guess not believing in a Senate or believing in the abolition of the actual Senate, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we've benefited from in the CCF-NDP [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation-New Democratic Party] is turning to those party elders to provide us with that wisdom and that sober second thought and that sort of guidance around when we're on the rails or not.

And Blakeney was like that up until his death. And if you think about it, Mr. Speaker, for someone who was in his late 80s when he passed on, to carry on that kind of contribution — coming out to conventions to provide thoughtful, well-informed remarks that pointed to what is beyond the horizon and what a modern, social democratic party should be doing; the way that he also contributed through his work with the transition for the Nova Scotia government, Mr. Speaker; and as a son of Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, the delight that he took with the election of the Darrell Dexter-led NDP to government there and the fact that he played a key role in helping them to get established. Or you look in Bob Rae's biography, *From Protest to Power*, about the work that was done in trying to get the Ontario NDP ready to govern in 1990 when they'd won an election and the fact that Rae says that Blakeney gave him some very good advice that he'd wished he'd followed. Or the work that he continued to do in conjunction with . . . Right up until the prorogation crisis that we had in this country, he was providing advice to the then Jack Layton-led federal NDP.

[16:15]

He was a ferocious intellect, Mr. Speaker, and continued to be engaged, like I say, right up until his death. And quite frankly, he's also one of those mainstays, one of those pillars of our political movement that you have a hard time imaging things going forward without him. But certainly in his writings, in his record, there's a legacy that will sustain there, Mr. Speaker.

One of his last pieces of engaging with the public mind was through his biography, *An Honourable Calling*. And I've had

certainly different opportunities to interact with Mr. Blakeney over the years and to talk with him and to spend time with him, but I was given the honour . . . He was on a bit of a book tour for his *Honourable Calling*, and I was detailed to help Mr. Blakeney as he did the book signing, after he'd given a lecture on the book, in conjunction with Greg Marchildon. And one of my sort of implicit marching orders was that I should prompt Mr. Blakeney if he was forgetting somebody's name or if he needed a little bit of help. And true to form, Mr. Speaker, he remembered everybody and then some, and he was prompting me on certain people coming through the line. And again it was, I think, just a tremendous example of a guy who loved people, and he had tremendous connection with a lot of different people.

Things that I'll miss seeing about him is the way that he would rub his hands together with glee — when there was something particularly politically advantageous to the New Democratic Party, he had a way of rubbing his hands together — and the way he would say “particular,” making a particular point about this or that. And I guess I'll miss the, I'll miss the way that his . . . Well the legacy of the Blakeney continues to live on in my home neighbourhood of North Central.

And here I'd like to say a little bit about Anne Blakeney, Mr. Speaker. The Blakeney family were very much part of the community in North Central. And it was sort of, it was a paradox because Blakeney was at one and the same time this premier and this person that was known on the national stage, but they were also very much part of the community. And as a kid I could ride my bike past the Blakeney place on 800 block King, the kids went to Wascana School and Scott Collegiate, and took music lessons from Ms. McCulloch over on 10 block Rae. They went to St. John's United Church and were very active there, and played a hugely important role in the North Central Community Association. And that, I think, is where it gave me a really good insight into, you know, it wasn't just Allan Blakeney, but it was very much Anne and Allan Blakeney.

And what a tremendous marriage they had and partnership they had, but also a political partnership. And Anne certainly, you know, knew where the kids were at in terms of age when she'd be out knocking on doors, was very active in the comings and goings and dealings of North Central Regina. They were pillars of the community really and truly.

And I guess she was also a pretty canny political operator and campaigner, Mr. Speaker. And certainly there is one, I think it was the 2003 election where I had a particularly good sign location, that I had run into the Blakeney family not long after the campaign had begun and she had seen this and she was very happy about it. And she was like, you know, you get your signs up early, and then your opponent has a very hard time recovering psychologically from it. It will get inside their head. And you know, here's Anne, who is like in her mid-80s, giving some very, very sage and kind of hard-nosed political advice to a young rookie like me. And I will always think of them as very much a partnership.

And I guess to the kids as well, we extend our regrets and our regards and our thanks for the contribution that Allan Blakeney made to this province.

And I guess the last thing I'd say about the Blakeney family, again the way that they connected with the community. And it wasn't just about the big issues. But in a place like North Central Regina, the attention that they paid to the quality of life in inner-city Regina was large in the politics of their agenda, the way that that played out into housing, as my colleague from Saskatoon Centre has talked about, or community schools or the in-school dental program or the different sort of public health initiatives that were there to make sure that it wasn't just a good life for some but that the good things of life were shared for everyone. And I know that Blakeney . . . There was a journalist who had come to Saskatchewan in the late '70s and came away saying that in Saskatchewan, better than anywhere else in North America, were the good things of life shared fairly. And he was, you know, not just as a brilliant administrator, not just as somebody that's paid attention to running a good shop and had a name for managerial excellence, he was in politics to get some things done. He was in politics because he had promises to keep. And I know that he took a great deal of pride in that observation about where things were at in Saskatchewan.

I think about the people in North Central and the people that worked with Mr. Blakeney, alongside Anne and Allan Blakeney, like Peter and Cath Barry — they've both passed on now — or Elaine Torrie or Gloria Blanchard or Flo Wilkie, who's also passed on, Mr. Speaker, and the belief that they had in the Blakeney family and the great way that the Blakeney family brought people together.

