



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

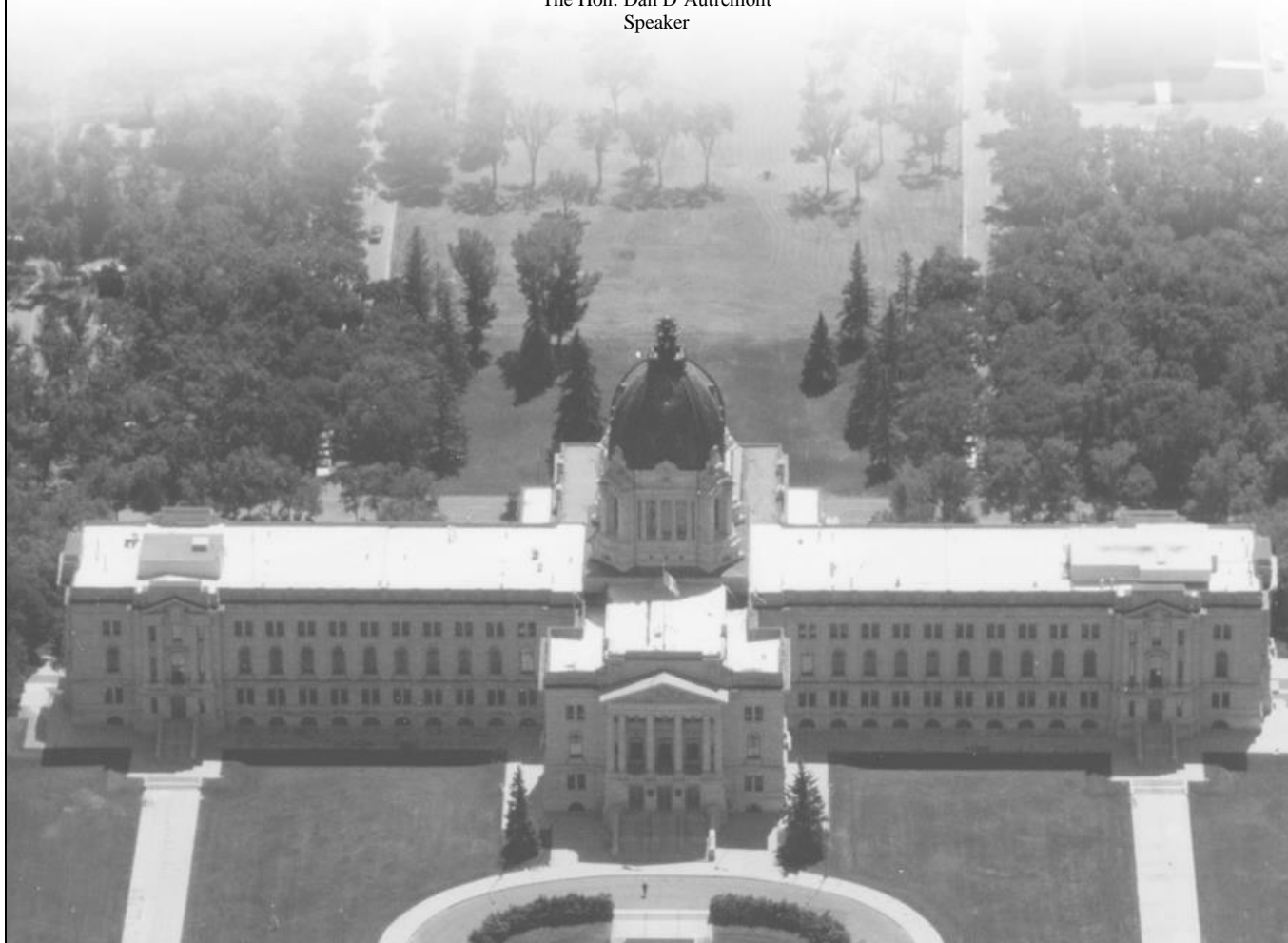
of the

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 — Cam Broten

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Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
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Campeau, Hon. Jennifer	SP	Saskatoon Fairview
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Ottenbreit, Hon. 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, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Hon. Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Hon. Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Young, Colleen	SP	Lloydminster

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Corrections and Policing.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The member has requested leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery here today are a number of leaders from a number of Saskatchewan's Islamic community, participating in discussions we are having today on ways in which our made-in-Saskatchewan Hub model can be expanded to help serve the needs in all our communities.

From Regina we have my friend Zarqa Nawaz, creator of *Little Mosque on the Prairie* and commentator on social issues in publications such as the *Huffington Post*, thanks for coming; Debra Schubert, member of the social committee for the Islamic Association of Saskatchewan, Regina branch; Imam Mohamed Moustafa Abdelsatar, imam of the Islamic Association of Saskatchewan, Regina branch; Said Noman, imam of the Somali Muslim Community of Regina; Munir Haque, president of the Islamic Association of Saskatchewan, Regina branch; Dr. Habib Rehman, president of Regina Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, and his wife, Shazia Rehman; Imam Ilyas Sidiyot of the Islamic Association of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon branch, thank you; Anas Ashraf, director of the Muslim Students Association; Omaer Jamil, president of the Islamic Association of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon branch; Imam Desai, the Prairie Muslim Association; Hafiz Zubair Sidiyot, president, Saskatoon Muslim Youth; Nasser Malik, president of Saskatoon South Ahmadiyya Muslim Community; Balal Anwar, public relations, Saskatoon South Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

I would like to thank all of you for coming here this morning and meeting with us. And I ask all members to join me in welcoming these leaders to the legislature today. Thank you.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I would like to join with the government in welcoming this very important group, this very important delegation to the Assembly today: a mix, Mr. Speaker, of community leaders, of religious leaders from Saskatoon, Regina, other locations.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to express my appreciation for the

important role that they play in making Saskatchewan strong, ensuring that strong communities of faith in our province play the role that they should, and really serve as a way of ensuring that communities are supported and that communities can do well. So I want to thank them for that. I think in particular, Mr. Speaker, here in the Regina example, of the pre-Ramadan luncheon that the Islamic Association conducted as a way to build bridges and build understanding. In Saskatoon I think of the Canada Day celebrations that the Ahmadiyya Community hosts on an annual basis, Mr. Speaker.

So I want to thank them for this work and thank them for their continued contributions in the years ahead. So I ask all members to join me in welcoming these individuals to the Assembly today.

