



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

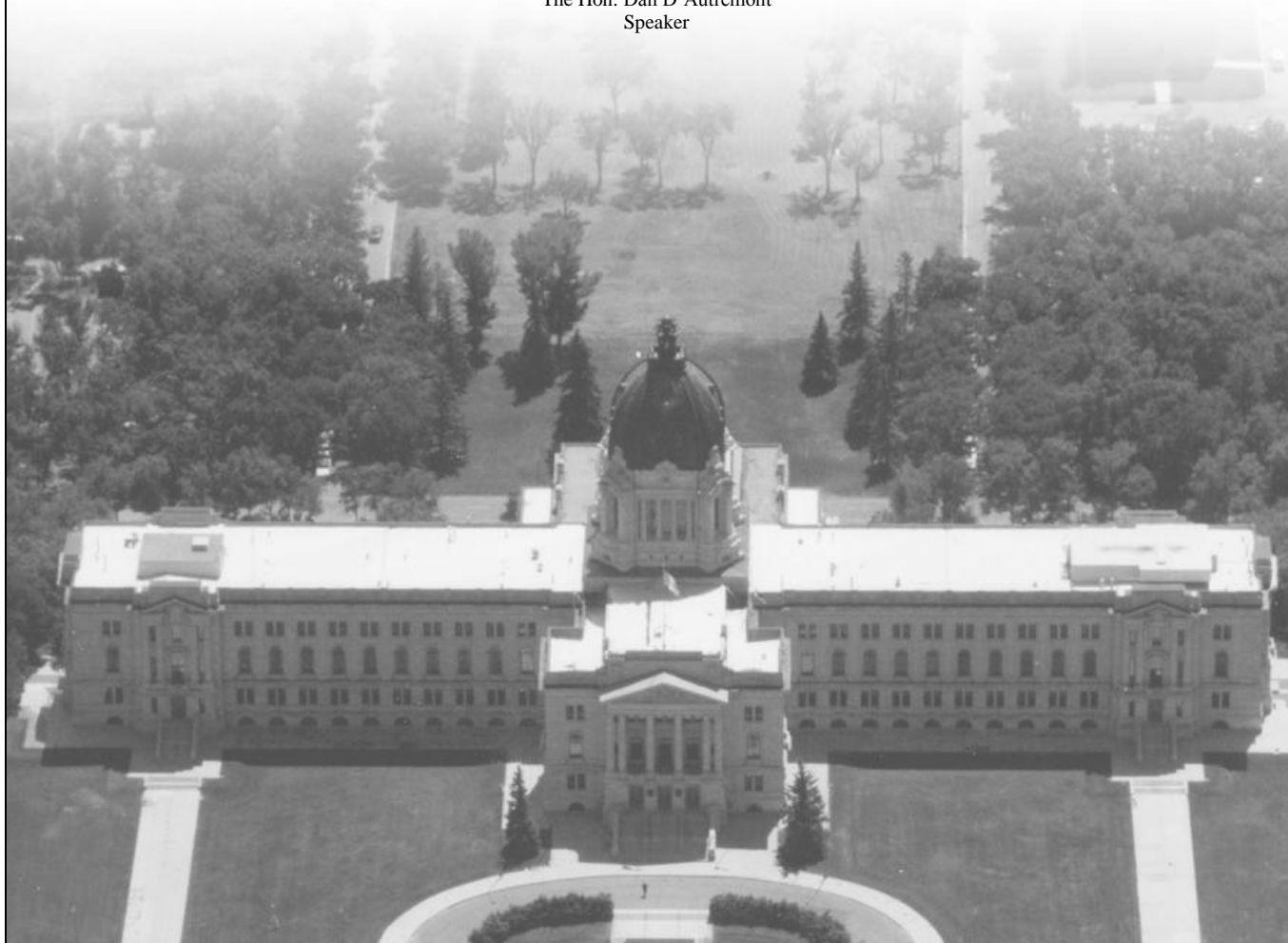
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. 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, 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, Hon. 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, Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Hutchinson, Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, 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, Hon. 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, Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Parent, Roger	SP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Phillips, Kevin	SP	Melfort
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Hon. Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Hon. 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, Hon. Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Hon. Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, sir, in the west gallery are some guests that have joined us here today for the proceedings of the House. I'd like to introduce, seated in that gallery, Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Bryna Barclay who is the Chair of the Saskatchewan Arts Board. We also have Suzanne Bell, the CEO [chief executive officer] of SaskFilm and film commissioner for the province of Saskatchewan; Mr. J.P. Ellson, CEO of SaskMusic; and Mr. Shawn McGrath, writer, producer, and owner of Far Field Media in Regina and a board member for SMPIA [Saskatchewan Motion Picture Industry Association], the Saskatchewan media production industry association.

These folks, along with a number of others, Mr. Speaker, have been involved in a consultation process with the government, and we're delighted with their presence here today and their involvement in that process.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd be remiss, I believe Mrs. Barclay's better half is also in your gallery — I just see him up there — Mr. Justice Ronald Barclay, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner who's also here today, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to join with the minister in welcoming the guests from the creative industries: Suzanne Bell, J.P. Ellson, Mrs. Bryna Barclay, and Shawn McGrath. I understand that there's creative consultations going on, and I just want to . . . very glad that the government is consulting on the creative industries, but I would suggest that it's a better idea to do it before you cut a program that's so important to the culture and arts section.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask everybody to welcome the folks from the creative industries here today. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker it is an honour this morning to introduce a gentleman seated in the front row of your gallery. I would like to introduce the Minister of State Responsible for Finance in the federal parliament, Mr. Ted Menzies.

Ted has been elected to the House of Commons in Ottawa for a number of times. He was first elected in 2004 and then re-elected, I believe, three times. He was made parliamentary

secretary to the Minister of Finance back in 2007, and then in January of 2011 he was made Minister of State for Finance. A tremendous background in terms of involvement in Alberta, and has been involved with the Alberta financial services corporation, international communities as well like the Lions Club International. So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join with me in giving a very warm welcome to Minister Ted Menzies.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to bring the greetings from the official opposition to Mr. Menzies. I assume that you're not here on a consultation mission to help our provincial government, but we're very happy to have you here bringing the federal and Alberta perspective to Saskatchewan. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure today to introduce three guests seated in your gallery. It's my constituency assistant, Janet Hanson, and her daughter Jessica Montgomery and their friend Meghan Nicholls. Please welcome them to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, sitting in your gallery is a group of individuals that are here, and they're coming today and I want to honour them. Chief Bart Tsannie from Hatchet Lake and his council are here. Jean, Paul, Judy, Sharon, George, it's good to see you here and welcome. They also have with them their senator, Angus Tsannie. Also an elder, Melanie, welcome.

Also they have a youth with them, and I'd like to introduce them as well, Mr. Speaker. And to that, Nick, it's nice to have you here, Gabriel. Also travelling with them is the band manager, Alex Maurice. He's here with the group. And also sitting up there is Brandy, welcome to the legislature. But I also want to acknowledge, Brian Hardlotte is the vice-chief with PAGC [Prince Albert Grand Council]. Welcome Brian. Also a newly elected vice-chief is Joseph Tsannie. Welcome, congratulations. He's the new PAGC vice-chief. Welcome. It is an honour to have you here.

And I ask all my colleagues to join me. Today they are here; they want to raise some concerns and they want some answers. So I just want to welcome to the Legislative Assembly. It is your Assembly and welcome and I hope we do justice to your issues.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming the people, these people from Hatchet Lake and surrounding area to their Legislative Assembly. It is their Legislative Assembly.

I look forward to meeting with them this afternoon. In fact, we'll be having a meeting around 2:30, I believe, to deal with some of the issues that they have regarding infrastructure and roads in the area, Mr. Speaker. So I look forward to answering any of their questions at that time and perhaps maybe even a question or two from the opposition before that time, Mr. Speaker. I'd like all members on the government side to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very proud to stand up today and recognize the people of Hatchet Lake and people of northern Saskatchewan. It's a long journey here, Mr. Speaker, and these are primarily Dene speakers. So what I'd like to do, and very, very quickly in my short Dene abilities, I want to welcome them in their own language. And it's customary to do so, and it's very short, Mr. Speaker.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Dene.]

And also, Mr. Speaker, we also have a band manager along with the senators and the vice-chief and of course the elders and the delegation, is a friend of ours from my constituency, Alex Maurice. And Mr. Maurice was a mayor. He was a member of the armed forces. He was a boxer, a businessman. And yesterday his mother celebrated her 98th birthday. So happy birthday to Pelagie Maurice.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Dene.]

So in the translation, I'm very happy that you're still very rich in the sense that your mother's still with us. And I think it's only important that we recognize the Dene visitors, the Cree visitors, and the people that travel a great distance to visit this Assembly, which is their Assembly.

So once again, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing the Dene and the Cree and the support cast for the people of northern Saskatchewan. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members of the Assembly, I would like to welcome in the west gallery the two CAs [constituency assistant] of Carrot River Valley, Cindy Warner and Shelley Meyer. As everybody in this Assembly knows, the CAs do the major portion of the work while the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] is away, and that can especially be said in Carrot River Valley. I want to thank them and welcome them to their Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Legislative Assembly, I would like to welcome a couple of ladies that have made the trip down here from Rosthern-Shellbrook. They are in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and the first is Sally Gunderson who is the

constituency assistant for the Rosthern-Shellbrook constituency. I'm very thankful for the hard work and effort that you bring to your job every day, and it makes it a true joy for me to work with you as we work here.

Also travelling with Sally is a lady that has been hounded by her MLA for the past year to come down and observe routine proceedings here in Regina, and I would like to introduce my wife, Krista, that's come down.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Also seated in your gallery is my friend from Nigeria, Ola Ebenezer. I met Ola about six years ago at a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meeting in Malaysia and we've kept in contact. And this is his fourth visit to Saskatchewan. Ola always says he likes snow, and I'm very happy to accommodate him. There's a foot and a half of snow waiting for him back in Biggar on the weekend. So please join me in welcoming Ola to our Assembly.

The Speaker: — I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce an independent officer of the legislature, Mr. Ron Barclay, seated in the Speaker's gallery. Mr. Barclay is the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. I'd like members to welcome him here today.

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. We know that by positive statistics 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 to immediately enact Jimmy's law, to ensure greater safety for retail workers who work late-night hours.

I do so present.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand today to present a petition in reference to SaskTel cell coverage.

And the prayer reads as follows:

Undertake as soon as possible to ensure SaskTel delivers cell service to the Canoe Lake First Nation along with the adjoining communities of Cole Bay and Jans Bay; Buffalo

River First Nation, also known as Dillon, and the neighbouring communities of Michel Village and St. George's Hill; English River First Nation, also known as Patuanak, and the hamlet of Patuanak; and Birch Narrows First Nation and the community of Turnor Lake including the neighbouring communities in each of those areas.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are the people from Canoe Lake, Cole Bay, Jans Bay, and I so present.

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 education in our province. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the Sask Party government to make education a top priority by establishing a long-term vision and plan, with resources, that is responsive to the opportunities and challenges in providing the best quality education and that reflects Saskatchewan's demographic and population changes, that is based on proven educational best practices, that is developed through consultation with the education sector, and that recognizes the importance of educational excellence to the social and economic well-being of our province and students for today and for our future.

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

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Swift Current. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of the leadership and community of Wollaston Lake. I will be serving this petition. There are many signatures that support this from the community, hundreds of names.

And the prayer reads:

That the Government of Saskatchewan stop turning their back on the people from northern Saskatchewan and start investing in public highways in the North.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to recognize that the construction of the road to Wollaston Lake, which was started under the previous NDP government, has shown little to no progress and must be completed quickly.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the leadership and community members of Wollaston Lake. I so present.

[10:15]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Introduction of Pages

The Speaker: — I would like to inform the Assembly that we have two returning Pages. They are Breanna Goertzen and Rikki Gusway who will be working with us this session.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Foster Families Week

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to rise in the House today to recognize the dedicated and caring foster families across the province during Foster Families Week.

Mr. Speaker, foster parents provide so much more than food and shelter. They provide those intangible things that can't be measured or counted, yet really do count the most. Foster parents provide a home and a family and love and security. It is through these things that children are shown support and caring — the most important things of all.

Mr. Speaker, I know first-hand that being a foster parent is so much more than a job. It is a calling. It is a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week calling to care for our most vulnerable citizens. It is a calling to make a difference.

As foster parents, both Marj and I have found enormous gratification in helping children who are feeling dejected and lost. Our most recent foster son has lived with us for over three years now and he is now enrolled as a first-year university student at the University of Regina. We are incredibly proud of him and what he has worked to overcome.

I want to thank all foster parents across the province for making a real difference in the lives of Saskatchewan children and youth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Saskatchewan Elections

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, this has been an eventful week for Saskatchewan democracy as we've seen voters cast their ballots in the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations elections and in the municipal elections as well. On behalf of the NDP [New Democratic Party] Official Opposition, I want to congratulate all of the candidates for putting their names forward. As all of us in this Chamber well know, it is no easy thing to stand for election, and everyone should be appreciative of their efforts.

I was in Saskatoon earlier this week and heard the speeches of all the candidates for election at the FSIN's [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] general assembly, and I want to congratulate Chief Perry Bellegarde on being elected chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. Congratulations also to Dutch Lerat for being acclaimed as the

third vice-chief. As well, I want to make a very special note of Kimberly Jonathan's election to vice-chief, becoming the FSIN's first ever elected female vice-chief.

In the municipal elections we have many new and returning community leaders. That list includes the re-elected mayor of Saskatoon, Don Atchison, and new mayors Michael Fougere of Regina, Greg Dionne of Prince Albert, and Deb Higgins of Moose Jaw who made history as well by becoming the friendly city's very first female mayor.

The official opposition looks forward to listening to and working with all of these servants of the people in the months and years ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Central Services.

Warman Becomes Saskatchewan's Newest City

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to offer my congratulations to Warman, Saskatchewan's newest city. Tomorrow residents of Warman will make their city status official with a signing ceremony and celebration.

Mr. Speaker, Warman is one of Canada's fastest growing communities. In the 2006 census the population of Warman was almost 5,000 people — 4,764. Just five years later, Warman's population increased by almost 50 per cent to over 7,000 residents. And, Mr. Speaker, this government is working to make sure that Warman continues to be ready for growth. A new middle year school is under construction and will be ready to be opened in the fall of 2013. A newly redesigned Highway 305 is funded. This new highway will meet the growing traffic and economic opportunities in Warman. And, Mr. Speaker, this government has increased revenue sharing to Warman by 192 per cent since 2007.

The population growth in my area is a combination of Saskatchewan people coming back home, folks moving here from across Canada, and immigrants from around the globe. And, Mr. Speaker, we welcome them all. I would like to extend congratulations to the newly elected, first ever city council and to all residents of Saskatchewan's newest city. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

2012 Provincial Métis Awards

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The inaugural awards of the Wiichihwayshinawn Foundation took place last Saturday, October 20th, here in the city.