I guess the last thing I would say is this: from North Central in particular, we will miss him greatly. And we're thankful for the legacy of the Blakeney family. The last interview that Allan Blakeney gave in his life was with the *North Central Community Connection*. He was doing a piece about different people that made a contribution to North Central. And I think that's somehow quite fitting, Mr. Speaker, because we're certainly . . . But to speak on behalf of the people of Regina Elphinstone-Centre and on behalf of my home neighbourhood, we're exceedingly proud of our connection with the Blakeney family and with Allan Blakeney.

So I'll close off by saying this, Mr. Speaker, his memoirs were entitled *An Honourable Calling*. And sometimes in political life we wonder about the honour of this calling, but when it came to what Allan Blakeney brought to public life in terms of passion, in terms of intellect, in terms of commitments, there can be no doubt that he indeed not just responded to that honourable calling but gave it honour himself. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question? Will the Assembly take the question as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Premier.

John (Jack) Chapman

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Having

asked for leave for all of the motions, I'll get right to this particular motion, Mr. Speaker:

That this Assembly records with sorrow and regret the passing of a former member of this Assembly and expresses its grateful appreciation of the contribution he made to his community, his constituency, and to the province.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read in a moment some of the biographical information of John (Jack) Chapman who passed away on March 6th, 2011. He was a member of this Assembly from 1980 until 1982 for the constituency of Estevan.

Mr. Speaker, I did not know Mr. Chapman personally, and I can't speak then from personal experience as to his time here in the Assembly, except I could say this: I think, Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Estevan would have been at that time, given the political history of the province and given what was about to happen just two years later, a formidable constituency for a New Democrat to win, I would expect, as was born out just a couple of years later in a political change that occurred in the province. And so that must speak to Mr. Chapman's standing in the community. And in a moment I'll read that that was a long-standing commitment he had to that area and to the city of Estevan.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes in our political system I think we underestimate the impact of individual candidates. There is always a lot of talk in the pre-writ period at election time, and even afterwards, in terms of the leader of a particular party or the party brand itself or even the platform. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that often we underestimate the importance of the women and men who are running for that particular party in a constituency. And I think it's safe to say, given the political history of our province, given the times, given the race that included a future premier at that time in 1980, that Mr. Chapman was obviously held in high esteem — notwithstanding any other issues perhaps for some — was held in high esteem by the people of Estevan constituency.

And so, Mr. Speaker, the motion reads:

That we are going to express our appreciation and acknowledge the contribution of **John (Jack) Chapman** who passed away on the 6th of March, 2011, who was a member of the Legislative Assembly from 1980 until 1982 representing the constituency of Estevan for the New Democratic Party.

Mr. Chapman was born on 19 August, 1931 in Estevan, Saskatchewan. John was a first class power engineer and plant supervisor who worked for SaskPower for 35 years.

Mr. Chapman was a very active member of the Lutheran community in Saskatchewan and Canada. He served on church councils and as a board member of Luther College.

John is survived and sadly missed by his wife of 60 years, Olive, his daughter Judy, son-in-law Joseph, and granddaughters Leslie and Amy.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy with members of the bereaved family.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Will the Assembly take the motion as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the pleasure of knowing Jack for many years, and I was at his funeral last year. And as we came into the church, the Lumsden community band was there to play at the funeral. And they had his chair sitting with his baritone tuba — just the tuba was sitting there — and then they played as part of the service that was held.

Jack was a large man physically, but also in his sense of community. He was born in the Estevan area and started working for SaskPower and worked for SaskPower for 35 years. Many of the last years in his job were as the regional manager for that area. He was somebody that was held in high respect by people of all different political parties.

In the by-election that was held down in Estevan in 1980, it was a by-election that came as a result of the selection of Mr. Grant Devine as the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, and so the plan was to open up a safe seat for Mr. Devine so that he could come to the legislature as the leader of the party. And Jack was a bit of a wrench in that political plan and ended up being elected as somebody who represented the community and had spent many years gaining the respect. It was clear though that in 1982, Premier Devine won the seat and then held it for many, many years.

[16:30]

I knew Jack through the Lutheran Church, and we served on a number of different boards within the national and local Lutheran church structure. And he always brought his common sense perspective into that role and, I think, made sure that there was a very good contribution to how the Lutherans organized their affairs in Saskatchewan.

I also knew Jack through the Scandinavian Club of Regina. Jack wasn't of Norwegian background but his wife was, and he became more Norwegian than she did, and ended up welcoming all of the relatives that would come, the friends that would come. And we spent many, many occasions over the years celebrating Saskatchewan Norwegianness. And so I, when I think about Jack, I often think of some of those activities where he would very enthusiastically celebrate the 17th of May or the Christmas parties or different things like that.

It was clear though that the focus of Jack's life was his family. And he and Olive were married for 60 years. They have one daughter, Judy, married to Joseph, and then two granddaughters, Leslie and Amy. And there's a very strong connection between the granddaughters and their grandfather. And in many ways his second or maybe third career . . . If you

had SaskPower and politics, and then his third career really was to spend hours and days and months with his granddaughters and being involved in their activities.