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

Hon. Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce a number of individuals, both seated on the floor here and in the west gallery. And they are all associated with Regina Lutheran Home and Eden Care Communities, and they're also my constituents, Mr. Speaker. And if you can give us a wave as I mention your name. I'd like to introduce Maxine Holm who's the Chair of the Eden Care Communities board. I've got Leah Clement who is the director of elder care services. I've got Jennifer Martel, Eden Care community builder. I've got Ryan Bahan who's a leader of recreation therapy. And on the floor here we've got, also we've got Betty Jerome who's the wife of Robert Jerome who couldn't make it here today. And on the floor here, Alan Stephen who's the CEO [chief executive officer] of Eden Care Communities, and Dorothy Burden who's a Regina Lutheran Home elder.

Mr. Speaker, these individuals continue to provide great work and inspiration to those at Eden Care as well as the community. I'd like to ask all members to give a warm welcome to these individuals to their Legislative Assembly and thank them for their great work in terms of serving those most vulnerable in our communities. Thank you.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming all of the guests here from the Eden Care community. The Regina Lutheran Home is the heritage of this organization. I know that in our family, we've had many, many years of involvement. My parents actually live at Broadway Terrace now, and so I'd like to say a special thank you to the board and to the executive for how well they take care of all of the elders who are part of that community.

I'd also like to make a special welcome to Maxine Holm who is here. She and her late husband, Roy Holm, are long-time friends. Roy was a great leader in Saskatchewan as the head of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and he was a long-time resident of Estevan. So welcome, Maxine Holm.

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I have the honour of introducing some very important guests today who are seated in your gallery.

Mr. Speaker, December 6th marks the annual National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The day commemorates the 1989 murders of 14 female engineering students at l'École Polytechnique in Montreal. I am honoured to welcome special guests who are taking a leadership role to speak out about all forms of violence against women and girls and the impact on families and communities.

Joining us are two members of the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Saskatchewan whose lives were directly touched by the events in Montreal. We have Patti Kindred who was an engineering student at the time, graduated from the University of Regina with a Bachelor of Applied Science in engineering in 1990. We have Dr. Kate MacLachlan, a geologist who graduated from McGill University in Montreal in 1989 and was visiting friends at l'École Polytechnique on the day of the massacre.

And I'm also pleased to welcome Superintendent Alfredo Bangloy, the assistant criminal operations officer with RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] "F" Division; Inspector Sheree Ortman and Inspector Evan Bray from the Regina Police Service; Jo-Anne Dusel, the coordinator of the Provincial Association of Transition Houses; Maria Hendrika, the executive director of Regina Transition House; Sarah Vallee, the executive director of Sofia House; and Pat Faulconbridge, the executive director of the Status of Women. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in welcoming these outstanding citizens to their Assembly today.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And while I'm on my feet, there is another delegation of outstanding community members and that is members from our Salvation Army. Many of you would have had the opportunity in the rotunda to maybe shake their hands and say hello and have a warm cup of coffee and a treat.

So with us today, Mr. Speaker, we have Major Doug Binner, the director of community ministries; Major Glenn Patey, the chaplain with Waterston centre; Major Mike Hoeft, the area commander of Prairie West; Lieutenant Kyla McKenzie, the executive director of Grace Haven/Gemma House; and Ivy Scobie, executive director of William Booth Special Care Home. May we all welcome these outstanding members to their Assembly.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to join with the Minister of Social Services in welcoming the delegation here today marking December 6th, a very important day here in Canada.

I want to thank them for their leadership, for all that you do in supporting women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence, but also working to bring awareness to the issues. Whether it's missing or murdered Aboriginal women, the high rate of police-reported domestic or partner violence that we

have here in Saskatchewan, the work that you do on these issues is so incredibly important.

For me as a mother and as a woman myself obviously, Mr. Speaker, a mother of two girls, I'm very grateful for the work that you do in our communities. To the folks from the Regina Police Service who are here as well, for all that you do. On behalf on the opposition, thank you for the leadership role that you've taken in terms of supporting women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence and preventing it going forward. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and to you and through you, it is my pleasure to introduce two good friends of mine sitting in your gallery. One is Trent Fraser. He runs Fraser Strategy. He's a good friend of mine, and he wanted me to say one thing about him, is that he can skate very, very fast. We have the pleasure of partaking in some hockey every now and then on Friday at noon. And he's a good community businessman and community-minded person, and he wanted to take in the proceedings today.

And immediately beside him is a friend of mine I've gotten to know over the last couple of months, about half a year, his name is Kevin Dureau. He is a business owner in the community of Regina, does a lot of community-minded activities and runs a lot of fundraisers. And he's hoping to be sitting on the floor of this Assembly come 2016. He is our candidate, possibly our candidate for the nomination for Regina Rosemont, and he's looking forward to joining this side of the House after 2016.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to welcome all of the community leaders and all the guests that are here today, but I wanted to just join with the member from Walsh Acres and welcome certainly Trent Fraser to his Assembly here today. And he does skate awfully fast. His puck control, you know, isn't always the best, Mr. Speaker, but he, you know, he's a great guy, a great business leader, and lot of fun as well.

And it's also a pleasure to welcome to the Assembly, Kevin Dureau. I suspect, as I'm hearing here today, that I'm going to get to know Mr. Dureau a little bit better over the coming months. And certainly I respect anyone who steps forward into the political process; I believe that all that engage believe that they want to make a difference in their community. And I look forward to getting to know Mr. Dureau through that process, and I'd be quite happy to have him sitting up there after the next election as well, Mr. Speaker. I ask all members in this Assembly to with join with me in welcoming these two fine people. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce a group of eight grade 10 students from Collège Mathieu in

Gravelbourg. They're quite a sharp-looking group, and they're accompanied by their teacher, Raymond Michaud. And Raymond is no stranger; he brings his class to the Legislative Assembly on a regular basis. So very, very pleased that you do that. It's part of their social studies class.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to have them give us a wave when I mention their name. There's Dylan Auger, Koalby Auger, Joshua Blanchette, Josée Bouffard, Stéphane Gahizi, Éric Gauthier, Ryan Gosselin, and Nikolis Kleckner.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be joining these fine students a little bit later and I'd ask all members to please help me welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join in with the Minister of Social Services in welcoming her other delegation, the folks from Salvation Army. They're very important members of our community, I know, throughout the province, but my particular riding of Saskatoon Centre boasts some Salvation Army services. And every day of the year, I know they're here today, but I have to say every day of the year they play an important part in our communities right across Saskatchewan.