The foundation was formed last December and it works to empower Métis people and promotes the achievement of Métis youth. The event was very successful, Mr. Speaker, featuring a performance of fiddling by Nathan Baker and a healing session by the Rainwater Singers. Christine Ginter was the keynote speaker of the evening and Ms. Ginter spoke of her own life and how positive role models helped her overcome difficulties. She said you should never underestimate the positive influence that we can have on our children and in our communities. The foundation honoured her with the award of the Gabriel Dumont

Award.

There are other awards, Mr. Speaker, including the Social Justice Louis Riel Award which went to Leo Daigneault. The Central Urban Métis Foundation won the Community and Social Development Award. The Youth Award went to Dallas Boyer. Leah Dorion won the Arts Award. Jon Lagimodiere won the Journalism Award. Keon Francis Flamont won the Entrepreneur Award. Dr. Carrie Bourassa won the Science and Wellness Award. And the Most Honourable Métis Woman went to Jeanne Pelletier. Finally, Senator Nora Cummings received the Portrait of Honour and Lifetime Achievement Award.

Congratulations to all the winners and thank you to the organizers of the Wiichihwayshinawn Foundation for recognizing the important work that these individuals do in the Métis community. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Growth for Saskatchewan

Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 16th our government released *The Saskatchewan Plan for Growth: Vision 2020 and Beyond*. Mr. Speaker, *The Saskatchewan Plan for Growth* is our government's map to keep this province growing. It is a plan that will build on the strength of Saskatchewan's people, resources, and innovation to sustain Saskatchewan's place among Canada's economic leaders.

Our government has set some ambitious targets in the plan for growth such as 1.2 million people living in the province by 2020, investing \$2.5 billion in infrastructure over the next three provincial budgets, reducing the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students by 50 per cent by 2020, and cutting the provincial debt in half from its 2007 level by 2017.

Mr. Speaker, our government's plan for growth has been called pragmatic, visionary, ambitious, and achievable by *Leader-Post* columnist Bruce Johnstone. We cannot afford an ad hoc, poorly thought-out approach to our province's future. Mr. Speaker, unlike members opposite, our government is not afraid to set goals through focused and disciplined targets. Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to work hard to make Saskatchewan the best place to work, to live, and to raise a family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

Autism Awareness Month

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning I'm very pleased to acknowledge that October is Autism Awareness Month in Canada. This is a very valuable opportunity for us to learn more about autism spectrum disorder and to build a better understanding of this complex condition that has a growing impact on many Canadian families. Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes our role in the importance of building a comprehensive service system for individuals affected by autism and their families.

We have already taken action. Over the last six years our government has allocated successful budget increases to support enhanced autism interventions. Mr. Speaker, we are investing over \$7.5 million into targeted autism services and supports this year. This is an increase of \$1 million in additional funding over 2011-2012. This added funding allows for more intensive therapeutic programming for preschool children who require increased intensity of treatment to support their learning needs.

I would especially like to recognize the Autism Society Canada which is celebrating its 35th anniversary this month. This organization has been spearheading the promotion of Canadian Autism Awareness Month and autism education and prevention. Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite everyone here to join with me in celebrating Autism Awareness Month. Thank you.

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

Civic Elections

Mr. Hutchinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to pay tribute to all candidates all across this great province in the recent civic elections and especially to congratulate all the successful candidates who are now Saskatchewan's mayors and reeves, councillors, and school board trustees.

Mr. Speaker, our government is really looking forward to working with the many new rural and urban councils in the upcoming years. We've worked very hard to develop a strong relationship with all municipalities all over the province in the last five years. Through different initiatives, particularly increased revenue sharing through a full percentage point of PST [provincial sales tax], our government feels that municipal-provincial relationships are indeed at their strongest point in decades.

Municipalities can continue to expect this kind of support from their provincial government. In the coming fiscal year, for example, municipalities will see over \$264 million in revenue sharing — more than double the amount they received in 2007-2008. It's remarkable.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is growing, and in order for our province to continue to grow, we will need strong municipal-provincial relationships. I ask all members to join me in congratulating the successful candidates in the civic elections, and we look forward to working with them to grow our province together in the years to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Throne Speech and Performance of Government

Mr. Nilson: — Last week the Sask Party announced their booklet of ideas to a select crowd at a \$100-a-plate dinner in Saskatoon, or a luncheon in Saskatoon. And yesterday they delivered the plain and uninspiring version in the Throne Speech.

Neither had anything new for the middle class. In their booklet and repeated in the Throne Speech, there's nothing for small business and no concrete actions to improve First Nations education or employment. Instead, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party has plans for more spin and PR [public relations] on projects they've already announced, sometimes up to six times. The Premier needs to stop the re-announcements and recycling of old ideas.

My question to the Premier: when will he reveal concrete plans to help Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting the hon. member refers to the select crowd that was there for the presentation of the growth plan. The member will know that that speech was webcast, so the select crowd included all humans who have the Internet, Mr. Speaker.

Moreover I could tell you that the growth plan was put on our website, and the website hits increased significantly, Mr. Speaker. The plan is widely available and was made widely available that day. He also references a booklet, Mr. Speaker. What the province is calling a plan for growth and lauding in most corners of Saskatchewan, the hon. member refers to as a booklet.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we did a little searching. We found 12 NDP booklets from their time in government — 12 plans for growth, so to speak, from the NDP. Mr. Speaker, there was one in 2000. After they presented it, the population dropped 7,672. There was one in 2001. They released another booklet. The population dropped 2,816. They announced another one in 2002. We lost 2,489. They announced another plan, another booklet in 2005; 3,752 people, that's what our population dropped by, Mr. Speaker. Thank goodness the people of the province stopped them from printing any more booklets or there would be no one left in Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, in the last year, the Premier has had too many unpleasant surprises for the people of Saskatchewan. Only after the election did they roll out their surprises for millions of dollars for more politicians or a death blow to the film industry. Only after last year's Throne Speech did they demand seniors pay more for their prescription drugs. Only after last year's Throne Speech did they roll out their plans for what could be the most extreme labour legislation in the country.

Yesterday's re-announcements leave middle-class families, students, small business people, and countless others waiting. To the Premier: how much longer will Saskatchewan people have to wait until the Sask Party starts to work for them?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the good news is they haven't had to wait at all. From the day this Party took office, we've been working on various issues the hon. member is raising.

In our first term, he fails to mention, 114,000 low-income Saskatchewan people were dropped completely from the tax rolls of this province, Mr. Speaker. In that first term, Mr. Speaker, we delivered, for the middle and lower class, the most significant provincial income tax relief in the history of the province. We delivered, for all people in the province, property tax relief, Mr. Speaker.

He references students. We have, Mr. Speaker, just in the last session, kept a promise and introduced the Saskatchewan advantage scholarship. Mr. Speaker, we continue to fund post-secondary education in this province so that tuition is affordable. The graduate retention plan allows students to earn it all back if they will stay in the province. These measures are for everybody in the province of Saskatchewan.

I think, Mr. Speaker, the fact that we have taken those actions and those measures, and we are building on them today, is reflected in the configuration of the House you see today, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I think that this government is starting to sound like a tired, old government. The only real plan for the Premier and his Sask Party government is to rehash their 2003 platform of privatization. This sends chills throughout the province, worse than the onset of winter, that the Sask Party would turn back the page to their ideas for privatization at any cost. They're dressing up and rebranding their failed P3 [public-private partnership] secretariat once again. And one has to wonder if the reason that they would contemplate selling Crowns and pushing privatization has to do with the financial state of the province.

So my question to the Premier is very straightforward: does this Throne Speech provide nothing because this government has run out of money?

[10:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — You know, Mr. Speaker, it is interesting just how out of touch this nimble nine is across the way, Mr. Speaker. We have had a growth plan presented in the province. There are three pages I have, I could read from them, of groups in Saskatchewan — individuals and groups not just in the business community but the municipal sector, Mr. Speaker, school boards — commentators who are saying precisely the opposite about the growth plan that's formed the basis of the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. These are the facts. These are the facts of the debate that we're about to enter with respect to the Speech from the Throne.

The hon. member references privatization, Mr. Speaker. We're going to probably have a bit of a debate for example on whether, if the province needs new liquor stores, should the taxpayers' dollars be put into building those . . . put into bricks and mortars for liquor stores or should we invest in hospitals, schools, and highways, Mr. Speaker.

We know where that tired old ideology will lead them, Mr.

Speaker. But they might want to stand up today and get a little bit with the times, connect with the people of the province, all these groups who like the growth plan, participate in the debate in a meaningful way. Maybe, Mr. Speaker, maybe, just maybe their lot would improve politically in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Information Services Corporation

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week the Premier confirmed he is drafting legislation for the sale of one of our province's Crowns, Information Services Corporation. It's a glaring omission from last year's Sask Party election platform, last week's booklet, and yesterday's Throne Speech. And the Sask Party plan for selling the profitable ISC [Information Services Corporation] comes without any mandate from the people. There's no public willingness to sell our Crowns, Mr. Speaker. And when it comes to ISC, there isn't industry support either. The Saskatchewan Land Surveyors Association wrote the Premier last week and said, "Our association strongly opposes this contemplation by this government."

To the Premier: for three elections he says he's not selling the Crowns. Why now is he going to do exactly the opposite?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was a little afraid that this new piece of carpet wouldn't get much wear, but I guess that's changed.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is talking about ISC, and there has been some talk through the media as to an evaluation that our government is in the process of conducting regarding ISC. Mr. Speaker, no decisions have been made at all.

What I have found really interesting over the last week or so that when people have approached me about ISC, they haven't asked necessarily, are you selling it or not? They have asked, what is it? Mr. Speaker, ISC is our land titles. It also handles corporation registry, Mr. Speaker. It handles personal property. It also handles vital statistics. And this is very, very important, Mr. Speaker. If any decision, and there has been no decision made yet, but if any decision is ever made to move ISC to a different format, Mr. Speaker, such as a public offering, vital statistics would not be part of that offering. Vital statistics would move back into probably the Ministry of Health, and that information would be secure for sure within this government.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, we just want to be clear with the record. Under the NDP, ISC was not sold. The NDP supports the Crowns to provide good services to the people. The Sask Party's plans on privatization are finally coming to light. ISC made \$15 million in profits for this province last year. The Saskatchewan Party wants to get rid of these dollars that help

fund vital services for people. In the words of the land surveyors, Mr. Speaker, “The ramifications of this sale of ISC will adversely affect the people of Saskatchewan.”

To the minister: why would the Sask Party privatize the Crowns like ISC when they turn a profit for the people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I’ve said, our government has entered into an evaluation of ISC. No decisions have been made, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward. But I find it interesting, the opposition line of questioning. Should we not enter into an evaluation of the company? Did they enter into an evaluation of the company, Mr. Speaker? Well in fact they did, Mr. Speaker. In 2003 they had ISC evaluated, and in 2006 they also went through an evaluation of ISC, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, what was even more interesting, Mr. Speaker, is one of the last bills that that government passed was the Crown protection Act. In the Crown protection Act, there was a glaring omission, Mr. Speaker: ISC was not in the Crown protection Act. So you got an evaluation of the company, an exclusion from the Act, Mr. Speaker. What was the intent of the former government? Can the member opposite tell us why they excluded ISC from the Crown protection Act?

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s unfortunate we get no answer to the question, but rather a question back. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have clearly spoken. It’s common sense in our province that the Crowns provide excellent service, and they do so for the benefit of everyone. Yet the Sask Party thinks otherwise. They’re the only people in the province who would rather sell off a profitable enterprise like ISC instead of investing in the services that help everyone in our province.

Mr. Speaker, among other things, ISC handles land titles. If a private sector monopoly runs this service, costs will go up for everyone. The Sask Party will be directly responsible for higher costs to sell a farm or register a business. The Sask Party is letting their ideology trump common sense. To the minister: the people of Saskatchewan didn’t vote for the privatization of Crowns, so why would the Sask Party sell ISC?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And as I said, no decision has been made as to the direction that we would be going with ISC. But we have conducted an evaluation; that’s very public. And we’ll be moving forward, looking at that evaluation when it comes in, Mr. Speaker, and making that decision.

But I find it interesting that the members opposite would talk about price increases under ISC, Mr. Speaker. When they were government and ISC was put into place, Mr. Speaker, in the

early days of ISC, you could take a house that was worth \$300,000. Mr. Speaker, what the fees were through land titles at that time were 280. Once the NDP got done with it, it was over \$1,000, Mr. Speaker. That’s an increase of 275 per cent for fees under that NDP government for ISC, Mr. Speaker. Under our government, we have actually dropped the fees, in the last four years, that ISC charges.

Mr. Speaker, if there was any change in ISC, certainly the fee piece would be addressed, Mr. Speaker, because we would want to make sure that there is some assurances for Saskatchewan residents as we move forward.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Northern Roads

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, the chief and council are here from Wollaston Lake. The Sask Party government announced in 2008 a road would be completed by this fall. Mr. Speaker, that has not happened.

The former NDP government announced an all-season road would be built, but the Sask Party has done next to nothing in the last five years. The chief and council are very concerned. Mr. Speaker, the leadership, community members want their government to take action on this road.

To the minister: why has the Sask Party failed to build a road to the community of Wollaston Lake?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as through introductions, we know members from the communities just mentioned are here. I am certainly looking forward to sitting down and meeting with a number of them this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, to look at the services that they need, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward.

We also know that the roads, certainly some of the roads in the northern part of our province, haven’t kept up. It hasn’t been over the last necessarily four or five years, Mr. Speaker. But the NDP, it’s interesting the member opposite — and he’s standing there, well he’s sitting there laughing, Mr. Speaker — we haven’t got it done in four years, Mr. Speaker, or five years. Who was the government for 16 years when that road didn’t get built, Mr. Speaker? Obviously the two representatives, the two MLAs from the North didn’t have much of a voice at the cabinet table.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — They talk about record revenue. Mr. Speaker, the government doesn’t have any common sense. The chief and council of Wollaston Lake want their community members to be treated the same as all of Saskatchewan people. Wollaston Lake needs this road to have a safe supply of food and goods for the families in their community. Mr. Speaker, if the barge is down, the community is cut off. That means that there is no road access for food and fuel.

Mr. Speaker, the road is also about safety for the community. In fact a teacher died in 2010 falling through the ice road. This is unacceptable. Will the Minister of Highways commit today to build this road for the people of Wollaston Lake?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, I look forward to hearing their concerns as we meet this afternoon. But I will say that, Mr. Speaker, over the past year, just in the northern area of our province, we've put in a little over \$42 million to deal with maintenance and capital costs, Mr. Speaker. Over the last four years, Mr. Speaker, four and a half years, we've put in over \$200 million into the North.