And I know that Jack lived his life to the fullest, was always there with a good story or a welcoming statement, and that we all miss him. But also, we also recognize that his life was well-lived, that he'd served the people very well in his role here in the legislature for a couple of years, but that it was another part of a grand life where he contributed wherever he went. So with those words, I want to extend my condolences to the family and basically say, well done, Jack.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Estevan.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I'm not going to take a lot of time here, but I just do want to be on record acknowledging the contributions that Jack Chapman has made to the Estevan constituency, the city and community of Estevan, as well as the province of Saskatchewan. And I did not know Jack personally, but I do remember that by-election in November of 1980 after which Jack became the MLA for Estevan, and that that was the position he held until the general election of April 1982 and, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, that he was defeated by then Premier Grant Devine.

I also remember Jack being very involved in his community and especially in his church. He was a very active member of the Trinity Lutheran Church in Estevan and his whole family was involved with the choir and things like that.

But I just don't have much more to add to that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, other than to say that, as the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition have mentioned, that Jack is survived by his wife, Olive, his daughter Judy, son-in-law Joseph, and two granddaughters. And on behalf of the people of the Estevan constituency, I would like to extend my condolences to the family of the late Jack Chapman. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, just to attach some comments here today as it relates to the motion of condolence for John Jack Chapman, I'm pleased to join in and just add some additional comments. I recognize that Mr. Chapman's life was one of service on so many levels — service to community. And his career was built within SaskPower, certainly a Crown corporation for which we have great pride, and I know Mr. Chapman had great pride and had a hand in making sure proper stewardship of that corporation. And I know that Mr. Chapman continued to care about these aspects — service to community, the well-being of Crown corporations — well into his late years.

I certainly had the privilege of meeting and visiting with Mr. Chapman in his late years once he had resided in Lumsden. What was evident, both by looking at biographical information, chatting with others who knew Mr. Chapman and chatting with Mr. Chapman himself, is that his service that he offered to community was incredibly important. And whether that be as alderperson or alderman, whether that was on housing boards or

hospital boards, whether that be by way of being a member of this honourable Assembly, Mr. Chapman saw importance to offering something back to community. I know that his leadership in his church, the Lutheran Church both in Estevan and in Lumsden and in Regina, was something also important to Mr. Chapman and something that . . . a way he saw of serving community as a whole.

So it's a privilege to offer a few comments as it relates to Jack Chapman, recognize his care and commitment to his community and our province, something that was certainly evident even in the late stages of life, and something that should be honoured and celebrated by this Assembly.

Certainly I'd like to express condolence to his family, his wife, Olive, and I'd like to thank both his wife, Olive, and their entire family for sharing Jack Chapman not only with this Assembly, but with the province and the community in his many roles that he provided great service to the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Premier's moved the motion of condolence with respect to John Jack Chapman. Will the Assembly take the motion as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Premier.

Serge LeClerc

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. On 16 April 2011, Serge LeClerc succumbed to his battle with cancer. He passed away in Ontario.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. LeClerc finished his career in this Assembly as an independent member, but began it as a Saskatchewan Party member. Mr. Speaker, I certainly, as leader, was involved in recruiting him to be a candidate for our party as we recruit people across the province to run in contested nominations and in non-contested nominations.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I took the opportunity to read the autobiography of Mr. LeClerc called *Untwisted*. Mr. Deputy Speaker, notwithstanding any of the events that resulted in change in Mr. LeClerc's party designation from Saskatchewan Party to independent, his is a compelling story of one's ability to overcome circumstance. Mr. Deputy Speaker, many of us heard Mr. LeClerc tell that story if we didn't read it in the book.

I remember hearing it for the first time in person at a Lieutenant Governor's prayer breakfast where Mr. LeClerc highlighted the fact that he was born of a Cree woman from central Canada who gave birth to him at a very, very young age, and was the best mother she could possibly be for Mr. LeClerc. But then as his book highlights and as he went on to tell us that day at that prayer breakfast, he got involved in many unsavoury activities dating from an early age, especially as a result of, I think

anyway, the experience he had in the — and I'll use this term loosely — in the corrections system in Ontario. And who knows what Mr. LeClerc battled throughout his entire life right up until the end based on the experience that he suffered in some of those facilities at the hands of those men, of men who you would as a young person want to be able to look up to and want to be able to trust.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I got to know Serge and of his interest in a number of important issues in our province and in the city of Saskatoon that he was then calling home, I thought it would be good for this Assembly and good for a government, good for a province to have that force of nature working towards some of the objectives that Mr. LeClerc held for this province in terms of addictions, in terms of programming for young people, programming for those young people on the street and others, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and was glad that he sought an uncontested nomination and was happy later that he won his seat and eventually took a place on this side of the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can tell this Assembly — and many members on this side won't be surprised to hear it because they experienced it — of his passionate expression of those interests that brought him to politics in the first place and what he wanted to achieve through his political life, especially on the addictions front but mainly in his desire to help young people.