I do want to acknowledge one person specifically: Major Doug Binner who I've known I think almost all our lives. He grew up in Parkbeg, Saskatchewan, went to school in the great town of Mortlach, Saskatchewan. So we've known each other a long, long time. And so it's always a pleasure to say hello to Doug at least once a year if not more. But to all the folks with Salvation Army, thank you so much for your work you do in our community. So I'd ask all members to join them in welcoming them to their legislature. Thank you.

[10:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly some great-looking individuals seated in the eastern gallery. I'm talking about a group of English as an additional language students from the Open Door Society. They're here with their great teacher, Deana Pageot, you know, a great educator in this community.

And I had a chance to meet up with the students earlier in the morning and say:

[The hon. member extended salutations in other languages.]

And maybe we'll have a bit more to say later on, Mr. Speaker. But this is a great group of students, and they come from as many places as Somalia, Pakistan, South Sudan, Philippines, Ukraine, China, Korea, Afghanistan, and Israel. So it's really great to see them here today at the Legislative Assembly. Again welcome and hello.

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

Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming Deana Pageot and her class of students from the Open Door Society to their Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, it's important to note that Deana is a long-time educator in the city of Regina, in the province of Saskatchewan, having served many years on the Regina Catholic School Division, as well as a teacher of teachers, working with the University of Regina and, as we see today, continuing to contribute to education in a role with newcomers to Saskatchewan.

So I'd like all members to thank her for all the work that she's done for education and welcome her and her students to this Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Estevan.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too would like to join in welcoming all the guests to the Assembly today, but specifically Maxine Holm. Her late husband was a pastor in Estevan for many years at St. Peter's Lutheran Church that I attended and also at St. Luke Lutheran in Midale. And Reverend Holm married, I think, all my siblings and myself and . . . or officiated at the wedding, I should say. Sorry. And he also officiated at the baptism of all my kids and my nieces and nephews as well.

So I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Maxine to this Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

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

Ms. Jurgens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would like to say a very special thank you to Major Glenn Patey of the Salvation Army. He did such fabulous work in Prince Albert and he was always on the go. And for such a small man, he made such a big impact. And I wish to thank him and thank all the members that work so hard to make our communities a better place to live.

So on behalf of the Legislative Assembly I ask all of you to give us a warm welcome to Major Glenn Patey to his Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the member from Walsh Acres in welcoming Trent Fraser to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, it's hard to believe that four and a half years have already passed since the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. Mr. Speaker, I think people will know that Saskatchewan had a first-class pavilion because of our Saskatchewan entertainment, because of our saskatoon berry pies, but most especially because of the people that were behind it, the volunteers and individuals like Trent who made all of that come together. We couldn't have done it without people like Trent, and so I want to join with all members in welcoming Trent to our Legislative Assembly.

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 that calls for greater protection for Saskatchewan citizens from developers who default on fixed-price contracts with the Saskatchewan government. We know that in September this year, this government walked away from a 48-unit, low-income affordable housing project in Regina, allowing a private developer to instead take control of and then rent the units at full market price. And when asked to explain how the government could allow the private developer to back out of a fixed-price contract without any penalties, the Minister of Social Services said, and I quote, “You’re assuming that there’s these desperate homeless people,” showing how disconnected this government is from the realities within our communities. Mr. Speaker, 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 recognize that there are indeed desperate homeless people in our province and to immediately reverse its policy of now allowing private developers with whom the government has close relationships to default on fixed-price contracts for affordable housing projects.

Mr. Speaker, I do so present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents as it relates to the danger created by that government on Dewdney Avenue, inundating it with heavy-haul trucks and not properly planning the traffic flow. Of course we continue to press for the urgent completion of the west bypass, but that’s not good enough, Mr. Speaker. Interim and urgent actions are required to ensure safety on Dewdney Avenue. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the provincial government to take action as it relates to the unacceptable danger, disturbance, and infrastructure damage caused by the heavy-haul truck traffic on Dewdney Avenue west of the city centre, to ensure the safety and well-being of communities, families, residents, and users; and that those actions and plans should include rerouting the heavy-haul truck traffic, receive provincial funding, and be developed through consultation with the city of Regina, communities, and residents.

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

These petitions here today are signed by concerned residents in Regina. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Creighton, Denare Beach, and area. Many residents

in these communities are struggling with disabilities and currently do not have the support services they need and deserve. And the prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial Government of Saskatchewan to establish and build a residential and day program in the Creighton/Denare Beach region to support the immediate and ongoing needs of the community, and so that persons with intellectual disabilities thrive in their respective communities.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by many people of Creighton, Denare Beach, Air Ronge, and La Ronge. I so present.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of safe staffing levels in long-term care. The petitioners point out that many aspects of long-term care are deteriorating under this government, that the Government of Saskatchewan actually recognize the need for safe staffing levels to provide hands-on care to residents. They point out that the government is failing to fix the basics in long-term care, including rejecting the further urgent requests from long-term care facilities for increased and needed staffing levels. The petitioners talk, point out that the government has removed the regulations requiring a minimum standard of care for seniors, resulting in neglect.

They talk about chronic understaffing in long-term care facilities resulting in unacceptable conditions, including unanswered calls for help, infrequent bathing, and a rise in physical violence amongst residents. And they talk about fixing the basics and achieving a real improvement in long-term care services requires a firm commitment to actually listen to front-line health care workers, residents, and their families, as opposed to failing to properly listen to their concerns. The prayer, Mr. Speaker, I’d like to read:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the government to commit to the creation of safe staffing levels for all valued members of the health care team and to reintroduce actual numbers of staff to match the level of care needs and the number of residents under their care in long-term care facilities.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed from citizens in Saskatoon. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition calling for the protection of health care services in Craik. And in the petition, Mr. Speaker, the residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention

the following: whereas Craik has had physician services for over 100 years; whereas the Craik & District Health Centre provides vital health services to a large rural area including the communities of Loreburn, Tugaske, Girvin, Aylesbury, Chamberlain, Dilke, Findlater, Bethune, Stalwart, Imperial, Elbow, Holdfast, and Penzance; and whereas access to physician services in Craik is of paramount importance to the community; and in the prayer that reads as follows:

The petitioners respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan cause the provincial government to immediately stop its plan to scale back health care services in Craik, refrain from turning the stabilization and observation unit into offices, and ensure that the Canadian-trained physician that wants to continue practising in Craik is allowed to do so without government interference.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by good citizens from Craik. I so present.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to present a petition from those Saskatchewan residents who are opposed to the correctional service job privatization. People in Saskatchewan are concerned that the government wants to privatize the food services in the corrections and young offender facilities. The government hasn't listened properly to these workers who have many concerns about what impact the loss of these jobs will have for the corrections system but also for the local communities. So these people say:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan may be pleased to cause the government to cancel its privatization in the corrections and young offenders facilities in Saskatchewan.