Mr. Speaker, we can all probably agree that more needs to be done, absolutely. But I will tell you that \$200 million over the last four and half years, it far outweighs any of the dollars that the NDP put in. That was when they had a member, a minister of Highways from their area, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, it's clear. It's very clear. Mr. Speaker, it's very clear. I want to be very clear. Here's a press release that talks about the road to Wollaston Lake being completed in the construction year of 2012 under this government. It was their announcement. Will the minister recommit the money today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, we put in over 200 million over the last four and half years. More needs to be done. We're going to be obviously hearing those concerns raised again today, I'm sure, from the group, Mr. Speaker. But again, we have put money in. We need to do more.

We just announced the extension of 914, Mr. Speaker. That will be a huge benefit for that northern region. It's an investment of over \$30 million by our government as we move forward, Mr. Speaker. So it's not that there hasn't been money put into the North; maybe there needs to be more. I'm looking forward to hearing their concerns.

We know that the forest industry had certainly gone through a slump for many, many years. That seems to be picking up and with that, increases traffic volumes, Mr. Speaker. That certainly helps justify more expenditure into the North.

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

First Nations and Métis Employment

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For three consecutive months, Statistics Canada has reported a year-over-year drop in the number of First Nations and Métis people employed in our province. Last month, the statistics were alarming: 21.3 per cent unemployment for First Nations people off-reserve; 10 per cent unemployment for Métis people. And this is compared to 4 per

cent unemployment for non-Aboriginals. We will never be all we can be when we leave these whole swaths of people outside of what's happening in the province, Mr. Speaker. This negatively affects the entire province and prevents Saskatchewan from reaching its full potential.

My question to the minister: when can we expect real action from the Sask Party government when it comes to employment for First Nations and Métis people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, since this government took office, great things have happened to the economy of Saskatchewan. It's our government's intention to keep this economy growing, moving forward. The Premier's speech the other day is a perfect example of that. Mr. Speaker, we want all sectors of this economy to move forward, all people in this province.

Absolutely I'm concerned about the numbers that the member opposite just stated. But let's look at the real numbers, Mr. Speaker. What's happened under this government, not just some recent fluctuations, Mr. Speaker, but what's happened under this government with First Nations employment versus what was happening under the members opposite: October to December 2007, the number of First Nations employed, Mr. Speaker, 34,000. In September of this year, Mr. Speaker, 39,600. Thousands more First Nations people employed under this government than when those members opposite were running the economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, for three consecutive months, year-over-year declines for First Nations and Métis unemployment. The minister talks about all people, Mr. Speaker, but their actions tell a very different story. It was two and a half years ago, Mr. Speaker, that that Sask Party government cut, eliminated the Aboriginal employment development program. It's been a year and a half since they launched their task force, Mr. Speaker, a task force that was supposed to report back months ago. Mr. Speaker, meanwhile, we have months of declining employment for First Nations and Métis people.

My question to the minister: how many months of declining First Nations and Métis employment will it take for the Sask Party government to take urgent action?

[10:45]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, since taking office, we've made record investments in post-secondary and skills training for First Nations people. A perfect example of that, Mr. Speaker, is in the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, a post-secondary institution that's done phenomenal work for First Nations people in Saskatchewan.

We've dramatically increased funding there, 25 per cent increase in funding since 2007. Mr. Speaker, the Gabriel Dumont Institute, 34 per cent increasing in funding since 2007 when those members opposite were in government.

Mr. Speaker, I think just intuitively, the people of this province can look around, look at the economy today, compare it to the economy when those members were in government and everyone was fleeing the province. Mr. Speaker, absolutely there's some cycles that happen in the economy. We're concerned about those numbers. We'll be monitoring. But, Mr. Speaker, we've got more work to do, but we've made a great start. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the minister can brag all he wants, but his actions tell a different story. It was that government, Mr. Speaker, that scrapped, that eliminated the Aboriginal employment development program. Representatives have travelled a great distance from Wollaston Lake here today, Mr. Speaker, because they are concerned. Because, Mr. Speaker, they want to have their voice heard. They don't want hollow promises and parroting of rhetoric from the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. They want a government that admits its mistakes and a government that takes urgent action.

My question to the minister on behalf of the people who are here from Wollaston Lake: will he admit, will he admit that it was an error to cancel the Aboriginal development program, and when will he take urgent action as opposed to the missed deadlines we've seen from the task force, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, this government has done a great deal of work. We have a record number of apprentices, apprenticeship training for First Nations people. We've made record investment in adult basic education and literacy programs, Mr. Speaker. Obviously we're concerned about that. We're doing what we can. First Nations people in this province are going to have a great role to play in the future of this economy.

Mr. Speaker, I find it somewhat surprising that the member opposite, who's a leadership candidate for the NDP, is raising this issue of First Nations employment and yet he hasn't stated where he's at on the federal leader's position on the so-called Dutch disease. Because, Mr. Speaker, what would that do, what would that do to things like uranium mining in northern Saskatchewan which is a massive employer of First Nations people?

Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite ought to make his position clear. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, that kind of deflection from the minister is pathetic, frankly, Mr. Speaker. And frankly, it is

insulting to the people. It is insulting to the people who travelled hundreds of kilometres to come to the legislature to speak about the priorities for their community, Mr. Speaker.

Members from Wollaston Lake want to be full participants in Saskatchewan's future. They want, Mr. Speaker, to be contributing to the economic and social fabric of the province. They travelled here to have their voices heard. As they've stated, Mr. Speaker, they desperately need a road to their community. And they need this government to take urgent action on the issue of employment for First Nations and Métis people.

My question to the minister: when will he stop with the deflection, take this issue seriously, Mr. Speaker, and take urgent action on the issue of First Nations and Métis employment?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, we do take this issue very seriously, and our solution to this problem is very simple, Mr. Speaker. We're going to grow the economy for everyone in the province. Mr. Speaker, that's what the Premier's growth speech was all about the other day. Mr. Speaker, this government is fully committed to that.

That member used the word pathetic. Do you know what's pathetic, Mr. Speaker, is those members opposite trying to hive off a sector of our population and playing fast and loose with people's emotions. Mr. Speaker, this government has done great things for First Nations employment. There's thousands more First Nations people working in this province. And as this economy moves forward, there'll be thousands more First Nations people working in this province.

Mr. Speaker, that member opposite is just simply playing politics, trying to get some airtime for his leadership campaign, which I understand is not doing very well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — At this time I would like to table the reports of the statement of votes volumes I and II for the 26th provincial general election.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Resignation of Deputy Chair of Committees

The Speaker: — I would also like to inform the House before orders of the day that the member for Regina Wascana Plains has resigned her position as Deputy Chair of committees on May 25th, 2012.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask for leave of the Assembly to move a motion regarding the appointment of a new Deputy Chair of committees.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked for a leave to move a motion regarding the Deputy Chair of committees. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

MOTIONS

Appointment of Deputy Chair of Committees

Mr. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd move:

That the member for Saskatoon Eastview be appointed to preside as Deputy Chair of committees of this Assembly.

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

That the member for Saskatoon Eastview be appointed to preside as Deputy Chair of committees of this Assembly.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask for leave of the Assembly to move a motion regarding sitting days.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked leave of the Assembly to move a motion regarding House days. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Sitting Days

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

That notwithstanding rule 6(1) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, when this Assembly does adjourn on Thursday, November 8th, 2012, it shall stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 13th, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.; and further,

That in accordance with rule 3(2), the 25th and final day of the fall period of the revised parliamentary calendar shall be Thursday, December 6th, 2012.

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

That notwithstanding rule 6(1) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*,

when this Assembly does adjourn on Thursday, November the 8th, 2012, it shall stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 13th, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.; and further,

That in accordance with rule 3(2) the 25th and final day of the fall period of the revised parliamentary calendar shall be Thursday, December the 6th, 2012.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask for leave of the Assembly to move a motion regarding the absence of a member from the Assembly.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked for leave to move a motion regarding the absence of a member from the House. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Leave of Absence

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

That leave of absence be granted for the member for Saskatoon Greystone for Monday, October the 29th to Thursday, November the 1st inclusive, to attend the Global Seminar on the Role of Parliaments and Extractive Industries in Vienna, Austria on behalf of this Assembly.

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

That leave of absence be granted to the member for Saskatoon Greystone on Monday, October 29th to Thursday, November the 1st inclusive, to attend the Global Seminar on the Role of Parliaments and Extractive Industries in Vienna, Austria on behalf of this Assembly.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for The Battlefords.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I feel so honoured and privileged to be the first to rise today to address the Speech from the Throne, a speech that clearly outlines this government's vision for this province and also its commitment to a plan to achieve that vision.

Mr. Speaker, I can hardly believe that it's been a year since our first Throne Speech of the twenty-seventh legislature of the province of Saskatchewan, a speech which also outlined our vision and our commitment to good governance for this province. After one year in my term as MLA for The Battlefords, it's been a very exciting year for me, a challenging year in some ways. And I would like to just take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to thank firstly my Premier and also my colleagues for all of their encouragement and advice and assistance over this past year. It's been a great year.

I look back over my inaugural speech last fall and one of the questions I had in that speech was, would I ever cease to wonder at the marvel of this building and this Assembly? And I think I can answer my own question now. I don't think I ever will. I look forward every day that we come to this building, to this place, to represent the members of our constituencies. And it is an honour for me to be here every day, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to continue by thanking the constituents of The Battlefords. They've also been very supportive of me. They've shown confidence in me in electing me as their representative. They brought me questions, concerns, advice, and suggestions, and it's greatly appreciated.

And, Mr. Speaker, if I may just continue before I get back to my address to the speech, I would like to extend my special thanks to two ladies who have been very helpful to me over the past year. They're doing a tremendous job of running my constituency office. They are Lillian Robinson and Gail Heintz. They take care of constituent questions, their complaints, their concerns, and they do it very professionally. But also, I think more importantly, they do it with compassion, with the utmost concern for what is important to our constituents.

My biggest thank yous go out to my family and to my wife. Linda has been my strength always, but especially over the past year she has been there for me in the good times and the not-so-good times. Thank you very much for being there, keeping me grounded, and helping me chill out a little bit when I sometimes get a little wound up too tight.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when so many jurisdictions are facing massive deficits, huge cutbacks, this government has brought in a balanced budget that has continued to provide the citizens of this province with upgraded highways, reduced wait times for surgery, school repair replacement, has increased benefits for seniors and those with handicaps, and as well has reduced our debt.

Mr. Speaker, this Speech from the Throne outlines our plan to continue to grow this province. We will continue to grow it, Mr. Speaker, not for the sake of growth itself, but for all of the benefits and the opportunities that that growth can provide, benefits such as in my own constituency of The Battlefords where we have just celebrated the official opening of two of the components of our new CUplex [Credit Union complex]. The Dekker Centre for the Performing Arts has just been opened. It is an ultra-modern theatre that I am sure will be enjoyed by citizens for many generations to come. The aquatic centre is an oasis for fun in the water with the pool, two waterslides, a wave pool, a lazy river, and much, much more for the entertainment of all the people of The Battlefords. Tomorrow we officially open the curling rink, and shortly thereafter we will open the fourth component of our CUplex. The field house will be completed. Our citizens greatly appreciate the \$7 million that this government was able to contribute to that project.

[11:00]

This Throne Speech also talks about investing in infrastructure. And again in The Battlefords, we've been able to take advantage of this government's funding for two major projects in the town of Battleford. These projects were the urban connector through the town, where our provincial contribution was \$7 million; the new water treatment plant upgrade which was an investment of \$2.3 million from this government. This plant now has the capacity to provide safe drinking water for 2,000 more people in our town. That will bring us up to our population of 6,000 people.

These are the types of projects that growth can help us afford. Mr. Speaker, that is why we continue to talk about sustained growth for this great province. And, Mr. Speaker, let's not forget about the \$5 million that has been allocated in our last budget to begin planning for our new Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford. But we are also very aware that we not only need new infrastructure, but we must also continue to budget for the huge infrastructure deficit that we inherited. We have heard loud and clear from all constituencies from all corners of our province that we must renew and rebuild Saskatchewan's infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, in the last five years we invested more than \$5 billion to improve or expand highways, schools, health care facilities, and municipal infrastructure. And we can also add to this massive expenditures in both SaskEnergy and SaskPower.

You know, Mr. Speaker, last spring during a committee meeting, the Minister Responsible for SaskPower shared with us a rather interesting statistic. And that was that there are considerably more power poles in this province than there are people. I found that quite interesting. And as you know, much . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Thank you for that. And as you know, much of our power grid was built in the '50s and '60s. And we know wooden poles only last so long. So we know we have a lot of work to do, not only to build the new grids for our increased population growth, but to replace some of the existing system. As one of my colleagues commented after that meeting, he said the power poles are something like you politicians that were born in the '50s: you're well past your best-before date. But let me assure you, Mr. Speaker, that is certainly not the case.

Another part of our plan for growth in Saskatchewan is building our workforce. We have outlined our plans to continue to attract former residents to return home. We will engage the federal government to increase the cap on immigration nominees from 4,000 to 6,000 annually. We know that we must continue to improve educational outcomes for First Nations and Métis people. We must close the achievement gap between First Nations and non-First Nations students.

Mr. Speaker, last week I had the opportunity to attend the 10th anniversary celebrations for Sakewew High School, our local First Nations school. This school has become a model for First Nations education right across Canada with excellent graduation rates. In fact, one year they actually graduated more students than any other First Nations school in the country. Mr. Speaker, this is the kind of success story we need if we are to fill our employment needs of the future.

I was pleased that this Throne Speech highlighted our continued concerns for those in this province who are the most vulnerable. We have recently increased the Saskatchewan assured income for disability program by \$2,400, and we will continue to add to this amount by adding an average of \$1,800 more by 2015.

Mr. Speaker, the phenomenal growth we have experienced in recent years has led in part to increased housing costs. We are aware that this creates problems for low- and moderate-income earners to enter the housing market. And that is why we have initiatives in place to help add 12,600 new housing units so that these moderate-income earners can actually realize their dream of home ownership.

Mr. Speaker, again in The Battlefords, with the assistance from Sask Housing, we recently opened over 40 low-income housing units. And a 21-unit affordable condo project will soon be completed, thus allowing 21 families access to a safe, quality, and affordable home.

Mr. Speaker, the future is bright for this great province we call home. We are setting ambitious yet achievable goals for ourselves, and we have a plan to achieve those goals. We want to continue to be a leader in Canada. We believe we will soon surpass British Columbia as an exporting province. We are already a leader in potash and uranium production. We are leading the way in carbon capture technology. As well, we are now Canada's top agri-food exporting province with more than \$10 billion of exports in 2011.

Mr. Speaker, I am excited about the contents of the Speech from the Throne. It outlines our vision and our plan for continued growth for this great province. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move a motion, seconded by the member from Regina Coronation Park, and the motion reads as follows:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To Her Honour the Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

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

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for The Battlefords, seconded by the member for Regina Coronation Park:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To Her Honour the Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

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

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Regina Coronation Park.