Even as a member of the Assembly, he continued to speak around the province. He took engagements around the province to speak, sometimes formally a part of our own fact-finding and information gathering we wanted to do as we developed our own policy around addictions, but often as a part of his own, what he would determine, what he would call his passion and in some cases a ministry, around the province to tell his story and maybe affect others in its telling.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not going to comment much about how his career in this Assembly came to an end, but I will say this. Tami and I, we have three great kids and sometimes when I reflect back on the life of Serge I think of their impressions of him and the impact that he had on them. And all I can say is this. Megan and Colter, our two oldest, and to some extent Faith, who's now in grade 8 but a little younger, both said to me unsolicitedly after hearing Serge's story — once at the high school in Swift Current where he was brought in by the school and another time at our church; on I can't remember which of those occasions — but I do remember that they both, in an unsolicited way, wanted to talk about the presentation that they had heard Mr. LeClerc give. They wanted to talk about what they had learned from that presentation and how it had made an impact on them — in the case of our oldest daughter, I think a profound impact on her — how it brought home for them what they heard in other forums and at their school about the dangers of the kind of lifestyle that Mr. LeClerc pursued early on in his life and, maybe even most importantly, about the power of an individual and grace to overcome some of that circumstance should people fall into that way of life.

For my wife, Tami, and I, we were just grateful that someone got through to our kids. Because we like to think that we do that pretty effectively as parents. But I think we all understand the concept of parental immunity in this Assembly where sometimes our pontifications don't always get through to our

own kids. And it takes a story of someone else, a very real story of someone else's life experience and challenges and how they have overcome those challenges — imperfectly, I think, in this case and in the case for us all — but how that particular effort can get through to young people when other instruction and other parenting simply can't.

I will forever be indebted to Serge LeClerc for doing that in the case of our kids. And it wasn't on a . . . I mean there was a personal relationship there. Megan, I think, got to be good friends with Serge. And Colter's a little shyer and was a little younger at the time. But it wasn't through that. It was through these forums where they would just hear in a very unvarnished way the story as only Serge could tell it.

And so sometimes it's difficult for us to square all the circles as we look back either at our own lives or at the life of someone, as we are today, someone who's passed. But I think it's very important, especially on a day like today as we reflect on the life of these members who have passed, that we consider, that we consider things in their totality, in their sum. We consider the fact that each of these people — and Serge is right at the top of the list — impacted people for the better, made a difference in the lives of individuals and in the lives of groups. And isn't that the reason that we run for office in the first place?

Some, by the way, get that job done through this kind of an office, but others do it as Serge did through groups like Teen Challenge and their own other, their other interests and other groups of which they're a part. But either way, we owe them a debt of gratitude. Either way we owe them our thanks, and we owe them remembrance in terms of that sum, that totality of what they gave and what they contributed. And that's how I'm remembering Serge LeClerc today. That's how I thought about him upon learning of his death in Ontario.

[16:45]

You know, I'll just offer this particular scripture that's always . . . It's sort of perhaps a little bit easily . . . It's perhaps too liberally thrown around, but if you think about it, I think there's an application to the life of Serge. It's from the eighth chapter of Romans, verse 28, and it goes something like "all things work together for good for those who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose." And if you take a look at that scripture and kind of analyze it, you think really, all things, all things work together for good? Even the worst of the challenges we face in our individual lives either as individuals or as a group — all things?

But when you consider Serge's life in its full spectrum from being a lawbreaker to becoming a lawmaker to sitting as an independent and dealing with the challenges towards the end, when you consider all of that in the context of the people that he helped and the lives that he changed . . . And I talked to one again just last week who was very much addicted to drugs and because of Serge's efforts at Teen Challenge, he and his wife, like many others, are living as contributing members to society and helping build this province. When you consider his life in the context of the people that he saved from addictions, or at least facilitated that salvation, then it's a little easier to understand that all things can work together for good.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I would move:

That this Assembly records with sorrow and regret the passing of a former member of this Assembly and expresses its grateful appreciation of the contribution he made to his community, his constituency, and to the province.

Serge LeClerc, who passed away on 16 April 2011, was a member of this Legislative Assembly from 2007 to 2010 representing the constituency of Saskatoon Northwest for the Saskatchewan Party and then as an independent member. He served as the legislative secretary to the Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, Chair of the Standing Committee on Private Bills, and was a member of two standing committees — Human Services and Privileges.

Mr. LeClerc received his Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology with a minor in social work from the University of Waterloo and later he became an author and motivational speaker, detailing his struggles with addiction, gang life, and criminal behaviour. He was an executive director of Teen Challenge Saskatchewan, a non-profit charity with a mandate to provide long-term residential care to youth recovering from addiction.

Mr. LeClerc is survived and sadly missed by his wife, Janine, and her son and daughter. He was predeceased by his first wife, Noreen, and is missed by his stepson.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy with members of the bereaved family.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Premier's moved:

That this Assembly records with sorrow and regret the passing of a former member of this Assembly and expresses its grateful appreciation of the contribution he made to his community, his constituency, and to the province.

Serge LeClerc, who passed away on April 16th, 2011, was a member of this Legislative Assembly from 2007 to 2010, representing the constituency of Saskatoon Northwest for the Saskatchewan Party and as an independent member. He served as the legislative secretary to the Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, Chair of the Standing Committee on Private Bills and was the member of two standing committees, Human Services and Privileges.

Mr. LeClerc received a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology with a minor in social work from the University of Waterloo, and later he became an author and motivational speaker, detailing his struggles with addictions, gang life, and criminal behaviour. He was an executive director of Teen Challenge Saskatchewan, a non-profit charity with a mandate to provide long-term residential care for youth recovering from addictions.