And these petitions are signed by people from Prince Albert and Regina. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today to present a petition condemning this government's dangerous smart meter program. The individuals who signed the petitions want to bring to our attention the following:

That whereas the government knew about major safety concerns related to its smart meter project; whereas the government ignored those safety concerns and plowed ahead with its program; and whereas the safety of Saskatchewan families was put at significant risk, the prayer reads as follows. They respectfully request that this Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to take responsibility for its failure to act on readily available information about safety concerns with its smart meter program, including through the immediate resignation of the Minister responsible for SaskPower and a fully independent inquiry into the concerning chain of events

that severely compromised the safety of Saskatchewan families.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by individuals from Assiniboia, Regina, Saskatoon, Wishart, Broadview, Cowessess, Pleasantdale, Yorkton, Melville, Canora, Simmie, Melfort, Paddockwood, Prince Albert, Big River, North Battleford, Nipawin, Muskoday, Hagen, Spruce Home, Canora, Lloydminster, and Carrot River. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatchewan River valley.

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to remind members that December 6th marks the international Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. On this solemn day, Canadians remember the anniversary of the murders of 14 female engineering students at l'École Polytechnique in Montreal in 1989. This year marks the 25th anniversary of this senseless tragedy.

Mr. Speaker, violence against women is one of the world's most persistent human rights violations. Unfortunately, Canada is no exception. Gender-based violence has no place in our society. In this fiscal year, we are committing over 29 million to help 83 agencies support women at risk of violence. In addition, we are investing a further 11 million in 32 organizations in 17 communities to develop and operate other programs and services. We are also committed to rebuilding the North East Outreach and Support Services women's shelter in Melfort that was recently destroyed in a fire.

Today, my colleagues and I are wearing white ribbons as a signal of our commitment to ending violence against women and girls. I ask that we as leaders and decision makers use our influence to publicly speak out against gender and interpersonal violence and abuse. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[10:30]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Annie St-Arneault, Annie Turcotte, and Barbara Kluznick-Widajewicz. Mr. Speaker, these are the names of the women murdered at École Polytechnique in Montreal on December 6th, 1989.

This Saturday is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women which marks the anniversary of this senseless tragedy in Montreal. The name of this day is important, Mr. Speaker, because it calls for remembrance and action to make life better for women and girls in our country.

Mr. Speaker, we owe it to those 14 women to use this day to remember those we have lost and to commit to confronting misogyny and gender-based violence in our communities. My colleagues and I, and the members opposite too, are wearing the white ribbon to show our solidarity with victims of violence and are resolved to build safer communities for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in remembering those we have lost to gender-based violence. And I also hope they will join me in continuing to fight to make our province and our country a place that is free from violence against women. Thank you.

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

Regina Lutheran Home Meets Elders' Needs

Hon. Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the 1950s, individuals from within the Regina Lutheran community created a committee to study the unmet needs of their elder constituents. In the early 1960s, the first elders in residence moved into the Regina Lutheran Home, and today it is a home to 62 people who are provided with heavy level 3 and 4 care.

Adjoining the care home, The Cozy Nook provides homes for seniors in 25 assisted living suites. The Regina Lutheran community continues to create an elder-centred community. Life in an elders' home revolves around interaction with plants, animals, and children, which is much different from institutionalized care. These relationships, along with that of their care partners, provide a pathway to a life worth living.

On Friday the 21st of November I had the privilege to represent the Minister of Health at the Regina Lutheran Home 8th annual Holiday Magic Gala Fundraiser. The event was attended by over 230 people, including elders from the Regina Lutheran Home, and proceeds of the fundraising event will go toward updating the Regina Lutheran Home.

I'd like to recognize and congratulate the entire family of elders, their families and loved ones, and the staff and management of the Regina Lutheran Home, some of whom have joined us in the gallery today and on the floor, for the great work and inspiration you are providing in elder care within Regina and our great province. Thank you.

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

Director of Sexual Assault Centre Retires

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I rise in the Assembly today, a day when we call for an end to violence against women, to recognize an important community leader in Saskatoon, Elizabeth Freire. Elizabeth has served for 13 years as the executive director of the Saskatoon Sexual Assault & Information Centre, and today is celebrating her retirement with colleagues and friends.

Elizabeth came to Canada from Brazil 25 years ago and completed her master's in social work through the University of Saskatchewan. In 2001 Elizabeth moved to Saskatoon with her

family to accept the position as executive director of the sexual assault centre.

Under Elizabeth's direction, the centre has grown dramatically. The agency has doubled in size and now occupies offices over two floors. She has supported the team of staff and volunteers with passion and enthusiasm and is dedicated to the provision of services for those who have been traumatized by sexual violence. She has tirelessly advocated for suitable, supportive programming for those who need it most.

She leaves behind a legacy that Saskatoon Sexual Assault Centre is an agency with a reputation in Saskatoon and across the province for providing important services for women and men, and as well the many children who have been abused by this horrendous crime. Their work is recognized by the College of Medicine and the Saskatoon Police Service, and they are often called upon for their expert advice.

I ask all members to join me in thanking Elizabeth for her years of service and for all that she has done to support the victims of sexual violence in our province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Top Cadet Corps and Squadrons Honoured

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On November 4th this year's top Saskatchewan cadet corps and squadrons were announced. The 2014 cadet units being honoured are 45 Jervis Bay, Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps, Saskatoon; 155 Royal Regina Rifles Army Cadets, Regina; and 702 Lynx Squadron, Royal Canadian Air Cadets, Saskatoon.

Over the past months Saskatchewan's military liaison, the member from Wood River, attended ceremonies to present certificates and pins to these cadets from these outstanding groups. The program annually recognizes the top sea, army, and air cadet units in the province and was first announced in 2009.

The cadet program has a rich tradition in our province, with the first Saskatchewan cadet corps being formed in Prince Albert on February 1st, 1903. These cadets pre-dated the creation of our province in 1905.

There are currently more than 1,660 youth enrolled in 58 sea, army, and air cadet corps and squadrons across Saskatchewan. Youth between the ages of 12 and 18 are accepted into the cadet program, which teaches citizenship, personal discipline, and general military knowledge. There has been a focus this year on Saskatchewan's proud military heritage.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing the contribution and achievements that cadets make in our province and congratulating this year's award recipients.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Health and Wellness Centre Opens in Yorkton

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday the Minister of Health and the Ministry of Remote and Rural Health celebrated the grand opening of the Sunrise Health and Wellness Centre in Yorkton that serves part of my constituency. This centre is a great example of innovation and patient-centred approach. It offers team-based . . . and is developed as a hub for integrated primary health services in the Sunrise Health Region.