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to address this House and second the Throne Speech motion by the member from The Battlefords.

It's been almost a year since the 2011 election, a year in which our government accomplished a great deal: a balanced budget, a growing economy, and a record high population, to name a few.

But a good government knows that no matter how much has already been achieved, there's always more that can and should be done. Mr. Speaker, that's why I and all of my colleagues in government spent this past summer asking our constituents what more can we do. I asked the people of Coronation Park this question, the people who took the time to visit my office, the groups I met with in the community, and the members of the public I met at events this summer.

The constituents of Coronation Park took the question seriously. Everyone I asked took the time to think about what government means for them and what it could mean in the years ahead. They told me what we have been doing right, and they were quick to point out what we could be doing better.

They told me they want their government to mean what we say and say what we mean. Mr. Speaker, that is this government. They want a government that follows through on its commitments, a government that keeps its word. Well, again, Mr. Speaker, that's this government. People want a government that offers them help but not a handout, a government that respects its citizens, that supports them to be independent. Mr. Speaker, that's what our government is all about.

So as I reflect on the year that's been and look forward to this

legislative session, I want to thank the men and women of Coronation Park for welcoming me as their new MLA and for taking the time to voice their opinions on what our government can do to make Coronation Park, Regina, and Saskatchewan even stronger.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Coronation Park saw themselves reflected in the budget last spring and now see themselves reflected again in the Throne Speech. They know that they have been heard and that this is a document that understands the day-to-day struggles that working people are facing. All summer my constituents reminded me how the biggest challenge can often be the simplest challenge — to live within one's means. We all know the temptation, Mr. Speaker, to spend what we have when we have it, and perhaps even borrow a little to add to it. But, Mr. Speaker, that can lead to trouble.

And my constituents, working men and women raising families, know all too well how important it is to spend wisely. They know what it's like to weigh every decision considering what you have, what you need, what you can afford, and how much you need to set aside for the future. That's why our government's commitment to balanced budget rings true to them because a government needs to be careful with its money as families are with theirs. After all, a government's money is really the people's money. They trust us with their hard-earned tax dollars, and the least we can do is treat that money as wisely as they themselves would.

My constituents have thanked us for setting a good example by being fiscally responsible, by being committed to balanced budgets, by looking for smart ways to save, and by paying down our debt. As one constituent told me, my children understand when I explain that we as a province owe money and we are going to pay that off and live within our means.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to campaign on a platform that said we could balance the budget and improve the quality of life for some of our province's most vulnerable citizens. We promised it then; we followed through in last spring's budget, and now we're going even further with this fall's Throne Speech.

As the Throne Speech states, our goal is to make Saskatchewan the best place in Canada for persons with disabilities. Mr. Speaker, I'm always cognizant of the struggles that people with disabilities are facing. I am proud of our track record so far. And I'm particularly pleased with the Throne Speech commitments to further increase benefits under the Saskatchewan assured income for disability program, or SAID. SAID was actually the first issue that brought voters through my door during the campaign, and it was an issue we heard over and over on doorsteps, on the phone, and in the community.

Mr. Speaker, SAID is a valuable program that supports independence, respect, and dignity. These are things that many of us take for granted in our daily lives, but to someone with a disability unable to earn an income, independence, respect, and dignity are precious and hard-won.

I've had the good fortune to meet many people who have benefited from SAID, people who face enormous challenges in their daily lives, people like the folks who live at Huston Heights, a 50-unit apartment-style independent subsidized

housing complex in Argyle Park for people with disabilities.

The people of Huston Heights were a bit skeptical when they first met me. They didn't know much about me, but I kept going back, meeting more and more of them, whether they wanted me to or not, and slowly but surely getting to know them as they got to know me. I spent afternoons over coffee and evenings over chili suppers building a better understanding of this unique community because, make no mistake about it, they are a community. They're also a family and a network of mutual support. The men and women who live there support each other the way all good neighbours do, and the meaning of being a good neighbour runs a bit deeper there than it usually does in a city this size. Many of the folks who live there receive SAID benefits, but SAID is not always enough.

Living with disabilities can be complicated, and the Throne Speech reflects that. It recognizes important concerns around education, employment, inclusion, transportation, and housing. And the Throne Speech commits our government to working with the community to build a comprehensive strategy that will consider all of these issues. It also includes a commitment to add another 12,600 new housing units by the year 2016 to provide better, broader access to safe, affordable, and quality housing.

I think we've all seen the benefits a housing project can bring to families, neighbourhoods, and communities. I know I have. Take the Silver Sage affordable rental units that opened up this summer in my constituency — 24 new units that support families, improve their quality of life today, and build a strong future for their children tomorrow. It's a great example of partners like Sask Housing, city of Regina, and Silver Sage holdings coming together with a common goal and making that goal a reality.

[11:15]

Making goals a reality is something our government has had a lot of experience with, especially when it comes to ambitious goals like growing Saskatchewan's population. Our province is growing faster than it has in the last 90 years, and immigration has played a big part in this. I see the results everywhere I look in my constituency: newcomers to Canada settling in and building new lives here, children from around the world attending schools like Coronation Park, St. Michael, Mother Teresa, and the Regina Huda School.

Regina Huda School is a great example, Mr. Speaker. Just this past June, I was honoured to be part of their fifth grade 12 graduation celebrating the successes of some outstanding young people. Many of these young men and women were born elsewhere, but the majority of them are staying right here in Saskatchewan to attend university and build careers. Every graduate I spoke with had a clear vision for their future, and they were already well on their way as scholars, leaders, and community builders.

Mr. Speaker, my office hears a great number of newcomers that have come and asked for assistance, clarification, and conversation. Coronation Park is home to a multitude of newcomers, and I'm proud to have the opportunity to meet and work with many, and I'm looking forward to being a part of

welcoming many more. This will be aided by our province's continuing engagement with the federal government to increase the annual cap in the immigrant nominee program by 50 per cent, from 4,000 to 6,000.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech doesn't just focus on bringing new residents to Saskatchewan, it also focuses on improving the outcomes for many of the residents already here, including the First Nations and Métis people. It includes a commitment to work with First Nations and Métis organizations to improve educational outcomes and increase employment.

Mr. Speaker, I've seen first-hand the importance of education and employment opportunities. For the last six years I've had the honour to teach sociology electives to licensed practical nursing students at Kawacatoose First Nation. The students were enrolled through SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] but had the opportunity to study close to home, close to family, friends, children, their community and elders, and of course with a great instructor.

But seriously, even though I was the one teaching the course, they were the ones who taught me many important lessons: how important it is to make sure that students are supported in their learning; how important it is for educational institutions to be flexible, to try new things, and to work in partnership with local communities; as well as the importance of traditional teachings to health care.

Mr. Speaker, almost all of my students graduated their course. And out of those graduates, all of them found employment in this province — some in rural communities, some in cities, and some on their reserve. They're all contributing to Saskatchewan's ongoing economic success. And they're all doing so because they are able to attend classes through a very innovative pilot project that has become the model for bringing the school to the student instead of bringing the student to the school.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to innovation, not just in terms of innovative education models, but also innovation in health care, research, and development. One of our boldest initiatives has been to step forward as the first province in this country to fund research for the liberation therapy for MS [multiple sclerosis] symptoms. I think everybody in this room, and probably a few outside its walls, know how strongly I feel about the value that liberation therapy can provide. And I'm honoured to be part of a government that is supporting scientific, evidence-based clinical trials well ahead of our counterparts provincially and federally.

Mr. Speaker, over the years I've had the pleasure to be part of Saskatchewan's cultural community. From my early days supporting live independent music as co-owner of The Venue to stints shooting video for Much Music to producing original pieces of art, I've had the chance to meet many of our province's cultural leaders. And I was honoured, and still am, to be invited to be a part of the recent creative industry's consultations. Each and every session, here and in Saskatoon, provided both information and collaboration between the sectors. It has been fascinating to listen to the different perspectives and nuances between and among the different sectors. At the conclusion of these sessions, there is an

appreciation as well as a degree of hope. These consultations support our Throne Speech commitment to build a long-term strategy to advance the commercial objectives of the creative industries.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech clearly establishes a strong vision for Saskatchewan's growth and success. It supports families. It supports communities. It supports industries. It is built on bold goals and new ideas.

And I'm going to digress a little bit here, but new ideas are not always embraced when first proposed. And I think a good example of this is Mike Myers in his *SNL* [Saturday Night Live] skit, "Lothar of the Hill People". And as Lothar says, look, Father. Look, I made this, and I think it could help us and make it easier to haul things because it rolls. I call it a wheel. What do you think? Can we use it for helping to haul things? Well, son, that might be a good idea, but it's a new idea. And because it's a new idea, we must fear and reject it.

And to quote Anthony Robbins:

Don't be afraid of new ideas. Be afraid of old ideas. They keep you where you are and they stop you from growing and moving forward. Concentrate on where you want to go, not on what you fear.

The architects of this Throne Speech couldn't have said it better. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to formally second the motion brought forward by the member from The Battlefords. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Prince Albert Carlton.

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well once again it's a pleasure to stand in this Assembly and talk about a document, a visionary piece of work, created by the Premier and his team moving us forward, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to start off by thanking the voters of Prince Albert Carlton who sent me back to this Legislative Assembly last year with a strong majority, supporting our vision, Mr. Speaker, based on our document, our platform piece. And this Throne Speech builds on that, moving us forward. And we talk about ideas in that platform piece that we brought into play. We're going to continue those moving on, Mr. Speaker.

We're also talking about new ideas, and those in the House will know that I've talked a lot about the vision for the future, the youth in our province. And I'm going to focus on that today because the two members prior, Mr. Speaker, did a great job in talking about the quality of the Throne Speech, the substance of the Throne Speech, and how it impacts various groups across this province, moving them forward in a growing economy, Mr. Speaker. But the pieces I want to discuss today really involve this vision that we have to leave this province in a better state than we found it as members of this Legislative Assembly.

Every Throne Speech since 2007 on has always had a vision, and the cornerstone of that vision's been a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker, fiscal probity and responsibility, so that in the future after I am long gone from this House, my daughters and my

grandchildren can say that this province was founded with a vision, to be sure, but our government maintained that focus going on to give them a strong base and a strong building platform to go on, Mr. Speaker.

And if we leave this province with reduced debt or no debt by the time I leave this Assembly, that would be one of the proudest moments of my life to ensure that my future generations with the Hickie name will be able to actually still have a place to stay, a place to play, and a place to thrive, Mr. Speaker.

In this Throne Speech, we identify that since taking over in government in 2007 we've seen an increase of 80,000 new people in this province. That's huge, Mr. Speaker, insomuch as that we now have a force that can actually be used and can be used as an employee base, employee base for young entrepreneurs to start new businesses, can keep the economy driving forward, Mr. Speaker.

And my two daughters will be able to benefit from that growth, Mr. Speaker, and I'm very proud to have that opportunity for them because growth by itself is one thing that we can hang our hat on, say it's a great thing to have. But it's how that we're going to be able to support that growth, Mr. Speaker, working with the economy, working with the stakeholder groups, that will give that foundation for younger people, even younger than my daughters, in some cases like we saw yesterday, that new immigrant family that came in from Scotland with that young, little son that was sitting behind me in the House, who we can look at them and say it's for that group that we can actually plan for that future. And this Throne Speech maintains our vision going on, Mr. Speaker. I'm very happy with that.

One thing this document talks about, Mr. Speaker, is that we will need to see up to 60,000 new workers by 2020. Governments always talk about the need for employers to hire more people and they generate that policy base to help them. We looked at, as a government in 2007, we saw that small businesses drove the economy. They still do to this day, Mr. Speaker. And we also talk about the fact that there are more opportunities than ever before in this province for employees. We see people moving back to this province on a regular basis. We see job postings, a record number still in our economy looking for thousands . . .

An Hon. Member: — Thousands.

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you . . . that we see opportunities abound. And I look at my daughters, Mr. Speaker. Alyssa's in university right now, first year studying in University of Saskatchewan.

An Hon. Member: — Thankfully she takes after her mother.

Mr. Hickie: — Absolutely. Yes, she's got the brains and the good looks of her mother, Mr. Speaker. I can acknowledge that. And then my other daughter, Mackenzie, who is in grade 12, who will be following right next year, Mr. Speaker, to the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], my alma mater. I'm very proud they're attending that school, that academic institution, that I can say I went and picked up my daughter last week for lunch and I got lost because of all the construction that we see there

and all the detours, which is a good thing, Mr. Speaker. I had to pick her up in front of an old establishment I spent a few nights at, and I couldn't even get in there, Mr. Speaker, because of the construction. So I was very happy to actually say that things have changed since my time there . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . It was the theatre. Yes, it was the theatre. Yes, that was one of the places as well I spent some time.

The issue with the University of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, is that we are funding students through the scholarship opportunities put in place in this last year's budget, the Saskatchewan advantage scholarship which, when I saw my daughter's tuition bill, I noticed it was right off the top, Mr. Speaker, which was an awesome opportunity for me to say to my daughter, you know what? That now allows us as parents across this great province to be able to plan for your future, have more money available than to actually keep putting in tuition. I've always told my daughters, I'll pay for the first piece of paper; after that, you're on your own. But, Mr. Speaker, with this opportunity year in and year out, that gives me the opportunity to help fund them for post-academics as well and postgraduate work as well if they so choose, Mr. Speaker.

One thing about the university as well I will say, as I found out this year, I didn't realize this, but every student who achieves a high standard of academics at grade 12 is automatically entered into advance scholarships for post-secondary as well. It comes right off tuition as well. And Alyssa did very well in high school, and she saw some saving this year or I saw the savings and so did my wife in the tuition bill. So we're happy to have that opportunity. Again it goes to the fact that their mother has a lot more brains than their father has, so they're doing very well. I appreciate that.

One thing about the university having that opportunity, Mr. Speaker, is this. Without growth in this province and the economy that we've seen in the last five years, I doubt, I highly doubt our academic institutions could have the opportunity to provide those scholarships, those opportunities for kids to actually work hard in high school and reap the benefits. And we see it in this Throne Speech as well. We're asking for the educational facilities from pre-K [pre-kindergarten] to grade 12 to ensure that they work hard and stay focused on our kids and our youth in schools, to work with them, work with the parents as well to bring forth opportunities so they can actually still strive and thrive in this economy in this province.

The bottom line in this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, it allows our young population, those of the future, to stay in this province, not to have to leave like so many of my friends' kids did, Mr. Speaker, and so many of my friends did as well to see opportunities. Now they can stay here and that's an awesome opportunity for our future of this province, Mr. Speaker. We see that as one of those benchmarks as a government, that we can all be very proud of, that we're seeing people having opportunities to stay.