Mr. LeClerc is survived and sadly missed by his wife,

Janine, and her son and daughter. He was predeceased by his first wife, Noreen, and missed by his stepson.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise and say a few words about Serge LeClerc. Serge was bigger than life, I think we could say. When he came into this Assembly, we all knew he was there. And sometimes it was very sort of loud interventions, other times it was quieter ones, but we always knew that Serge was there. And I personally always had and have a great deal of respect for Serge LeClerc because no matter how we have come as individuals to this place, he came from some extremely difficult situations that gave him a whole other education in life that I think assisted us in the work that we did here.

When I was in university in the States, I took two of my university courses at McNeil Island Federal Penitentiary where basically it was all the people who had sentences of 10 years or more. And I ended up spending lots of hours under lockdown in the prison because that's where we had these classes. And I was reminded, when Serge showed up in the legislature, of some of those people who I had studied with in 1972 — and I guess it would be 1972 — because they would, when you first would meet them, there would be this protection, this shell. But as you got into the study of something of a common purpose or you had a chance to ask some questions, they would be just like other people that you knew and respected.

And I think that I, in my private career before I got into politics, spent I think probably, well probably about 12 years on as eventually the president of the church council on justice and corrections, representing Lutherans as we looked at the correctional system of Canada. And in that role I was always reminded of all of these valuable people that were locked up, and what could they do. And so coming into the legislature and having Serge show up here and bringing his experience to the different things that we did was a reminder to me, and to all of us, that the Lord finds interesting ways to identify strong people and puts them in the right places to do things. And so for Serge, I say we all need to thank the Lord. Thanks.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a privilege and an honour to rise in this Assembly today to speak about the passing of an individual who at times seemed bigger than life, as was alluded to by the Leader of the Opposition — a humanitarian, motivational speaker, author, the former MLA for Saskatoon Northwest, but to me firstly a friend, Mr. Serge LeClerc.

His life of hardship, and at times survival through crime, is well documented in his autobiography, *Untwisted*. Born of a 14-year-old First Nations girl who was a product of rape, he stood little chance for a productive life. Statistically he would

say he should have been aborted. But his mother raised him well, I would say, to the age of eight, where for being truant and hanging around with older boys, being caught shoplifting, he was taken away from her. At that point he would quite often say he realized he was not built for speed.

Years of physical and emotional abuse in a violent reform school led to a risky lifestyle, intermittent incarceration. His escapades should have and many times almost did leave him dead, but he always had a heart for the little guy and those in need.

He eventually encountered a Christian pastor who presented Serge with some difficult decision choices while in prison, some difficult questions. He could choose to believe either he was nothing more than an animal that walked on two legs and when he died it's over; there was nothing more. Or he could believe you are a creation of God. He has a plan for you. You are valuable, you have a purpose, and can have eternal life with God. The pastor also asked him the question: if there is a God and life after death, Serge, heaven and hell, where are you going to end up?

Serge was renewed through faith in Jesus Christ, turned his back to his old life, and strived to offset the wrongs of his past. In fact, as was spoken by the Premier, while in prison he forwarded his education from a grade 4 equivalent to many university degrees and distinctions. He used his story to educate young people of the pitfalls and repercussions of drugs and crime and was very careful not to glorify it. In fact he would quite often say, my testimony is a powerful one but is not a good one.

Serge was instrumental in bringing a highly successful Teen Challenge program to Saskatchewan before retiring from that organization and being elected to this Assembly in 2007.

I got to know Serge some time before he decided to seek public office. I had the opportunity to see him speak many times to groups of a variety of demographics as well as accompany him to some speaking engagements around the province after we were elected. Our seating arrangements and duties meant we were often together. We became very good friends.

And no matter the audience, he had a message that impacted them whether vulnerable youth, mixed secular groups, faith-based groups. One of my favourite quotes of his, particularly when speaking to youth, was this:

You can be anything you want in life. The only person that can make you a loser is you. If you really want to improve your situation, work on the one thing you control — yourself. You are created to be excellent. You are the best; be the best.

I once went with him to a ratepayers meeting in rural Saskatchewan. On this occasion, I asked him what he was going to talk about — a Métis, ex-con politician in front of a room full of what would be called rednecks at a secular event. He said it would come to him. He walked around the room and visited with people and later delivered a message that captivated them and, they admitted to me, they needed to hear. His message included his path, his faith for which he never made any

apologies, and the pressures of peers and society.

I can honestly say when he was in his element there were few, if any, that were better; probably none better. Only one gentleman in that one talk at that secular ratepayers meeting got up to the washroom in the whole hour talk. One lady commented to me afterwards in tears: he never had a chance to be a little boy; he had no chance to be a child.

The impact his messages had was undeniable. I continually hear from people to this day that he had impacted. He had a very unique way of sharing the gospel with people. He often referred to himself as a red-letter Christian, and if anybody's familiar with the Gideon Bible, all the words of Jesus Christ are in red.

And he drew a very interesting gang metaphor from that that really impacted me, but I know it really impacted specifically vulnerable youth that were getting drawn into that gang lifestyle. And I'll do my best to interpret his rendition of that, Mr. Speaker. But what it was, was Serge came from a gang background. He was a gang leader. He had a core group of guys — his gang — around him that he trusted and followed him, and he had a whole group of people that followed him outside of that. He drew very eloquently that comparison to Jesus Christ being a gang leader, his apostles being his gang members, and the disciples being those that would follow all of them. And he had an interesting take on that to verify that the gospel was true.