The centre provides physicians, nurse practitioner services, diabetes education, exercise therapy, pulmonary and cardiac rehabilitation, and a range of women's wellness services. All of these services are provided under one roof. The model of care and the facility design ensures an efficient flow of people of information and of supplies. It also makes it easier for clients to access the services they need and receive comprehensive, timely care.

I congratulate all the project partners for this great achievement. People in Yorkton and throughout the region will receive better primary health care, thanks to their dedication and hard work.

Mr. Speaker, our government has invested \$13.2 million since 2002 to support better primary health care in this province. This includes \$3.42 million in 2014 and '15. As we continue to strengthen primary health care in our province, we want all communities, large and small, to have a voice and to benefit. We will continue to support health care regions to provide patient-centred, community-based, and team-delivered primary health care in our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Remembering Jean Beliveau

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sad to say that this past week Canada has lost one of its greatest hockey players, a true legend: Mr. Jean Beliveau. A man of honour, Mr. Beliveau was known nationwide as a class act who took the time to make every individual he met feel special.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford had met Beliveau on several occasions, and as he and every other fan who ever met Beliveau would say, he was a gentleman that took the time to stop, talk to people, sign autographs, and always answer questions.

After his playing days, Mr. Beliveau could have had quite a career as a politician. In the early 1990s, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney offered Beliveau a seat in the Senate. He declined the job on two occasions. Some years later, Prime Minister Chrétien offered Beliveau the chance to be Governor General, but once again declined, claiming he was not worthy of the honour. Mr. Speaker, that right there sums up Mr. Beliveau.

His legacy will live on in the records he set, the legion of hockey players he inspired, but there's no record book that can capture, no statue that could convey the greatness of Jean Beliveau, who won an incredible 10 Stanley Cups for the Montreal Canadiens over an incredible 20-year career.

Mr. Speaker, this country has never seen a better ambassador for hockey than Mr. Jean Beliveau. From all the hockey fans in Canada, you'll be sorely missed. Rest in peace.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Care and Staffing in Long-Term Care Homes

Mr. Broten: — The number of families who are coming forward with major concerns about the quality of seniors' care is overwhelming. The majority of them share their stories quietly because they're afraid of repercussions for their loved ones, but more and more are speaking publicly, like Margaret Fraess's daughter.

Margaret lives at Samaritan Place, and her daughter has huge concerns about the poor quality of care because of short-staffing. Margaret went three months without a bath — three months. My question is for the Premier. Does he agree that three months without a bath in a care facility is entirely unacceptable no matter what?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, of course not. And we'd like to look into this matter, Mr. Speaker, as we have others.

It's interesting. This particular long-term care home is relatively new in the province of Saskatchewan. It was built in partnership with the Catholic Health Ministry. And you know, we've also heard some very good reports in terms of the model of care that's provided there. But, Mr. Speaker, we certainly would want to look at any specific examples like this. It's not acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, just this day in the legislature, we've been introduced to people who are involved on a daily basis, on a volunteer and professional basis in the care of seniors and residents in long-term care. We know that it's happening across the province. 8,700 seniors in care in Saskatchewan, and so very many of them getting top-quality care.

Mr. Speaker, we'll continue to add resources in this area. We've added 750 more front-line workers for long-term care than existed when members opposite were in government, with the same complement roughly of residents. We'll continue to add nurses, as we have, and doctors, and look for ways to improve not just long-term care but acute care and the health care system in general in Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, in location after location, we hear how short-staffing is hurting patient care and resident care throughout the province.

Margaret has cerebral palsy and epilepsy, and she suffers from delusions and other serious mental health challenges. Her daughter Debbie has guardianship over her.

Under the model of care at Samaritan Place, if a resident

doesn't want a bath, they're not given one. It's a fine concept in theory, but what is needed in practice is the right number of staff so that a care aid can spend a bit of time gently persuading the person that they really need a bath or they really need their adult diaper changed rather than simply making an offer and immediately walking away. There are major health implications of not having a bath, even a sponge bath, or not having your adult diaper changed.

To the Premier: does he recognize that this model of care is a good one, but it doesn't work when there isn't the right number of staff?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's more than a function of staff. And I would point out that this facility and the staff that are there today didn't exist just a few years ago. I need to also point out that it wouldn't have existed had members opposite had their say, because they didn't want this facility to be built at all. That was the discussion and debate we had in the legislature.

The Minister of Health advises me though that in select regions and moving through to the rest of the province, training in gentle persuasion, which is the issue that's been raised by the member, is happening across the province. For those residents where there's some special challenges, Mr. Speaker, around dementia, this is particularly important; it's true. It also can be very complex, Mr. Speaker, the Health minister advises, if front-line staff, whatever the complement is, are forcing things on patients who may resist and then, you know, you might have even greater challenges to their health and the chance for something to happen.

Obviously this is a very long time though to go without a bath. That part I think most would recognize, and it's something we would want to look at.

Mr. Speaker, this model of care in particular though and the question the member asked is not just a function of the number of staff. Sometimes the complexity of the individual patient and what's required for each individual patient comes into play in a general sense with respect to these issues. We can look into this very specific one though.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier proves my point. Gentle persuasion is good. It is needed. It is the right course of action to take, but you need enough staff to do the gentle persuasion so that the right health outcomes are achieved for residents, for patients.

Debbie has many other very serious concerns about her mother's case. Her mother has been assaulted four times while in care facilities, resulting in broken bones, bruises, and a fractured spine. Her mother has been found wandering outside of the facility, and Debbie is very worried that she'll be hit by a car or that she will freeze to death.

Debbie says a major part of the problem is short staffing. She sees it, and she's frustrated, Mr. Speaker, to see recent office

renovations for administration while basic front-line care continues to suffer.

Debbie says she has reached out to everyone she could think of, including her Sask Party MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], and she just kept getting the runaround. So she called us because she wants change and she agrees that we need regulated minimum quality-of-care standards and better staffing levels.

My question is for the Premier. How many more people will have to come forward before he will recognize that these are not simply isolated stories? What will it take for him to act?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

[10:45]

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we've already established that there are standards in this province, Mr. Speaker, that regions and facilities are required to meet. There is a document of course we've made available to the opposition, and obviously regions are aware of it. They must meet it.