One thing about my riding is that — of course it's not in my riding — but the Highway No. 11 twinning has been a great project that we're seeing move forward. It's almost done, Mr. Speaker. I believe 12 kilometres has yet to be done. We'll see that done by next year — knock on wood, mother nature co-operates. But that adds to a sense of peace and comfort for

my wife and myself because our daughter drives back and forth right now to university, not maybe enough to see us at home on weekends, but it gives us an opportunity to know she's safe. And Mackenzie, her sister, will be safe going back and forth as well in the future.

And for those of us who've had the opportunity to drive on that highway now, it's a great experience insomuch as that it takes away . . . It just seems like times flies faster, Mr. Speaker. Safer as well, not always having to pass vehicles to get to our destination. Not that I speed, Mr. Speaker. I always drive within the rules as a police officer still. I'm sure that's going to be one of those benchmarks I always follow as well, but it gives us a chance to have safer travel.

One thing in this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, that I want to talk about. It mentioned in the media yesterday was that the opposition criticized it's no new initiatives, especially in health care. I find that very puzzling, Mr. Speaker, because the new Minister of Rural Health and Remote Health is one of those individuals that always saw that he needed to champion this cause, Mr. Speaker. He lives in a rural riding and of course he works with his boss, the new Minister of Health, who will work together to ensure that we have the opportunities in the future . . .

An Hon. Member: — I'm not his boss.

Mr. Hickie: — Well you are now.

[11:30]

And we see an opportunity in this Throne Speech to talk about initiatives that the new minister has looked at in Nova Scotia, building on these great men and women that work in our province in the health care field — look at having a team approach in our rural areas to advance health care and to be a positive impact moving forward.

As well as we saw announcements of international medical grads, I believe it was 24 in this fall, have come to this province to study and expand and be part of our health care system. We'll see up to 90 more I believe in the next year or so. That bodes well that we have a health care system managed by ministers, deputy ministers, people in the administration that understand our vision as well, and that's great for the people of this province, Mr. Speaker.

This Throne Speech builds on other throne speeches, Mr. Speaker, along with successive budgets we've had as well, to ensure that the opportunities in this province remain strong. We see entrepreneurs having opportunities. We see current businesses having opportunities, whether they be large corporations or small operations — mom-and-pop operations, I call them — or for new entrepreneurs that want to enter the workforce and generate more of our economic momentum by hiring youth in this province, and others, Mr. Speaker.

This is still the place to be, not the place to be from, Mr. Speaker. I firmly believe that. This Throne Speech takes that vision moving forward. We'll see that, I'm sure, the opposition will have some criticisms of this. But if they'll look into the actual, into the line-by-line in the Throne Speech, they'll see

that we have an opportunity to maintain our momentum, see the growth of our economy move forward, see opportunities for our youth and for my daughters. And it's because of that, Mr. Speaker — for my two girls — I definitely support this Throne Speech. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week the Premier delivered the deluxe version of the Throne Speech to a \$100-a-plate luncheon in Saskatoon. Even had a colour picture of him in the booklet that was produced. And yesterday we got the plain version here in this place where the democracy for Saskatchewan should be the key feature. And so, Mr. Speaker, already just in the format of what's happened with this particular Throne Speech, we have a message about what's happening in Saskatchewan.

The Premier and the Sask Party have one version for people who can afford to pay for it, who can afford to live in very many parts of the province, and then he's got another version or another message for the people that are struggling. But unfortunately that message isn't in the Throne Speech. So, Mr. Speaker, we need to ask questions about what's here, but we also need to ask questions about what's not here.

The message is I think both overtly and covertly, or not anywhere, that the middle class, that ordinary families, small businesses, there's not much there for you. And we know that people are already contacting us around some of these particular issues.

We emphasize or we talk a lot about the tax issue for small businesses because we know that the small businesses of Saskatchewan provide most of the jobs. And we find it curious, given the members opposite and the areas that they represent in the province, that they've focused on reducing taxation for the large corporations and slow walking or even maybe stopping the reduction on the taxes for small businesses. So we're surprised. But these are the kinds of signals that come there.

Now the other thing about this Throne Speech is that there's not much new in it. I mean there's so little new after the comments from last week that the Premier had to throw out a few bits and bones that aren't even in the speech this week to try to get some news, whether it's the good initiatives around protecting our highways workers or some of the other comments that are made. But practically, what's in this speech has been announced over the last few years.

For example there's 2.5 billion for infrastructure listed. Almost all of this money has already been announced and passed in this Assembly, and it's already been proven to be not sufficient for the needs that people have in this province. Another one — and I know the member that just spoke before me referenced this — Highway 11. And we're all in support of twinning Highway 11, but I think the Sask Party has announced this one six times since 2008, and I think what they should do is just get the work done. And so we're all looking forward to a safe facility there.

Another example of sort of a rehash or a re-announcement of things is around housing. We all know that more affordable housing units are needed in the province, and that comes from

the new mayor of Regina saying housing is his number one issue. You go and talk to people from smaller communities, whether in the Southeast or the North, and housing is a major issue. And so the announcement of housing in the Throne Speech was actually announced in last year's, the 2012 budget. And 4,600 of those units were actually in an announcement in March of 2011. Issuing a new press release does not equal new homes for Saskatchewan people. And I think people are starting to understand how just getting words from this government but no actions is going to be a major problem for all of us.

Another example of a redo or a rehash is SaskBuilds. The P3 secretariat was set up by the Sask Party with great fanfare and it was failed and then abandoned. It was turned into an efficiency office and then, well we're not quite sure where it quit. But to go back to that same concept, give it a new name and then raid the rainy day fund to put some money in there to go and try to get some of these projects, we have many questions about this because we think that there are some great difficulties with it.

It also raises questions around the finances of the province. And I think we would all note that when I asked the Premier today if some of the basic points around finances in this Throne Speech are such as they are because the province is running out of money, he avoided that question by going off onto all kinds of other diversionary things. But we will continually come back to that question because that is a fundamental question about a conservative Sask Party government. We've been burned before by a government that kept announcing things and announcing things and spending money and eventually Saskatchewan people have to pay.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to ask that question and we look forward to some answers. But I'm assuming that we're not going to be getting very many clear answers about that, because the issue really revolves around how are we being prudent, how are we using Saskatchewan common sense to do the things that are needed for people. And as I say, this document does not provide for the middle class, for ordinary families. It doesn't provide for small businesses, and we're disappointed for that.

Now there are also some goals, some words set out in this document which are plans or goals — I think it's called a plan for growth — but there's really no description of what the actions are that are going to allow us to reach those goals or plans. As New Democrats we believe in smart growth. We believe in making things happen in a very ordinary way, and that you tell people what you're going to do and then you go and do that. Unfortunately we have a history now of five years where the actions of the government come as surprises — sometimes surprises to the whole community, sometimes as surprises to a particular part of the community. And we know that that's not a very good way to govern, and we know that people are watching that particular issue.

One of the major challenges in this speech does relate to the First Nations unemployment. And my colleague asked questions about that today. It's now at a high ... The unemployment rate for First Nations people that want to work is at 21.3 per cent, but there's no action plan to deal with that particular issue. And what's especially difficult about that is that the Aboriginal employment development program was

wiped out by this government. They never really explained why. But they did say they were going to try to do something in that area, and it's been stalled — it's been stalled and it's been stalled and it's been stalled. And lo and behold it shows up in the Throne Speech as, well, something else we're going to do. Mr. Speaker, that's not good enough. That's not what the people of Saskatchewan expect.

And there are other areas where plans have been made to expand things, whether it comes to the numbers of doctors available in rural communities, when it comes to supporting different areas. And we know that the government's even created a new ministry to try to deal with that one, and we'll be assessing that pretty carefully too.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are some references in here, but there are a number of things that, well, there's things that aren't in the Throne Speech. And what we know from the history of the last year is that it's these surprises, as I referenced before, that are the problem. Nobody in the election and nobody in the Throne Speech ended up telling us that there was going to be millions of dollars for three more MLAs, but we were dealing with that fairly quickly last year.

The film industry did not expect to be gutted last spring, but we've seen the fallout of that and once again a slow walk of any kind of a solution we've all been waiting to see. We know both from a practical basis and from the experience of people involved in this industry that many people have had to move away to find employment in the film industry. And this is very sad because we had developed a very good core of people who could be among the best of the producers and actors in North America.

So, Mr. Speaker, we're wondering what other surprises are going to show up. We've had the surprise where the government has announced about privatizing our personal information Crown, the one that deals with land titles but also deals with a number of other issues. And this particular one is surprising because it does actually provide revenue for the province to help deal with particular expenses there but also some other revenue that goes into the overall government services that are provided.

[11:45]

And it's an area where the public expects that the government would be involved and provide security of title, security of the boundaries of property that you have. And it's a fundamental part of growing the economy of Saskatchewan because we all know that when corporations, whether they're small or big, want to invest money and get involved in the province of Saskatchewan, they want to know that there's security of title related to the property that they're going to be involved with in the province. And so to raise uncertainty in this area is also something that is surprising that the government would do that. It's not necessary and it, I think, is going to cause some difficulties.

Now there's also a suggestion in last week's document which doesn't show up in the Throne Speech at all and that relates to the Heritage Fund. And as I said last week that this proposal for a heritage fund was made saying, well we'll do it when we've

paid off the provincial debt. Well then you go and look at the books of the province, and the plan to pay off the provincial debt is at most \$80 million a year. When we started looking at the calculations, it was pretty clear that the monies that would start to go from non-renewable resources into a heritage-type fund which other parts of the world and North America have. They have a very good one they're working on just in North Dakota, just south of us. Alberta has something that's similar like that, Alaska . . . Places where there's great revenues from non-renewable resources, people make some very prudent decisions about how to provide for future generations.

But the suggestion we get from the Sask Party is, well we'll start putting some of that in when the government has paid down the debt. And so, Mr. Speaker, that's 2060 at the earliest. And we don't think that that's a prudent way to deal with this, and we will be saying that directly.

I know some of my colleagues have been talking about it. We've got this time capsule 100 years from now and it might be that we get to open the time capsule before we actually start putting money into a heritage fund. It's that far out in the planning for the province.

And so there's also a brief mention in the Throne Speech about the Saskatchewan employment Act, and it uses the words, we're going to have the most modern legislation. And that sends a chill through many people in this province, because 100 years of negotiation, accommodation, discussion, legislation, regulations has provided a relatively stable work community, work relationship in Saskatchewan. And the way that the government brought out the discussion on this last year with then no public consultation has created quite a number of difficulties.

My colleague from Saskatoon, and all of us helping him, went around the province and listened to people, and once again it was this uncertainty and this fear about what the government might do. We know obviously from the Throne Speech that something is going to come forward here, but once again we're not getting the details, and we're also getting intimations of things that we're very uneasy with.

When you look at the document that went out to the public, it challenged many basic things that people have expected as part of the work contract if one lives in Saskatchewan, and we're very concerned about that. So I think that the Throne Speech in that area ends up being something that just creates difficulty; it doesn't assist in the further development of our province.

Now you end up wondering where and why the government is being so, I guess, closed or terse or not really saying what they're going to do. And as I said before, we've had enough surprises from this government that we're apprehensive about it. We know that the public is apprehensive about this. And so it's, as I indicated before, some of the privatization initiatives are of concern. And I mentioned before, the personal information Crown, ISC. We think that and we know the public thinks that this is an idea that maybe should be going back into the rethink category.

But also we have this suggestion around the SaskBuilds or the P3 secretariat. And I think that often the people, you know,

public, and maybe even members in the legislature don't always realize what we're talking about here. Well one of the advantages of being a government and having a good credit rating in Saskatchewan now, which we all appreciate — and it's taken a lot of work to get it back into a situation where it is now — is that when you have projects that are important for all of the people of the province, that you can then secure the funds to actually build the project.

Now one of the questions always becomes then is how you finance those things. And the P3 secretariat says, well we're a little uneasy about borrowing the money to do a project which we think is important. And let's go to some, like a project like the new bridge in Prince Albert, and it's important for a new bridge in Prince Albert, and it's also important for the old bridge in Prince Albert. Now practically what happens is that for the economy of Saskatchewan, let alone the economy of Prince Albert, but for the economy of Saskatchewan we need another bridge in Prince Albert.

Mr. Speaker, for the economy of Saskatchewan, we need to make sure that the bridge that's in Prince Albert has been rejuvenated, fixed, and we also need another bridge. But this is the perfect kind of example of where the government may set up a P3 because it will have a guaranteed load of traffic which could pay a toll. And there aren't many places in Saskatchewan where you can actually control the traffic around a particular place.

So if we had a toll road to Moose Jaw, well we'd go four miles north, or two miles north and go on the grid, and get around it. And that's true pretty well anywhere in Saskatchewan. But when you get up to Prince Albert and we want to get across the river, you have a choice. You go across that bridge, or you go down and maybe find a ferry if it's the right time of year that ferries work, or you go another direction and see if you can get a road or another bridge. But that ends up being a lot of miles or a lot of kilometres added on to your trip.

So in Prince Albert, are we going to see this government come forward and say, oh we've got a great idea; we'll put a bit of money in there, you know, maybe the municipality puts something in, but what we'll really do is we'll get a company to build a bridge and then we'll put a toll both on the old bridge and the new one so you can't escape it. Or like most places often do is you only put a toll going one direction because you assume people want to come back. And all of a sudden you've got a line of cash that'll come and pay for a particular facility.

And who's going to pay that? Well businesses are going to pay it to make sure they get to the North. But, many, many people who rely on Prince Albert as a centre for commerce from all of the northern communities would also be hit with that. Well many of us in Saskatoon and Regina, maybe we'd pay the toll once a year or something when we went up that way but, Mr. Speaker, we're wary of the wording that we see in this Throne Speech and that we've heard in the more deluxe version last week, and we're wondering if there are other places where this kind of thinking will prevail. So, Mr. Speaker, I think that there are some real concerns about the concepts and the ideas that have been set out here.

Now when we have the tradition or the concept — clearly it's

over a hundred years that throne speeches have been given in the province of Saskatchewan and before that it was in the North-West Territories legislature in this particular part of North America — but there's always been a tradition that this is the place where you do set out your plans and goals for the province. And I think that kind of the events over the last 10 days raise a question about that respect for this institution. And I will talk about this more often maybe than some others, but I say that it ends up diminishing the role that we have as legislators in this province when the executive branch, the Premier, ends up going to another place because then he gets to give the speeches as he's so bluntly stated. Because one of the reasons that you have the representative of the Crown give that speech is that it can then be given in a measured, well-toned way that does set out the plans for the province that allows for us as government and opposition to then debate it here in this House. And, Mr. Speaker, anything that diminishes the importance of that role, diminishes the importance of this House is wrong, and we will fight against it because that is just not how things happen.