You see, he said in his life he was living a lie, a lie of crime, a life of crime and wrongdoing. And when the leader would get grabbed by the authorities, the gang would split up and run and hide for cover and they would never come out because they were living a lie. The difference was, in Serge's point of view, that the apostles came out of hiding. They all died terrible and vicious deaths for professing to what they had seen — the truth. And he said, you don't come out of hiding for the truth. And that I know really impacted a lot of people. But I heard him. I give that message to you. I know it impacted me. That really spoke to the truth of the Bible and the words of Jesus.

Many, especially here, I don't believe, got to know the real Serge. Grant that he was somewhat guarded — perhaps the survival instinct that he developed from his past, being in school in a boys prison and the boys reform school. The, at times, harder outer shell that protected the real man was all most saw. He never let many see who he really was — truly a soft-hearted individual who had to grow up quickly to survive and, as that lady said, never got to be a child.

He was always looking out for those in need or being wronged. His love, care, compassion, and interaction with his predeceased wife, Noreen, was something to truly witness. I never saw a more loving and caring individual when witnessing him looking after her in her final days.

His sensitivity of people in need or having difficult situations was quite something. In fact, one personal story I can reflect on is it happened to be the anniversary of my son's passing. And I was having a pretty good day, but Serge walked into my office and he knew something was instantly wrong. And when I did share with him what that day truly was, he broke down in tears and hugged me and really consoled me. And that's just the type of person that I got to know, my friend that I truly loved.

Whether it be in prayer meetings or committee meetings in the legislature, there was always an interesting event. As the Chair of Human Services Committee and taking part in other committee meetings, I was worried not so much of what the opposition was going to bring up or how they were going to conduct themselves. I'm more worried about Serge and what he would be up to, so he truly kept me on my toes.

[17:00]

He became ill in the spring of 2010. He was diagnosed with cancer some time after and passed away Saturday, April 16th, 2011 in Trenton, Ontario. A celebration of his life was held there on May 7th, 2011. My family and I attended, and I was honoured when asked by his current wife, Janine, to contribute by remembering my friend.

Serge was not perfect, Mr. Speaker. None of us are. To some he seemed stubborn, abrasive, blunt, and many times he may have been, but always with the best of intentions from a caring and passionate heart. And the harshness, I came to realize, was the person he created to protect the boy inside. I believe, Mr. Speaker, we should measure a man not only by where he is and what he's accomplished, but by how far he has come. And I can honestly say I've never met anyone that has gone such a distance or touched so many in a positive way as Serge LeClerc has.

Many times, oddly enough, Serge would tell me of a song that he wanted played at his funeral or, as it was, the celebration of his life, and that song was "I Can Only Imagine." And I just choose to share those words right now, and it goes:

I can only imagine
What it would be like
When I walk by your side

I can only imagine
What my eyes will see
When your face
Is before me

Surrounded by your glory, what will my heart feel
Will I dance for you Jesus or in awe of you be still
Will I stand in your presence or to my knees will I fall
Will I sing hallelujah, will I be able to speak at all
I can only imagine

I can only imagine
When that day comes
And I find myself
Standing in the sun

I can only imagine
When all I will do is forever, forever worship you
I can only imagine

Mr. Speaker, my friend Serge need not imagine any more.

While my family was visiting with him and his wife and family the last time, I encouraged him to leave his bitterness that he must have felt because of allegations and assumptions behind, focus on his health and his family. He said, as difficult as it

was, he was going to just do that, and in true Serge fashion said that it was easier with friends and family around him and a community who truly knew him.

The hard protection he had developed in his younger years and kept largely through his life, that I think I saw through, was really softened in his last days; possibly it was gone. He was surrounded by loved ones and there was no longer a need for that outer shell. At the end of one of our last conversations, he said, "Tell Brad I'm praying for him. I'm praying for all you guys. And I'll say hi and give your son Brayden a hug for you."

Serge's second wife, Janine, and her children and parents were a true blessing for Serge in his final months. He had a wife, two kids, and finally parents, albeit in-law. He never really remembered what it was like to have parents but now he had everything at once. I'm sure the Father welcomed him with these words: "Well done, good and faithful servant." His ashes will be interred this coming April 16th in Trenton.

May God bless his stepson, Mark, and his wife, Lana, and his wife, Janine, and her children, Samuel and Nicole, with peace and comfort. God bless and Godspeed, Serge, my friend. Well done. Rest in peace.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to add a few words on behalf of the folks I represent, Saskatoon Centre. And this is always a tough time when we think back and reflect on a person's career, and I want to say how much I appreciate the Premier's remarks about trying to square a circle and my own leader's remark about somebody who's larger than life. But as I think about some of the things about Serge and while it was perhaps a short time here — four years — but some of the things we got to work on, I just want to talk about one example of his commitment to those people who live on the margins of society.

He talked a lot about addictions and that kind of thing, but it was brought to my attention, in Saskatoon it was easier to vote for the mayor than to borrow a library card. A community group had told me about this. So we needed to do something about ID [identification]. And I know the member from Saskatoon Sutherland will know, talking about a community project, about project ID and how can we do this. And Serge was quite helpful in that. And Serge saw . . . I think what I want to say is, Serge was a man of common sense. He could not stand the barriers that we create for people, especially those who are living on the margins, who are dealing with issues that just make life a little harder than it should be. And clearly Serge had that commitment to common sense that we should always fight against that.