The premise of his question is wrong. I mean the premise of the question is, when will the government act? The government has been acting in terms of improving long-term care from the situation we inherited since the day we were first elected in 2007. We've been replacing long-term care facilities rather than closing the beds, which is what happened here, and we have been adding staff.

Now maybe there needs to be additional resources. That's something that might well be part of the budget process we're engaged in right now. But this is the record of this government: licensed practical nurses up 37.4 per cent in the province; registered nurses up 9.3 per cent from when members opposite had the chance to do this as well; care aids up 9.7 per cent, specifically in long-term care.

And this needs to be on the record because the premise of the question . . . And the Leader of the Opposition I think would have people believe there has somehow been a reduction or there hasn't been an increase. Same complement of long-term care residents roughly speaking, 750 more front-line long-term care providers in the province of Saskatchewan today versus not very long ago when members opposite had the chance to do something about these issues.

It may well be that more is needed, Mr. Speaker, especially in certain circumstances. That's something the government's open to, and we're open to it, Mr. Speaker. You will know that we are, based on our record of increased investments and more front-line workers in long-term care in Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, those on the front lines are concerned about bloated administration. Those on the front lines are concerned about more and more middle management and not those on the front lines.

Saskatoon Health Region said they needed 450 care aids to get

the level of care to where they want it to be. They only asked for 38, and all they got were 19, Mr. Speaker. That's this government's record. And the Throne Speech, no new initiatives to address seniors' care, but what we can see is a continued dismissive approach.

Earlier this week, we raised the case of Art Healey who lives at Rose Villa care facility in Rosetown. He was found wandering outside in freezing cold temperatures. The family blamed short-staffing. The Premier blamed a broken door. But now the family says that this government has put Art in lockdown, and he can't even walk around inside the facility.

His daughter, Mr. Speaker, says it's like a prison, a violation of his rights, and she says she now knows why people are so afraid to speak up. She says this:

I did not want to have anyone lose their freedom to move about the facility freely. I shudder when I think how bad the care of our elderly has to get before more funding is provided for more floor staff.

My question to the Premier: how is it an adequate response to simply put him on lockdown? Why not fix the main door and hire more staff?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this particular case, certainly the health region and the facility are working with the company that has provided the door, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that it is properly functioning and that the WanderGuard system is in place.

I'm not aware that this is going to change in terms of the care that's being provided, and certainly I think, though, the staff and the administration are wanting to ensure that this individual is safe while those repairs are being made, Mr. Speaker. But there is also issues with a patio door that doesn't have a lock on it, Mr. Speaker, that we can't lock the doors for facilities, Mr. Speaker, for safety reasons. And so there's a dialogue going back and forth between the facility and the manufacturer.

But, Mr. Speaker, I can tell the members opposite that this government has invested for example in gentle persuasion approach in I believe five health regions, Mr. Speaker. Heartland Health Region is one of them, \$245,000 that this government provided; \$80,000 in Kelsey Trail Health Region; \$115,000 in Prairie North Health Region; \$305,000 in Sun Country; and \$1 million dollars in Regina Qu'Appelle, Mr. Speaker. We're interested in seeing that there are positive results and, if that is the case, Mr. Speaker, in these regions, we would look to expand that into other regions across the province.

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

Purchase of Farm Land

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, two years ago this month the Agriculture minister appointed a special investigator to study large land deals and trace the flow of money. To the minister:

what happened to that investigation?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question. There were actually two investigations carried out by the special investigator, and there was no wrongdoing found in either one of them.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, many farmers and residents of rural Saskatchewan are still incredibly concerned about vast tracts of farm land being bought up by people or entities that are illegally using foreign money to buy that land. And major concerns have been raised about the special CPP [Canada Pension Plan] deal that delivered huge benefits to two Sask Party insiders. A former and respected manager of the Farm Land Security Board says that special deal was bizarre.

To the minister: will he commit today to a fully independent review of *The Saskatchewan Farm Security Act* and the ability of the Farm Land Security Board to effectively enforce its provisions?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — As the member knows, Mr. Speaker, non-Canadians are restricted to owning 10 acres of Saskatchewan farm land. Any companies that purchase Saskatchewan farm land must be 100 per cent Canadian owned.

Saskatchewan does have fairly strict regulations in comparison to other provinces. But just the same, Mr. Speaker, we understand that there is concern out there about potential offshore money being involved in purchases of Saskatchewan farm land and with institutional investors, and so we are fully prepared and we are looking at possibilities of opening up that Act.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Government Use of Consultants

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Central Services. How can she possibly explain the whopping 168 per cent increase in the use of consultants in her ministry?

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

Hon. Ms. Campeau: — Thank you for the question. Mr. Speaker, the government does use contractors to fill positions that are difficult to recruit for and are temporary in nature or where specialized expertise is required. So this applies particularly to the IT [information technology] side of Central Services where technical and professional resources are contracted to fill in the gaps in the technical know-how.

In the case of my ministry, consultant numbers vary from year to year, depending on the work being undertaken and the skills required.

Central Services maintains and supports nearly 1,000 different software applications that are over 10 years old, Mr. Speaker. Supporting these applications requires a wide range of skills that are not easy to acquire. What the auditor is seeing is a significant number of projects that are under way that are transforming the way that government does business and helping us keep pace with meeting citizens' needs and modernizing and consolidating outdated systems.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor has exposed the Premier's claim on reducing the size of government as a total sham. At the same time as the Premier has been cutting jobs in the public service, he's been ramping up the use of highly paid consultants, a 228 per cent increase right across government.

In Central Services alone, nearly \$22 million is now going to consultants, up from \$8 million in 2008. In 70 per cent of those contracts, there was absolutely no documentation on why the consultant was even needed, from the Provincial Auditor, Mr. Speaker. So my question to the Central Services minister: why not?

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

Hon. Ms. Campeau: — Mr. Speaker, hiring contractors to fill in our technical skill gaps is nothing new. In the final three years when the opposition was in government, from 2004, 2005, through 2006, 2007, they had an average of 84 IT consultants on contract per year and even as high as 100 at one point. And in fact our annual number of consultants is down 22 per cent from theirs, and we've never had as many as 100 IT consultants on the IT file, Mr. Speaker.

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

Agreement with Smart Meter Supplier

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we saw this week that the SaskPower minister's story just keeps changing by the day, and pathetically he keeps trying to hide behind the former president of SaskPower by quoting what the former president said. Well yes, Mr. Speaker, what the former president said was correct: we either go with Sensus or we don't get the \$18 million back.