We also know from the last few years that we've had fewer speeches to the throne from the ministers of the Crown. And we've lost what has been a tradition that is easily revived. And maybe I challenge the Premier and the people in the legislature to bring back at least a portion of speeches from ministers in each department where they lay out some of the goals and objectives of their department or ministry so that, on the record, we can get some sense of what it is that's going to happen in Agriculture or what's going to happen in Health or what's going to happen in Highways or Education, post-secondary. All those kinds of speeches that are . . . You know, sometimes they're summaries of what's going to happen but at least we end up having that on the record that we can go back and refer to.

And, Mr. Speaker, we haven't had that type of information for a few years. And I remind the Premier that this may be something that he should be doing because it's part of how this institution works. And I think it's important that people across the province have both this chance to see it on their television screens, go and look at the web information, but also go and see the transcripts of what's been said.

[12:00]

And it may be that the Premier delivers his speech outside of this place, and not having the Lieutenant Governor doing so, he can control the message. It may be that he doesn't have very many ministers give comments about what's going to happen in their ministries because he wants to control the message. But, Mr. Speaker, the public wants to know what you're going to do, not how you've controlled the message. And we will continue to ask questions about that particular issue.

Now over the last few days, we've seen the results of democracy at both our municipal level and also at the First Nations elections. And we're very pleased to welcome all of the new municipal council members and mayors, school board candidates, and we look forward to working with all of these people. And we know that regardless of which position people are elected to or that they've run for, they all come with the same goal which is to serve the people of Saskatchewan, and

we want to say thank you to all of the successful and the unsuccessful candidates. And as was mentioned earlier, special congratulations to the FSIN leaders, Chief Perry Bellegarde and Vice-chief Kimberly Jonathan, as well as some of the others. But those two are the ones that have higher profile in the news this week because once again the leadership within the First Nations . . .

And then also congratulations to the people who've been elected in the Métis leadership as well because they have to be partners in what happens in this province. And we know that the connections and the ability to work together is what's going to allow us to move forward. And so, Mr. Speaker, when the Throne Speech kind of leaves a lot of things out or we have a record of a government that surprises everybody, we all get concerned about what is the future for our province.

In a couple of minutes I'll be introducing an amendment to this motion in support of the Throne Speech because, as I said last week, the Throne Speech had to do much better than the booklet of rehashed ideas that we got last week because there's no actions; there's no plans as to how we're going to do these things. And as I've said a number of times, this Throne Speech didn't do better, but the people of Saskatchewan deserve better.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the motion be amended by adding the following:

And that this government no longer enjoys the confidence of the Assembly because it has allowed its ideology to trump common sense when governing. It has introduced an agenda of privatization which puts politicians ahead of people, and it ignores the middle class and small businesses of Saskatchewan.

So moved. And this is seconded by the member from Athabasca.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Leader of the Opposition has moved the following motion:

That the motion be amended by adding the following:

And that this government no longer enjoys the confidence of the Assembly because it has allowed its ideology to trump common sense when governing, has introduced an agenda of privatization which puts politicians ahead of people, and ignores the middle class and small businesses of Saskatchewan.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased and honoured to stand up to respond to the Throne Speech in the year of Our Lord 2012. I've heard that phrase before.

And I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, it's a great honour for me to again represent the people of Athabasca. As we all know, it's certainly a lot of work. It's a lot of challenge. And for the two northern MLAs and those that live in the far southwest and

southeast corners of our province, we know travel and the demands on your time and family members, the loss of valuable time with your family and friends, those are some of the sacrifices made. You become an MLA and travel to Regina to take part in this great hall of debate, and great hall of democracy, so to speak. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, I say it's an honour, and I want to thank the people of Athabasca for their kind support and their kind help.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at the Throne Speech and I look at the reality of how the Sask Party is governing and the reality that we're going to be facing fairly short . . . in short time here as a province, because there are some troubling clouds looming on the horizon. We've always maintained that, and that you got to be very careful and prepared for the rainy day and prepared for the time when Saskatchewan has to really, really get ready for some of the troubling clouds that we see on the horizon. And those are some of the messages that, you know, that I want to share today with my response.

So I liken the whole notion of the Throne Speech to the reality of governing and what the Sask Party are actually practising out there is like a bad marriage, Mr. Speaker. And the reason why it's a bad marriage is because the reality of what the challenges are in the province, and the glossy presentation of the Throne Speech, don't match up at all, Mr. Speaker.

And I watched with great interest yesterday as the government was having their Throne Speech read out, that half the Sask Party caucus was asleep. You know, they're sitting there, they're fidgeting, and they're off to dreamland. And maybe half of them are wondering where the P.A. [Prince Albert] bridge allocation was and half of them were wondering where the DISC [Disability Income Support Coalition] program was at, half of them wondering, I wonder how long the good times are going to roll. And, Mr. Speaker, the only exciting thing that happened yesterday in the Sask Party caucus during the whole Throne Speech debate was somebody's cellphone went off. And that's when the attention focused on them. Somebody's cellphone was beeping and everybody said, whose cellphone is beeping? That was not the point, whose cellphone it was. The point is they were half asleep because the presentation given under the Throne Speech was boring, Mr. Speaker. Especially when you have to mention some project six times in a row and six years later, you're still mentioning it in the Throne Speech. Like how boring is that?

And today my leader made reference to a tired, old government. They've been there six years, Mr. Speaker. They are a tired, old government already, Mr. Speaker, because the good times are going to come to an end. And I don't know where to begin, Mr. Speaker, to begin criticizing the actions of that government versus the glossy presentation they made in their Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker.

I say to the people of Saskatchewan that it's all hogwash, especially when you have to mention one project six times over the past several years, Mr. Speaker, and that's the twinning of Highway 11. I think it is mentioned six, six times, Mr. Speaker. Like enough already. I think people are getting the message that this road is being fixed. And I think maybe it's time that they get a new agenda going, that they get a new vision, and they get a new plan, Mr. Speaker.

I don't know where to begin as to what this government is doing wrong, Mr. Speaker. I go back to the reference of a bad marriage. You have an uninterested party in a sense that sometimes in marriages that happens. And the people of Saskatchewan are looking at this government and saying, when did we give them the agenda to privatize our Crowns? When was that given to them, Mr. Speaker? It was never given to them. When did the people of Saskatchewan give them the agenda to go to war with our working people, our working men and women, Mr. Speaker? They never got the agenda to do that, Mr. Speaker.

And then they went to war with our teachers, you know, where the teachers are very, very unhappy with some of the activity that they got. And I want to make reference when I went to the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] gathering, and what they said was when we went to visit these teachers . . . And they had a nice, glossy black box that were sitting at each of the teachers' tables — maybe you were there, Mr. Speaker — and in this . . . The box is really fancy. It even it had a little ribbon on it. And the teachers thought, well maybe this was some chocolates, you know, as an apology for the manner in which the teachers were treated, Mr. Speaker. And so they unwrapped the ribbon, this nice black, fancy box, and they're wondering what was in there. The box was a fairly elaborate, elegant box. So when they opened it up, what did they find in there? They found a carpet — a piece of red carpet that they took out of this Assembly as a gift to the teachers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, everybody's going around saying, what're you doing sending a piece of red carpet to the teachers? What is that about? That's how disorganized and disjointed these guys are. So one of the teachers said to me, we don't want a piece of the red carpet from the Assembly. We want a piece of wall, they said. We look around, Mr. Speaker, and we keep asking them, why do you insult the teachers by sending them a piece of red carpet from this building? Like what's the message there, Mr. Speaker? These guys got it all wrong. They're a tired old government. You look at their front benches, Mr. Speaker. They've only been there six years and they're tired, they're old, and the pressure of governing finally affected the way they think, Mr. Speaker.

Now let's go down the list again. The Aboriginal community, Mr. Speaker, they've gone to war with them. They've gutted the Aboriginal employment development program. We hear the numbers have gone up in terms of the unemployment, Mr. Speaker, for both First Nations and the Métis people. So you see they've gone to war with them, Mr. Speaker. And Lord knows under the immigrant file, they've also squandered the opportunity for Saskatchewan to grow because they're going to war with the immigrant community, Mr. Speaker.

And now the other part they're going to go after now is the environmentalists, the people that really are concerned about our environment. Well they're going to shut them down too, Mr. Speaker. They're going to shut them down too, all in the name of saying that we're in charge and we're not going to listen to anybody else that's going to have anything to say about the future of Saskatchewan, including those pesky environmentalists that keep getting in the way of the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker. Those people have a right to speak, and their right to speak and to exercise their democratic right to

come here and tell people what this government is doing wrong is being, every day is being severely cut back. And there's ways and means that this government is doing it but they're very, very quiet on how they do it. And, Mr. Speaker, people know that.

And most recently some of the activity around the disabled file, Mr. Speaker, it is very, very, very discouraging when you see that some of the programs that they're highlighting in the Throne Speech does absolutely nothing for a lot of disabled people. And we're going to talk a bit about that at a later time, Mr. Speaker.

But what I want to do is make sure we talk about northern Saskatchewan because that's where I'm elected from. And we want to make sure that we respect all issues in the province but primarily because we're from northern Saskatchewan, I want to talk about the Throne Speech and exactly what the North and how the North was impacted.

Four thousand, five hundred words in that document, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Throne Speech — 4,500 words, Mr. Speaker. And you know what happened? Not one of those words made a reference to the North. Not one, Mr. Speaker. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because they, the Saskatchewan Party, had made it within their language, within their activity, within their thinking, that the North is not getting anything. So I list off the disability community. I list off the environmental community. I list off our teachers. I list off the Aboriginal people. I list off rural Saskatchewan. I list off those that want to protect the Crowns for our ownership. And now I list off the North as people that the Saskatchewan Party has totally ignored and has gone to war with some of these groups. And, Mr. Speaker, that's a crying shame.

So you go back to the glossy presentation of the so-called Throne Speech versus the activities and the actions in the budget of the Sask Party. You can see that this is indeed a very bad marriage, Mr. Speaker, because all they're doing is promising things and they're very, very short on delivery, Mr. Speaker, very short.

Now today we talk about the northern agenda, and we're talking about highways today. My colleague from Cumberland brought a group in from Wollaston Lake, and they're talking about their highway. And they're very concerned because they talk about the incredible challenge to Wollaston Lake in terms of having access for food, for medical supplies, for gasoline, and so on and so forth. And what happened, Mr. Speaker, is Wollaston Lake people said, well maybe these guys will be good and they'll finish off this road because they told us in 2008 under the former minister of Highways, by the fall of 2012 you'll have your road. You'll have your road. And what happens, Mr. Speaker? Wollaston Lake people have showed up here and are saying, where's our road? Where's our road? It's not done yet.

[12:15]

And, Mr. Speaker, they've got a meeting with the Minister of Highways, and I pray the Minister of Highways gets up at the meeting and says, yes, we've done wrong. We promised. We should follow through. That's what I hope he says, Mr. Speaker. He should say, I hope, we promised that. We should

follow through to the people of Wollaston.

And, Mr. Speaker, why should he do that? Not because the NDP committed to that in 2007, Mr. Speaker. Because his own colleague from Cypress Hills, who was the former minister of Highways, he made that commitment to them. And all of a sudden, as soon as he made the commitment, the money's gone. So today I want to ask the minister, when he has the meeting with the people of Wollaston Lake, you make a commitment, follow through and show them the money. Show them the money, Mr. Minister, because that's where action will speak louder than words. And so far all we've seen from this government on northern issues, Aboriginal issues, and highways is just a bunch of fancy words and rehashed announcement as the Throne Speech has indicated from time to time during the presentation of the entire speech, Mr. Speaker. So I want to share with the minister and I want to send a copy to the member from Cypress Hills, their very own commitment to Wollaston Lake, Mr. Speaker, their very own commitment. And I'll ask that to be xeroxed and presented to those two folks.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why nothing from the North? The minister alluded today to a highway being built for the mining sector. Now let us be very, very clear, Mr. Speaker. We in the NDP support any development when it comes to highways for mining companies. There's no question in our mind that's important to the northern economy. We have a great relationship with Cameco and Areva and the many other mining companies, and the First Nations and Métis people and non-Aboriginal people of the North embrace their partnership with the mining sector. The problem is you can't just build the road for the mining sector. You've got to start building roads for the people that live in that area because it has a direct relationship as to how they view industry, Mr. Speaker.

They want to have access to safe highways. They want to have access to year-round supplies for gasoline, for food, for medicine, and the list goes on. And yet this Sask Party government has denied them that opportunity. And it doesn't stop, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't stop at Wollaston Lake. In fact it's being felt in Cumberland House. It's being felt in Pelican Narrows. It's being felt in Dillon. It's being felt in Patuanak. It's being felt in Turnor Lake. It's being felt in Black Lake. It's being felt all throughout the North.

So what happens with this government is they turn around, they announce this million dollar road — which we support, which we support — but they don't put anything else in the North to help people with safety and the critical issue of making sure that they have decent highways in northern Saskatchewan. But to build a highway for resources, they're right on it. To build a highway for people, they show no interest despite making that commitment themselves, Mr. Speaker, despite making that commitment from themselves.

Now what's really important, Mr. Speaker, is the people of Wollaston Lake and the First Nation and Métis people of the North are coming here to the province and they're telling the provincial government and they're telling the people of Saskatchewan, look, we know we're doing great by contributing to the economy, to the mining sector. We know we're doing great by contributing to the wealth of Saskatchewan through some of our hydro power stations in

northern Saskatchewan. We know that there's tourism opportunity. We know that there's oil and gas. We know that there's forestry. The North is rich. It's an abundant source of resources for the people of Saskatchewan, and the people of the North want to share it.

But what they're saying to the people of the province is, why don't you let us have our fair share? Why can't we have decent houses? Why can't we have safe highways? Why can't we have commitment from this government, Mr. Speaker? Because this government is going to war with northern people, with the Aboriginal people, with the working people, with the teachers, and the list goes on and on and on. And that war, Mr. Speaker, is not going to stop until we get rid of the Saskatchewan Party.

And, Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech does nothing but simply misdirect or redirect people's attention to the fact that they are building an economy for some of their corporate friends and that's about it, Mr. Speaker. That is about it. So once again the people of the North come here. They travel hundreds of kilometres. They're asking for the road to be finished to Wollaston Lake. They're asking for the road in my area to be worked on. And they're saying, in your haste to haul out the resources out of the North, can you at least lay down some pavement for us? Can that at least be a legacy for the Saskatchewan Party? Because why? Because you promised us in 2008. You promised you would do this and you didn't deliver. Mr. Speaker, they did not deliver.

Now what I look at, Mr. Speaker, is quite frankly the northern people and the northern part of our province does a great amount, a great amount in terms of contribution to the tax base, to the economy, to the wealth created for the province as a whole. And all the northern people are saying is, just give us our fair share because we're tired of travelling on dangerous roads. We're tired of travelling on gravel roads that often are washed out in the summertime. We're tired of travelling roads that are iced up during the wintertime. And we're tired of travelling on a ferry that's fairly old in the Wollaston Lake's case, that come out during the 1970s. And they're tired of having that barge break down steady. And what did they want? They wanted a road so they wouldn't have to have that barge service there.