So I just want to say that I appreciated his time in the House here. Often we didn't agree and often it was tough to get through some of the gruffness and things like that, but I always knew that it was a common sense thing. He would see that too. And I think that what we all try to do in this House is if we can reach across to each other and make this world a little better than we found it, then we've come a long way. And I think that was what Serge really thought about in terms of just a simple thing about having identification. So thank you very much, Mr.

Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, I count it a privilege to just be able to say a few words on behalf of Serge LeClerc, a gentleman I call a, not only a colleague but a friend. As is already mentioned, Serge had a very challenging upbringing in life. He was born of an unwed mother, grew up on the wrong side of the law, spent a lot of years in prison, gained a lot of knowledge that most of us never ever and probably never will achieve. But you know, it's interesting, he also made a choice. He made some bad choices because of some of the challenges he faced as a child, as a teenager. But as some of my colleagues have already shared, when he was challenged in prison by a gentleman who introduced him to a person named Jesus Christ, he made a choice, and that choice changed his life.

And as a result of that change, he wanted to see other lives changed and got involved in Teen Challenge and then was invited to the province of Saskatchewan to begin the Teen Challenge program. And we've also heard, from around the room, of the many people who have been changed — young people whose lives have been changed, young people who've been consumed in drugs and alcohol — and as a result of the Teen Challenge program and other programs in this province, have been able to change their lives.

I first met Serge at a Full Gospel banquet and was really inspired by his message. I was actually a bit shocked when I heard that he was interested in seeking political life. The reason I say that is because, as you met the man and got to know him a little bit, you kind of thought, a little rough around the edges. But probably we've all been there. In fact I'm still there, pretty rough around the edges at times. And he was rough around the edges, but he had a heart. He had a heart of gold.

And I can remember when he walked into this Chamber, and speaking with him shortly afterwards, it still amazed him that with his background and the life he had lived and where he was, that he actually could be elected to sit on the floor of the Legislative Chamber in the province of Saskatchewan. He was humbled. He was awed. But I will say this, he found it a little frustrating.

In some ways, many people commented, he was like a bull in a china shop. This place just operated too slowly for him. But he still let you know where he stood. And he could be a little crude at times, but you knew where he stood. You knew where his heart was. He wanted to see young people have a change in life. He wanted to see this province grow and change and move forward. He had that desire.

I can also remember when his wife, Noreen, was very ill and that devastated him. When she passed away, he went through a real low ebb in his life and for a period of time really struggled. Then I remember one day he walked in with a young lady and her two children, and you could see the gleam back in his eye and the joy as he introduced me to his soon-to-be new wife, Janine.

Mr. Speaker, there are very few, if any of us and those in the

past, who've sat on the floor of this Chamber who when we walk out the doors for the last time will be remembered very long or fondly other than by a few family and friends or someone who may walk down the halls of this Chamber and see our picture on the wall. I can tell you this: Serge LeClerc will be remembered by hundreds, if not thousands, of young men and women whose lives were changed because our Heavenly Father allowed him to walk, walk this Earth and walk amongst us. Thank you.

The Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question? Can we take the motion as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Premier.

Robert (Bob) Long

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move:

That this Assembly record with sorrow and regret the passing of a former member of this Assembly and express its grateful appreciation of the contribution he made to his community, his constituency, and to the province.

Robert (Bob) Long, who passed away on June 4th, 2011, at the age of 74, was a Member of the Legislative Assembly from 1978 to 1982, representing the constituency of Cutknife-Lloydminster for the New Democratic Party. He served as the minister of Highways and Transportation from 1980 to 1982.

Mr. Long became the president of the NDP in 1988 and served until 1992. In 1993 Premier Romanow appointed Mr. Long as the chairman of the Highway Traffic Board. He served on the board for 10 years.

Mr. Long is survived and sadly missed by his children Murray and Marlyss, their spouses and children, as well as his fiancée, Rosemarie Grant.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy with members of the bereaved family.

Mr. Speaker, the time at which Mr. Long served in this Assembly was a time that I was getting very much interested in politics and significantly in provincial politics. And I'm happy to tell you that — I think this is true — I'm almost positive that at the time and in years since, I would have been able to tell you, maybe not exactly the years, but I would have been able to tell you that he was the minister of Highways for a time. I had a habit of . . . well maybe a number of strange habits when it becomes an interest in politics, including board games and other things, but even in memorizing those who are honoured enough to have their picture on a highways map, which was accorded to Highways ministers at the time. I'm not sure that's the case, if that's the case for the member for Rosetown or not any more.

I'm not sure if it is. If it's been stopped for some reason, I don't think we'll start it up again frankly, Mr. Speaker.

But it's interesting just in this bio to note that even after the sweep in 1982, Mr. Long continued his political activism. He continued his service at the party level, and we all understand that that is the absolute bull work for what happens here. We're notwithstanding the parties we're talking about. You need that party leadership, that party infrastructure. It does keep this process going. It's an important part of renewal. It's an important part of policy development. It's an important part of candidate recruitment. I do not know how the inner workings of the New Democratic party were conducted in the early, in the 1980s for example, but I would imagine that the leaders of the party would be relying on the president — in the case of Mr. Long, up until 1992, from '88 to '92 — to help recruit candidates and to build for what was a seminal important change, I'd argue, for the party, for that party and the province in the early 1990s.