It was actually the Premier and the SaskPower minister that repeatedly said, we'll get our money back no matter what. To the Premier: why did he say that when it's not true?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, what the member opposite is alleging is completely unfounded, and I think he knows it. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, what the president of SaskPower said initially was, "If they [Sensus] are not able to produce a meter that's acceptable to SaskPower or independent specifications, they will pay us \$18 million in cash."

On October 27th in this very Assembly, Mr. Speaker, the day that the report was released on the Sensus meters, I said in this Assembly, "We will put them through . . ." That is, Sensus

meters.

We will put them through rigorous testing here in Saskatchewan. If they meet the standards of CSA at that time, we may consider using them again. If . . . they are not able to meet the standards here in Saskatchewan, the rest of the money will be recovered by the taxpayers of our province."

I don't think it could be any more clear to the people of Saskatchewan. That's exactly consistent with what the SaskPower president and CEO at the time said, Mr. Speaker, and that's exactly what happened in this Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, my question isn't for the minister, whose story has changed by the day and who has sold out Saskatchewan people, their hard-earned money and their safety. My question was a straightforward one, and it was for the Premier.

The former SaskPower president was clear from the outset that we either go with Sensus or we don't get any of the \$18 million back. But the Premier and the SaskPower minister went out of their way to contradict the president, stating that they'll get their money back no matter what.

To the Premier: why did he go out of his way to contradict what the SaskPower president said? Why did he provide inaccurate information to Saskatchewan people? Why won't he finally just table that deal with Sensus here today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, we'll provide for *Hansard* and we'll even read it to him if he likes, Mr. Speaker, the exact comments that were made on October 27th in this legislature by myself. I'll read them real slow for you.

We will put them through rigorous testing here in Saskatchewan. If they meet the standards of CSA at that time, we may consider using them again. If . . . they are not able to meet the standards here in Saskatchewan, the rest of the money would be recovered by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

Which of course is in sharp contrast to the way operations were in Saskatchewan under those members opposite, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when they were in charge of things here in Saskatchewan, they had companies like Business Watch International, a pretty grand name for a company, Mr. Speaker, especially when it was a pawnshop is what it was, Mr. Speaker. And what did they do with respect to that? They lost \$2.4 million on that little venture, Mr. Speaker. Whether it was potatoes or pawnshops, they lost money time and time again.

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

Costs and Benefits of the Lean Initiative

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the story they're spinning today, time and time again that minister, that Premier went out of their way to say we get the money back no matter what. And that's

clearly contradicted by what testimony in committee by ministry officials clearly said, Mr. Speaker.

The Provincial Auditor yesterday, Mr. Speaker, said that the government has no evidence that lean is creating sustainable change or making health care better, and apparently the government also doesn't know if it's actually saving any money because the Health minister, Mr. Speaker, refused to answer written questions about any financial savings achieved through lean. Either he doesn't know the answer, Mr. Speaker, or he doesn't want Saskatchewan people to know the answer. And either way, that is completely unacceptable.

We also requested this information directly from the health regions, and we heard back, Mr. Speaker, from three of them. And those three health regions report that they saved \$49,244.26. That's it, Mr. Speaker. That's the same amount of money we pay to have one sensei here for 12 days. Mr. Speaker, my question for the Premier: how can he possibly defend that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I can indicate to the House, as I have before, that since 2008 since this government started to use lean — even though it was used a little bit by the members opposite, to their credit — we have saved \$57 million in our health regions, Mr. Speaker. And I will give . . .

An Hon. Member: — Says John Black.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Well, Mr. Speaker, says Canadian Blood Services. Not John Black; Canadian Blood Services.

In 2009 using lean principles, Mr. Speaker, we went from \$53 million in purchasing blood products to now \$38 million, a \$15 million reduction in the amount that we spend on an annual basis to purchase blood products. Mr. Speaker, at the same time, Manitoba, which started out at \$53 million that same year, now spends \$61 million in blood products. Mr. Speaker, that is because of lean being used in Saskatchewan. It is saving us dollars, and that is just one example.

[11:00]

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the blood example has nothing to do with the \$40 million American toxic consultant. This government knows it, Mr. Speaker, and the minister won't even table the information to the written questions about the savings.

We asked the health regions for their update of savings as a result of lean. Cypress Health Region says they've saved \$31,648. Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region says they've saved \$17,465, and the Prince Albert Parkland Health Region says they've saved — get this — \$131.26 because of lean. Let me repeat that. In P.A. [Prince Albert], Mr. Speaker, they've saved \$131.26.

Mr. Speaker, a Japanese translator costs \$600 a day, and the Prince Albert Health Region has only saved \$131.26. My

question to the Premier: if John Black was supposed to save them so much money, why do we see such meagre savings through this project?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, we know it is saving us dollars within the health care system in this province, Mr. Speaker. That's why this government in the last year can introduce a 3 per cent increase in the Health budget and still, at the same time, open new facilities and hire additional staff in the system, unlike when the members opposite were the government and the Health minister had a 6.8 per cent increase in Health, and what happened? Beds were closed. Staff were fired. Facilities were closed, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, but we know that lean is more than just about saving money. Mr. Speaker, distribution of wrong medication errors went, from Five Hills Health Region, from 17 a year in the mental health unit down to one. And I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite would like to put a price on what that has meant to patient care, Mr. Speaker. Do they put a price on what the care is for our patients?

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know what dream world the minister and the Premier are living in, but if he listens to front-line stories of families not getting care, of front-line workers from Santa Maria who are frustrated, Mr. Speaker, he would see a very different reality than whatever they're dreaming up over on that side, Mr. Speaker.

The entire Prince Albert Parkland Health Region reports that they have saved \$131.26 because of lean, and they specifically say, they specifically say that they have not realized any other financial savings from lean. The Provincial Auditor says the government isn't tracking or reporting the right information to know if lean is creating sustainable change or making health care better. We've covered that many times. And of course we know a majority of the front-line workers have a very different story to tell, that it has no impact at all, or it's actually harming patient care.

And now we know, Mr. Speaker, that this government doesn't even have a good financial story to tell when it comes to the John Black version of lean that it's forcing on this province: just \$49,244 saved across three health regions, and in Prince Albert just \$131.26. My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Premier: is he ready to admit that the John Black version of lean is clearly not working?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, obviously, Mr. Speaker, when we look at lean, it is about saving dollars, but it's also improving the care that we can provide to our patients.

Mr. Speaker, Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, using lean methodology, reduced the number of cancelled MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] scans from 12 per week down to one, which

allows them, without adding a single dollar of additional resources, to do 650 more scans per year, Mr. Speaker. Now if we can see a 7 per cent increase in productivity across the health regions, that would see us being able to do 2,600 more MRIs a year without a single dollar, as opposed to when the members opposite were the government, Mr. Speaker.