And, Mr. Speaker, to operate that service, how many thousands, hundreds of thousands of dollars did that cost? So in the long run, the people of Wollaston have a very good argument. It's going to save the government tons of money over a period of time. So why don't you invest in our community highway, the community access highway, Mr. Speaker?

And one of the things that's really disappointing me, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that when we lost government in 2007, a good example is the people of Cumberland House came to the Assembly and they called the minister's office and they asked them, can we see where the project for our Cumberland House road — which I think is 123 — and where's the money? Why aren't you guys fixing up that road? And I think one of the staff members said, the money was never there. That was the response from one of the staff members at the minister's office, Mr. Speaker.

That was meant to mislead the people of Cumberland House

because, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is the money was allocated. Because no minister, as the minister alluded to during estimates, no minister can make any kind of commitment unless it's gone through its due process, Mr. Speaker, and that due process is called a budget. And, Mr. Speaker, we can't make any kind of announcement unless the budget has been approved, not from within the department but from the Treasury Board and from the cabinet. So it's a fairly rigorous process which the Minister of Highways explained in committee, how it worked. Because I knew how it worked but I wanted to see if he knew how it worked. He was fair in the sense of saying this is how it should work, and this is how it does work.

So what happened, Mr. Speaker, is they can't, they cannot, make a commitment or announcement unless it's gone through that fairly rigorous process. So when we announced the highway to Cumberland House, the improvements then, Mr. Speaker, we obviously had to follow the same rules that they follow and the same process. Why did somebody in that staff turn around and say, the money was never there. Why would they tell the people of Cumberland House that, Mr. Speaker, the leadership? And I'll tell you, I have my theories as to why, Mr. Speaker. But that's exactly the point of why people don't support this government and certainly why we don't support the Throne Speech and why we're going to watch very, very carefully what they do, what they do when you talk about these objectives and these plans for the future when it comes to their budget, Mr. Speaker.

And I tell the people of Saskatchewan it's like a bad marriage. It's like a bad marriage because you have one partner that's willing to do a lot of the work but quite frankly the other partner's sitting down, not working at anything to resolve these issues. And, Mr. Speaker, that bad marriage is going to come up and as we all know, as we all know sooner or later that issue's going to come to a front.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are going to reject the Saskatchewan Party. They're going to divorce their ideology. They're going to divorce them from government because they've broken too many promises and tried to manoeuvre their way out with glossy little presentations called the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker.

So I'll look at some of the issues that we talked about. And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, I can go on and on about the union and the proud men and women that work in our service. They do a great amount of work in health care. They do a great amount of work in infrastructure and they do all these wonderful things. And yet you wonder why is the government, the provincial government, still going to war with their lean program, Mr. Speaker, and also with the manner in which they treat our working men and women?

And these working men and women are not going to go away. They're going to continue fighting like the North. They're going to continue fighting this government right till the bitter last day, Mr. Speaker. And they will continue that fight for many, many years.

And I turn around and say, well if they have this lean project, why didn't they express it? Why didn't they do the lean project

for the current Sask Party caucus? Pare out those three extra MLAs you want. We don't need three more MLAs. We need three more snowplow operators. We need three more people working in the health field, Mr. Speaker. We need more doctors. We need more nurses. We need more teachers. We need all these wonderful people out there working instead of having three more additional MLAs.

Did they campaign on that? Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. But they didn't make reference of that in the Throne Speech. You know why? Because the people of Saskatchewan don't want that. They rejected that idea and they still reject that idea because it doesn't do anything good for the people of Saskatchewan or anybody else except the Saskatchewan Party in the hopes that they can gerrymander the next election, Mr. Speaker.

Now I look at the other issue — taking rural Saskatchewan for granted, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan, rural Saskatchewan, reached out to these guys and they supported them. But right away, Mr. Speaker, you see cuts to the AgriStability Act or the AgriStability program. We want to see what those cuts and the impacts are going to be felt throughout rural Saskatchewan.

One of the most recent examples, they tried to do away with SaskTel's wireless cell service, Mr. Speaker. We got on that as an opposition, and what did they say? Well, Industry Canada took away our frequencies so SaskTel can't operate that service, so 8,000 rural Saskatchewan people. Well, Mr. Speaker, they got a bunch of folks really upset and they said, well because SaskTel has an older system. So we turn around and say, well why would you want to hurt rural Saskatchewan? That's good for the small business community, good for the farm families, good for all these people that live in rural Saskatchewan. Why would you want to take away that service? Well because we have another private sector player coming on, Xplornet I think is the name of the company.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they have a data cap which means that they only have so much information they can download. Secondly, what they call their footprint is not as great as SaskTel's service, which is a lot smaller. And the worst part is their fees are higher. So the service is less. The options for service is less, but the costs are greater. And what happened? Instead of defending and supporting rural Saskatchewan, these guys let ideology trump common sense in saying we're going to bring Xplornet in.

And, Mr. Speaker, after a few days of opposition criticising that move and the 8,000 people that are impacted by that decision, all of a sudden they said, oh, Industry Canada changed their mind. We got our frequencies back to 2014. And I said, well number one, we got to make sure we never lose those frequencies. And number two, if you would stop taking the money from SaskTel's bottom line, they could re-invest money into their system to make sure that this service is never interrupted, Mr. Speaker.

But what they've done was they stripped SaskTel of any profits they have, and they took in their spending — we don't know where yet — but they took the dividends and they stripped SaskPower, SaskTel, all these Crowns of any dividends. And,

Mr. Speaker, when you do that, when you do that, that's contrary to good business practice. That hurts the Crowns, Mr. Speaker. It hurts the Crowns. And that's why we on this side allude to the fact that the Sask Party has a privatization-by-stealth agenda when it comes to the Crowns, and none of that was mentioned in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. And what all they've done, they re-announced and rehashed some projects they started; up to six times they re-announced that, and once again to the Throne Speech, they announced that again, Mr. Speaker.

So I look at all these issues that . . . There's so much more that I'd like to say. They give us a time limit of how we respond to the Throne Speech. And I listen to some of the backbench, the backbench as they get up and say some of these things that they're supposed to say. I'll tell you that you'll never get into cabinet if you deviate from those reading notes that you're given. So you get up and you read out the notes that you're handed and don't deviate. Just stay on message, okay, because that's the agenda. Some of you guys have been here for a while. You just follow your script. Don't deviate from the script because if you do that, your chances of being in cabinet or getting that extra 1 kilometre of road paved in their constituency will be squashed.

So don't deviate from your script, backbench, because that's exactly what you're there for. You're not there to talk about a brave future. You're not there to talk about fairness. You're not there to talk about equality. You're not there to represent your constituents on a wide variety of views. You're there to just simply do your script, do as you're told, and say what you're told to say when you're told to say that, Mr. Speaker.

And that's what my point is today. The Throne Speech, they know, they know it's not strong. They know that the Saskatchewan people can read all through this whole presentation, Mr. Speaker. And if they ever get up in this notion, any of the backbench saying look at all these wonderful things we're doing, who they should thank today, Mr. Speaker, who they should thank today was the Alberta government. And I'll tell you why. Because when the Alberta government said to their private industry folks, we're going to look, we're going to review the royalties of our oil and gas, well guess what? The big boys, the oil and gas boys said, well we'll see you later, Alberta. We're heading to Saskatchewan.

That work began in 2001, and who was the leader at the time, Mr. Speaker? It was Lorne Calvert. He reduced the royalties. He brought in companies, and they're ready to make all kinds of deals with the Saskatchewan people. And as a result of some of that work when the Alberta government announced their royalties change, people knew that Saskatchewan was going to start to boom. And this began, Mr. Speaker, as early as 1998.

[12:30]

Now we sit here, we sit here and we listen to those guys, and I can almost guarantee you when Alberta announced the royalty issue with the oil and gas companies that maybe some of their front bench or some of their Conservative connections probably phoned Alberta and said, don't do that, because it'll all come to Saskatchewan and they'll invest in Saskatchewan and they'll make the NDP look good. So I almost guarantee they probably

didn't want that to happen, Mr. Speaker. They may have talked to their oil and gas buddies — don't come here and invest until we're in government and it'll make it look like we're going all these wonderful things. The big oil and gas boys said, the heck with that. We're here to make some money. We're going to Saskatchewan and, Premier Lorne Calvert, you're a pretty darn good Premier. We think that the royalties that you set up is really good. We know that the NDP are always worried about a capital strike. That's not going to help anybody in the future, so we're going to continue investing in Saskatchewan. And this Conservative government in Alberta talking about royalty issues, we don't want to deal with them any more.

Now, Mr. Speaker, all of a sudden the wheels started to turn, you know, and I mentioned earlier in some of my speeches people like Eric Cline, Eldon Lautermilch out of P.A., people like Maynard Sonntag, these were the people that actually led some of this charge. They were really instrumental in making sure that the entire cabinet was aware of what was going on. So to make a long story short, oil and gas companies migrated to Saskatchewan because they were pissed off at the Alberta government. They wanted to come here and deal. Well they're very upset with the Alberta government, Mr. Speaker. They wanted to come here and deal with an NDP government that had the right royalties, the right environment, the right attitude, and the right leadership, Mr. Speaker.

Now you fast forward four or five years later and there's the Sask Party saying, look at all these wonderful things we're doing, when in fact they inherited all that stuff. Like, get with the program. You inherited all that stuff. You inherited the booming economy. You inherited money in the bank. You inherited a growing population. And they've been saying, look what we're doing. Look what we're doing. And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan know.

So my point being that if you inherit a great economy, a growing population, a proud province, and great job numbers, we simply ask on the NDP side two things: (1) don't mess it up. Don't mess it up, and (2) govern for all people with the wealth that you inherited. Govern for all people. Don't exclude people. And try and follow some of the ideals and examples that the NDP set up for you so you can be a good government, Mr. Speaker.

And what did they do, Mr. Speaker? They started privatizing different Crown corporations, and they blame us for that. We're privatizing, that is what they're saying, but it's all your guys' fault because you didn't put it under some Act five years ago.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what's important is that the people of Saskatchewan sit here and they watch this, and they actually kind of smile because they know it's actually full of a lot of stuff that you find on the ground as you walk through the farm field, that when they claim credit for something they didn't do, the people of Saskatchewan kind of shake their head. They kind of shake their head and say, well as long as it's good for us, you know, we'll tolerate that. But what, Mr. Speaker, what they have done is they're starting to mess up the good bounds that Saskatchewan was in when the NDP were in charge, Mr. Speaker. And the worst part is they're starting to exclude certain people.

And what they're doing is they're using glossy little booklets called the Throne Speech to try and glaze everybody's eyes over in the hopes that they can convince people that they're still doing a great job, Mr. Speaker, because they're not. They simply are not. Any time you go to war with people, and any time you ignore northern Saskatchewan, or any time you ignore highways, any time you sell off a Crown, every time you exclude a certain group and you try and gloss it over with all these fancy little words, Mr. Speaker, you insult the intelligence of the people of Saskatchewan, and they will not forget that, Mr. Speaker.

Now in some of the final points I want to make, Mr. Speaker, and I know there's a lot more that I do want to say, but I'm going to be fairly brief in some of the comments that I want to make is that . . . Let's look at the disability program, Mr. Speaker, the disability program — and I think it's called DISC — and they made a reference to that in the Throne Speech.

Now as a result of the DISC program, or the SAID program, you look at what they're talking about is trying to get the disabled community engaged and certainly support them better through the program called the SAID program where you take them off welfare and you put them through this program. Well, Mr. Speaker, they brag about how much extra money that these people from the disability community are getting, and the fact of the matter is, on one hand, you increase their income by 40 or \$50 a month, but then you turn around and you jack up their rents. You jack up the costs of medicine. You jack up the cost of living. You jack up all these things, and then you see that the net effect is that people in the disabled community turn around and saying, well we had more money but where'd it go? Where'd it go?

It got clawed back by the government, Mr. Speaker. And that's exactly my point, that there's no thought put to the program. And right now they're in transition and you look at some of the issues that they're struggling with, the transition phase itself, from the welfare program to the youth SAID program. There's a lot of difficulties in that. That wasn't addressed in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. They didn't talk about that, once again glossing over the issues.

And, Mr. Speaker, from northern Saskatchewan's perspective, we have a leader in the disabled community that is a fairly strong leader. He has been advocating for northern disability issues for years and years and years, Mr. Speaker. And that gentleman's a guy by the name of Gary Tinker.

Now Gary Tinker many years ago — I think it's 22, 23 years ago — he began a walk from La Ronge to Regina here on crutches and he wanted to bring awareness of northern disabled issues, Mr. Speaker. Now one thing that Gary is really upset at right now, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that — and that's why I want to make sure I mention it in response to the Throne Speech — is exactly, and I'll quote from Gary's conversation with me, and this is the quote from Gary Tinker because he's quite mad right now at the manner in which the northern people, the disabled people are being used in northern Saskatchewan. And I quote from the conversation:

The first time when the government announced this big, massive disabled program, well, okay. Everybody was

excited. They wanted to come up with disability solutions and disability program. That was my understanding. I said, then make sure you guys don't forget the North. There are between 6 to 700 people across the North with disabilities. And when they said disability support income program, and they clapped for themselves, but nothing is happening. Years have gone by and nothing has happened.

Mr. Speaker, that's Gary Tinker. And he was . . . He tempered his conversation and he tempered his comments, Mr. Speaker. And then there's another example, another one of his quotes. Quote:

I don't know what is happening with the government people, with the new people [and I'm assuming he's talking about the Sask Party] and I don't understand why they didn't consult with us when these changes came through. We only have \$60,000 for the people and that money will be gone by the time we get any allocation because the program demands are so high.

Mr. Speaker, so 600, 700 disabled people in the North, I think if my math is right it's roughly \$80 per disabled person in the North. And that's meant to offer admin and support.

So I got a host of comments from Gary and conversations from Gary, who is really upset, not from the fact that he didn't try to reach out to this government to talk about the SAID program or the disability program. It's because he did reach out, he did advise them. He was fair to them: he gave them the opportunity, the benefit of doubt.

And, Mr. Speaker, six years later he's really upset that this government simply did not consult, did not listen to them, and turned their backs on 700 disabled people in the North under this program, and turned around and said, well here's \$60,000 to help you out, Mr. Speaker. That was a huge cut to the Gary Tinker Federation, Mr. Speaker. We have more to say about Gary Tinker's federation as time will permit, but those are some of the examples, Mr. Speaker, those are some of the examples that I'd like to allude to.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what I want to point out, that as an opposition we find that there is a renewed strength, there is a renewed sense of optimism within our caucus. We're going to have a fantastic leadership race, Mr. Speaker. The best is yet to come. We're going to stand here every day and fight against the Saskatchewan Party government. We're going to continue to gloss over their pamphlets and their booklets as they try and convince the people of Saskatchewan doing all this great job.