And so we are grateful today for Mr. Long's service in this Assembly, both as an MLA for Cutknife-Lloyd but then also as the Highways minister. And we're also grateful that he continued his involvement, first at the political level and then providing leadership at the Highway Traffic Board.

You know, Mr. Speaker, perhaps it's a small thing we do here for a day when we take the chance to acknowledge that kind of contribution. But it's so very, very important that we do, in the memory of in this case Mr. Long, but also to his credit with his family and friends who mourn his loss. And, Mr. Speaker, I know there are other members that wish to speak about Mr. Long. It's my honour to move this motion.

The Speaker: — Will the Assembly take the motion as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

[17:15]

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bob Long truly lived out his name. He was long. He was tall. So when I got to know him in his role in the party, it's like in any place, as other tall people know, you go into the room and you say hi to five or six people that you see in a crowd of 3 or 400. And he was always one that I acknowledged when I came somewhere.

Also he had a very strong voice, and so you knew that he would be bringing some good advice whenever you met him. And I think that was his strength in the years that he was a member of the legislature for Lloydminster Cutknife and in his years as a leader in the party and then as he worked with the Highway Traffic Board. He had people who would listen to him because he was very reasoned in the kinds of things that he would say.

When a premier is in a situation where he has to put together a cabinet — and I guess that is a topic we might be hearing about a little later this spring — it's always interesting who gets which jobs and how they do those jobs. But I think all of us need to remind ourselves that it was Bob Long, as minister of

Highways, who completed the twinning of the highway from Swift Current over to the Alberta border, that many of us really appreciate that particular role. And not a lot of people recognize and understand that Saskatchewan did have the twinned Trans-Canada Highway first in the country, and it was because of good work over many decades of many Highways ministers. So I just say to people that Bob was a real asset for the province, and that as you zip over to Calgary, just tip your hat to Bob Long and say thank you.

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

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to speak about Mr. Long as well. He is someone that I believe I only met once. It was after I was elected, and Mr. Long was very gracious and we had a very good talk about politics. But as a young man, I remember Bob at fowl suppers and very involved in our community.

But I don't think I truly appreciated him until . . . It was before I was elected, and I was door knocking in Lloydminster. And I can remember it was a nice fall day, and I on a doorstep, and this lady came to the door, and I got a true education about politics, about the history, and about Bob Long. And she told me Bob . . . I can't remember exactly how she put it. The last time we had a really good Highways minister was Bob Long, or the best Highways minister we ever had was Bob Long. And I was kind of looking forward, because that for some reason stuck in my mind, of knocking on her door in this last election to see if things had changed. I don't think they would have. I think that her opinion would still be that Bob Long was the best Highways minister in Saskatchewan history.

I think that what he's done in our constituency is set a very high bar. People expect a lot from MLAs since, and I certainly try and live up to that. And I know that he's remembered very fondly by a lot of constituents, Mr. Speaker, and that's what I just wanted to share with the Assembly today. Thank you.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will not be long in my remarks but . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh yes, this is terrible, okay. But I think Bob would have actually liked that joke. He was a really great guy.

I had the chance to sit and talk with Bob quite a few times over the years. And I guess the main thing I want to say about Bob Long is this: there are those that approach the CCF-NDP with a sense of it being a movement, and it's bigger than just a political party or a political machine or things like that. But you know, it being a political party, there are those that are perhaps overly pragmatic and, you know, concerned about technique, and they're more on the operator side of things.

The Bob Long I knew was . . . If the NDP, CCF-NDP was ever a movement that had some ideas that it fought for, it was because of people like Bob Long. But if we ever took power to put those ideas into . . . make those things happen in power, it was because of people like Bob Long. He was a guy with a great laugh, good mind, and deep roots in the West, West

Central there. And as has been noted, you know, sometimes people get defeated and you don't see them much after that. But his involvement continued, to become party president in 1988. It was a fiercely fought affair at the then provincial convention, and one of the people that he went toe to toe with to win that presidency, Mr. Speaker, was Roy Atkinson — you know, no shrinking violet himself. So you know, right out of the gates, you knew the guy was a fierce competitor.

But as has been noted in different quarters, in 1991 the NDP had something like 45,000 paid up members — which, when you consider what the size of the electorate is, is almost sort of hard to believe in the modern context. And you know, it was almost too successful because ever after the bar was set so high that, you know, good luck replicating that.

But the fact that, as has been said, the kind of bull work that's involved in getting out and getting the money together and getting people willing to be card-carrying members of a political party, that was the challenge that Bob went at with relish. And if we had such great success on election night in 1991, it was for the efforts of somebody like Bob Long.

So again, Mr. Speaker, he made a great contribution to public life, but certainly he was one of those happy warrior kind of partisans and I think he made a great contribution to the kind of cause that we, on this side of the House, want to see advanced.

I want to say, as well, a special word of condolence to the family and particularly to his son Murray, who is long in stature as well and got a sharp mind and a ready laugh just like his dad. So Bob Long will be missed, but his legacy will live on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Can I take the question as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — All in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved that this House do now adjourn. Is the House in favour of the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:23.]

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Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Bob Bjornerud
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Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission

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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated

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Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing

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Minister Responsible for Information
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Minister Responsible for Uranium
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Transportation Company

Hon. Laura Ross
Minister of Government Services