But we know that there is trouble looming on the horizon, Mr. Speaker. We're seeing some of their corporate friends, that there may be a reduction in investment. We hear some of the mines might not be opening up. There's some concern there, Mr. Speaker. The price of oil and gas is going down. The rainy day fund that they spoke about, well that's also going down. So the question people of Saskatchewan have got to ask themselves, if the government has all this money that they allude to or give the impression they have, why in the heck are they re-announcing projects up to six times? And they've done it most recently with their Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. It just doesn't make sense. It leads us to believe that there is

something funny going on.

We want to get to the bottom of that, Mr. Speaker. We want to find out why they're doing this. What's the bottom line for Saskatchewan's budget? Are there some problems? And, Mr. Speaker, is there going to be any kind of information coming from these guys to tell the people of Saskatchewan exactly where we stand with the resource sector, with our budget, with our programs, and why they keep re-announcing old, rehashed announcements in a Throne Speech presentation which is really important for the people of Saskatchewan in terms of getting some advice and direction as to what the government is planning for the next year?

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to close off with a couple of points. First of all, I think that the people of Saskatchewan in general want to make sure that while the economy is going good, they want to keep it as strong as they can. They understand that when people are watching — the middle class, the rural people — they're watching television, they're watching what's going on, the primary concern is to make sure that they have stability. And we in the NDP caucus certainly appreciate that point and we certainly want to see the economy continue building and we want to see the economy continued to strengthen, Mr. Speaker. That's what we want to see happening. We want to see recognition in the fact that there are some environmental concerns that are coming forward. There's always that balance, Mr. Speaker. You don't have to compromise one over the other. You really have to begin to look at that balance to make sure things are indeed happening along that front.

You don't have to go to war with our working men and women. You don't have to do that. That'll hurt us in the long run. There's no reason to do that. You don't have to ignore the North with its rich resource base and simply think that you can always take out the resources at no cost to you. Because the people of Wollaston and many other regions come here today to say, no, we're going to stop doing that now. We need to have some investment in our communities.

And, Mr. Speaker, you've got to stop fighting against people that want a true disabled program. They want to see a visionary program. They don't see any evidence of that whatsoever, Mr. Speaker. And I think really, quite frankly, that Gary Tinker comment really hit the nail on the head when he gets so angry, the fact that he felt like he was used. And, Mr. Speaker, at that end of the day he got a lot less money for a burgeoning demand for supporting disabled people to the North, and that really is a slap in the face.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out in my closing comments that I take great pride, I take great pride in standing up today to talk about the deficiencies of this government, Mr. Speaker. They have not been forthright with some of their issues in terms around the management of our finances.

They know there are some looming crises in their resource sector. We know that people in Saskatchewan don't want to see all the resources given away for nothing, that there's got to be something for the future. There's got to be something for infrastructure. When you hear in Prince Albert . . . And the Prince Albert MLAs are way in the back, and they've been silent. When you hear in Prince Albert that you need a new

bridge because it's choking off economic activity to the area and to the North, and when you hear in Prince Albert that when you shut off the water, water lines are collapsing because that's the only thing that kept the water lines up was the water pressure, when you hear all these issues, Mr. Speaker, and you hear nothing but silence from the current MLAs — and this is happening right across rural Saskatchewan, not just Prince Albert — then you begin to wonder, where did these guys go? Where did these guys go?

The bottom line is they went nowhere. They continue sitting here and singing from the same song sheet. You will not deviate from the notes you're given because that's what you do as a backbencher. But, Mr. Speaker, I think they should stand up, speak up for their people, and begin to present a fair view of what Saskatchewan needs to do to build into the future.

So once again, Mr. Speaker, like I said, we have great opportunity in this fall sitting to present more issues. There's a song in my heart for about 30 issues and I want to get them all out of my chest here before the Christmas season's upon us. So once again, I want to second the motion of the amendment that my leader has made. And of course the amendment is:

And that this government no longer enjoys the confidence of the Assembly because it has allowed its ideology to trump common sense when governing. It has introduced an agenda of privatization which puts politicians ahead of people and ignores the middle class and small businesses of Saskatchewan.

I second the motion, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to stand in this Assembly and speak to the Throne Speech that was delivered yesterday, the government's plan for growth in the province of Saskatchewan.

But first of all I'd like to acknowledge the work of a number of people that have supported me through the years. And number one, I'd like to say thank you to Tina Durbin. For 20-plus years she served as my CA assistant and retired earlier this summer. And I currently have a young gentleman who is actually doing an excellent job as well, Jeff Cole who's serving me as my constituency assistant. So hats off to Tina for the work, the time, and the effort she gave. And as some of my colleagues have mentioned, they actually help make us as MLAs even look better just through their conscientious work in our offices. Also thank you to Audrey McEwen for her continuing service to the constituency.

I think I'd be remiss if I didn't say thank you to my wife and family as well. We, as MLAs, through the years we all know what it is to devote and carry the load of our responsibilities to represent our provincial parties and to represent government and to listen to the concerns of people. And many times our spouses and our family members tend to get overlooked. But I think as members it's important for us to acknowledge their work, their commitment, and their support, as the member from The Battlefords mentioned today, even in the difficult times to know that there are people around you that are there to offer a

word of encouragement and support you.

[12:45]

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to take a moment to say thank you to all the men and women who just a couple of days ago put their names forward to enter into municipal elections. I'm not exactly sure what happened across the province, but in my constituency there were a number of communities that actually had elections to fill positions on council, and it's been a while since we've had that. In fact in some municipal councils over the past number of years, they've had to give out a second notice trying to fill positions. But this year we have many communities where there were 10 and 12 people running for six positions on council, and we have had mayoralty races as well. So I think that speaks well. I think that speaks to the growth in the province of Saskatchewan and the fact that people are excited to get involved in the area of local government.

We talk about growth and we talk about opportunities as MLAs. Let me just divert a couple of minutes from growth, and speak to the many opportunities we have as MLAs to get to meet our constituents.

It's not all that often that you get to join with a family as they celebrate 125 years on the family farm. And it was my pleasure this week, my pleasure to gather together with a family as they celebrated 125 years. And as I was reminiscing with the family members, both younger and some of the more elderly folks, we all came to the same conclusion. We wondered what the original family members would say today if they were able to stand on that family farm. My sense is they would look out with pride as they looked at the generations that had come, and they would also be very proud of the progress that had taken place. And what was a quarter section, turned into a three-quarter section family farm, is now a growing farm where the couple are now farming 5,000 acres of land. And in some cases that's small in today's figures, but versus what it was years ago, it's exceptionally large.

Also, Mr. Speaker, we talked about growth, and one of the challenges that communities have faced over the past half-dozen years is, as the growth has taken place, they've all of a sudden realized that they don't have the ability to actually work with and prepare for the growth in their communities. And when I speak about that, I speak about communities that were struggling with their water treatment plants. They were barely keeping up to where they were. And as more families moved in, they had a difficulty in developing new residential areas. They also had problems with their sewage lagoon systems. And, Mr. Speaker, as a result of works of this government and working with the federal government, the infrastructure program of the day helped them begin to meet some of those goals.

And I have been pleased to join with the communities of Grenfell and Whitewood as they opened new water treatment facilities, and the community of Moosomin, just recently, as they opened their new Communiplex. And I can tell you this: the people in those communities and the leadership in those communities were really grateful that senior levels of government stepped up to the plate to help them address those goals.

And I'm pleased, Mr. Speaker, that in this current Throne Speech we continue to speak up and recognize, as the Premier indicated earlier, we recognize that it isn't just, we've dealt with the infrastructure needs; now we don't have to worry about it. Municipal governments are telling us that's going to be an ongoing issue. And I'm pleased to see that we are able to look forward and say to municipal governments and to the people of this province, we will continue to work with you to address your infrastructure needs.

Mr. Speaker, growth is not just bricks and mortar; it's people. And in my constituency we have seen a lot of young families move into communities in the constituency. In fact in the most recent statistics, I believe every community has grown and some have grown significantly, but it's also created some stresses.

One of those stresses is young couples trying to address how they deal with daycare issues and care for their siblings, their children who need to be cared for while they're endeavouring to meet their responsibilities of the jobs that they're involved in. And our government has again stepped up to the plate. In fact under the former minister of Social Services, a number of programs were announced where the government was able to assist communities and groups and individuals provide daycare services. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we all realize that the demand far outweighed the ability, but the number of daycare spots has grown significantly over the past four years. And I would imagine we will continue to see growth in that area.

But I would also like to say too, in some cases where we weren't able to assist with the development of those daycare spaces, the need was there and individuals stepped up to the plate. Not only did individuals, but communities and local businesses. And tomorrow I'm looking forward to gathering together, to meeting with folks in Rocanville as they open their new daycare facility.

Other areas where we've seen growth, Mr. Speaker, is in schools across the province and the number of young people that are going to school. And as a result of that, we have seen the constituency of Moosomin, we've seen a number of schools that have been expanded or where schools have been upgraded and new capital projects have been announced. And one of those is Prairie Valley and just recently we opened up the new K to 6 [kindergarten to grade 6] school in Kipling, and they continue to work to develop the rest of the capital funding that is going to expand that school. And, Mr. Speaker, most of that money is actually coming from the local level.

There again, I say provincial coffers haven't been always able to meet every need, but local initiative has taken over and school divisions have moved forward as they've seen the need. And I want to extend a thank you to the previous minister, the former minister of Education who saw that when the new funding formula was coming into place, that a handful of school divisions were going to be really challenged, and implemented a gradual phase-in of the new funding formula which greatly assisted Prairie Valley School Division as they move forward with their commitments to address the needs in their community.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition has been talking extensively about

the needs for First Nations people and educational opportunities. I'd be remiss if I did not again just bring to the attention of the constituency, the work done on the Cowessess First Nation. And I want to recognize the work and efforts of the current member for Greystone, the previous minister for Advanced Education who, in consultation, we were able to assist Cowessess First Nation in moving forward with a licensed practical nursing program.

And to date, Mr. Speaker, 21 individuals have graduated from that program; 21 individuals are now working as licensed practical nurses in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And at the graduation this past June of the last group of licensed practical nurses from that program, I was informed they had I believe it was 74 applications for 14 seats; 74 young men and women were stepping forward and many of them First Nations young men and women. And I just feel really proud and really pleased to see that we were able to assist.

And that's just one program, Mr. Speaker. That's just one of the programs which we're working to assist First Nations young men and women as they look to move forward and achieve opportunities that are certainly open to them in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech was all about growth, all about how we move forward to meet the needs of a growing province and of a growing population in the province of Saskatchewan. One of the things that has been brought to my attention — and we're talking a lot about debt reduction — and people that I ran into, whether it was community leaders or individuals, business men and women, every one of them to the T said to me, rather than worrying about retiring the provincial debt immediately, put a plan in place to work towards reducing that debt. Because I don't think if you try to reduce the debt immediately, you may not have the resources available to meet the ongoing needs like the infrastructure needs.

And I'm pleased to see that we are moving forward with a plan that says we're going to move to reduce that debt. At the same time, we will work to meet the targets of addressing the needs of individuals. And I'm pleased to see as well, Mr. Speaker, it's not just the province of Saskatchewan, the Government of Saskatchewan, but if I'm not mistaken, Erin Weir made this comment about a well managed debt reduction program. "I agree with Premier Wall that, as a matter of accounting, it makes sense to pay off existing provincial debt before creating a new savings fund." I think that's positive. Mr. Speaker, that was one of the NDP candidates who put that up on his website that he agreed with the Premier of Saskatchewan in taking a planned initiative in dealing with provincial debt.

In regards to debt restructuring as well, Peter MacKinnon said this in *The StarPhoenix*:

"The government is very wise to be thinking of what happens when the province is debt-free. And if the resource (revenues) that are available to the province exceed what is necessary to operate then what should we do? What kind of approach should we take? I think that requires systematic thought, not simply year-to-year policy decisions."

And that's what this Throne Speech does. It thinks ahead, takes a systematic approach as to how we move forward in addressing debt, how we move forward in ensuring that the commitments to health care and education and highways and you name it take place across this province in a manner that all people across the province can benefit from.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk also, just mention, make a comment about how working together with local individuals can assist addressing some of the local needs. For example, this past summer on a number of occasions I've driven down to Kenosee Park. We only live about 30 miles from it so I'm quite pleased to speak about the park. And I speak about how that park has provided services to people over the years in the province of Saskatchewan, not just from the province of Saskatchewan but certainly we see a lot of North Dakota plates at the park.

And one of the ongoing issues the past few years was the lowering of the water levels at Kenosee Park. Over the past two years one of the park's individuals took the time, and a lot of times his own time, to kind of map out, well how do we get the water from the back part of the park into the major lake, into the big lake? And a lot of local people working with him said, well first of all we need to know how the water flows. There's no point in blowing beaver dams at the end of the back side of the park and all this water rushing in, and then it disappears before it gets to the lake. So a long-term plan was put in place, a well-thought-out plan, that enabled, that measured or drew out a diagram of how the water flows, and then a systematic approach was taken where water was . . .

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Requesting leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Do the members . . . A member has requested leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to members for offering me the chance to introduce a good friend to this Assembly. And sorry for interrupting the speech there as well.

It's my pleasure to introduce Mr. Myan Strong-Garcia, a grade 7 student, St. Joan of Arc. His parents, Myan's parents, are good friends of ours, Kendra and Jaime. And it's a pleasure to have Myan join us here today for an artistic display that's going to go on just after this Assembly. But Myan's also a pretty fantastic football player, maybe one of the top young football players in Rosemont, to be honest. I think he's got over 1,000 yards this year, Mr. Speaker, eight touchdowns. He plays for the Bengals. He wears orange on the field, which I really like, Mr. Speaker. He's a pretty talented young man.

His mom and dad are fantastic people. His mom just ran for school board and put forward a really solid effort there. And certainly his dad is one of my good friends and is a running

partner literally and politically. So, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to introduce Myan Strong-Garcia to his Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADDRESS IN REPLY (continued)

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, I note the clock is rolling by fairly quickly, but to make a long story short, as I was going down to the park this year, everyone commented about the level of the water in the lake at Kenosee. It's just been coming up, and that happened because with the Parks and Renewable Resources and local people, we found a way to manage the flow and to ensure that we got every drop of water into that lake.

I'd like to make one further comment — I think the time is running out — but anyway I'd like to make one further comment about the work of Highways and, Mr. Speaker, that may have to come another day.

I thank you for your time and your effort, your indulgence and the work of my colleagues, and I am in support of the Speech from the Throne.

The Speaker: — The time of adjournment now being past, this House stands adjourned to 1:30 p.m. Monday.

[The Assembly adjourned at 13:00.]

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Premier

President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Bill Boyd

Minister of the Economy
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff

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