And I would refer to the Canadian medical . . . Mr. Speaker, one of the medical journals that talked about, in 2004, Saskatchewan's 22-month wait for an MRI is "almost criminal," said radiologists association, Mr. Speaker. And you know what the response was from the member from Lakeview when he was the Health minister? "That is how our system works." A 22-month wait for an MRI that's almost criminal, and that's how the system works?

We're going to focus on improving the system. We're going to focus on quality improvement and saving money.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 176 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)*

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 176, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved first reading of Bill No. 176, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time?

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 177 — *The Insurance Act*

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move that Bill 177, *The Insurance Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has moved first reading of Bill No. 177, *The Insurance Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time?

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 552 to 572.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has provided responses to questions 552 to 572. I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order the answers to questions 573 to 584.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has ordered responses to questions 573 to 584.

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Performance of the New Democratic Party

Mr. Bjornerud: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, at the end of my comments I'll be moving the following motion:

That this Assembly does not support the NDP's policy to raise taxes on Saskatchewan businesses which was adopted at the NDP's most recent convention.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think this is a very timely motion because within about a year we're going to have an election in this province. And you know, to date in the last three years I don't think we've heard . . . We've heard a lot of criticism on every issue from the NDP [New Democratic Party] opposite. The members opposite are very critical of everything happening in this province. We know they don't like growth. We know they don't like the population to grow in this province because well, for what, 60 out of the last 100 years they've worked very hard to make sure that people left this province instead of came back to it as we see happening today.

But as I said, Mr. Speaker, it's very timely because it would be a good opportunity for the members opposite to tell us what they would do should — God forbid — they ever got to be government in this province again. And I think they have that opportunity today and we'll be waiting with a bated breath to see where they would go.

But, Mr. Speaker, at the NDP . . . I think it was one of their recent conventions, and why this motion kind of came to light today is that one of their recent conventions, this was one of the resolutions that was passed. And it says:

Be it resolved that an NDP government would ensure fair taxation [and I want to repeat that, Mr. Speaker, ensure fair taxation] on business and high income earners by increasing their amount of income tax.

Well that's fair. I've seen that happen in this province many, many times under an NDP government. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? That's exactly why our young people were leaving this province in droves. Schools were closing. They closed hospitals down right across this province, Mr. Speaker. And as usual with an NDP government, many, many people left this province, especially the young people that we needed so much to stay here and raise their families and have families in this province.

So, Mr. Speaker, one of the other resolutions and part of the same resolution I guess it is:

Be it further resolved that an NDP government would grant income taxing powers to Saskatchewan municipalities.

Well we know why that is, Mr. Speaker, because when they were government — and I saw this first-hand, being a reeve in an RM [rural municipality] when they were in government — is that they cut funding to those same municipalities. So those municipalities would need the ability to tax at a higher level because the NDP would download on them as they did before.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's common knowledge right across this province, but especially in rural Saskatchewan, that we hope that we never have to put up with another NDP government and watch the demise of this province like we did in the last 16 years before we formed government.

Mr. Speaker, some of the things that we've done since we've come to power, and a lot of them have to do with taxes which has helped grow this province, but since 2007 the Sask Party government tax reductions saved families almost \$2.8 billion. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan residents will save 480 million this year due to tax cuts. Since 2007 our government has increased the personal, spousal, and child exemption amounts and introduced new low-income tax credits.

Mr. Speaker, for an example, an individual taxpayer pays no tax on the first \$18,650. A member of four with \$50,000 annual income will pay just \$166 in provincial income tax in 2014 compared with \$2,302 in 2007, and of course that was at the end of the NDP reign. Tremendous difference, Mr. Speaker. That's about \$2,100 for a family of four less in tax to pay. By the end of 2014, this family will have saved \$14,000 over seven years. I think those dollars are much better spent by the individuals and the taxpayers of this province than they were with the NDP government opposite for all those years we were stuck with them.

Mr. Speaker, also we have removed 114,000 Saskatchewan residents from the provincial income tax roll. Now, Mr.

Speaker, if you want to help low-income people, as the members opposite quite often talk about — but yet they had no action on it — there's the example of how you can help lower income people, by removing 114,000 of them from the provincial income tax roll. Mr. Speaker, that's not talk. That's action on behalf of this government.

Mr. Speaker, under the NDP, property tax payers funded 60 per cent of the cost of K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] education and boy, that opens up a whole ball of wax that the NDP had when they were government.

Mr. Speaker, we saw, I think it was, I don't know what it would be now, about 9 or 10 years ago when the former premier, Mr. Calvert, was at the SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] conventions and said on a number of occasions, year after year, the status quo is not on with the education tax on farm land. But did we see a change? No, Mr. Speaker, we did not. What we saw was a band-aid put on the cut and then ripped off by the same government a short time later.

Mr. Speaker, people of this province remember very well. They haven't forgotten and they will not forget what the NDP did to them when they were in government. And I think we see across this province, Mr. Speaker, how this province is growing, how the population is increasing in this province, how we see so many new people in all our communities, especially in Regina, Saskatoon, P.A., Moose Jaw. I'm sure I can speak for the members on this side of the House from rural Saskatchewan. How many small towns in this province are seeing houses fill up, new families move in?

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow I have the luxury of going to Langenburg — a community in my constituency, a growing community in my constituency, Mr. Speaker — to have sod-turning for a brand new school. Mr. Speaker, how many times did we go to those functions under an NDP government? Well we didn't go because we didn't have the opportunity, not because we weren't invited, because there was no new schools. In fact, our biggest problem mainly in rural Saskatchewan is they were closing schools, one after another across this province.

[11:15]

What was the number? One hundred and seventy-six, something like that. Yes, here we go. That was the record of the NDP, Mr. Speaker. And you know, Mr. Speaker, I think what's also timely right now . . . And, Mr. Speaker, my time is going very quickly here, but I really find it odd the new-found compassion of the NDP in question period when they come and they start speaking about long-term care. And they've been on this issue, and there's been some good issues brought to light here, and they should be, Mr. Speaker. And as the Health minister and the Premier have said, these issues will be dealt with. They shouldn't be happening. But the new-found compassion of the NDP is really odd, considering their record in health care.

Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons I ran for politics in 1995 was because of the track record of the NDP at closing hospitals, 52 hospitals. And then on top of that, if that wasn't bad enough outside of Regina, they closed the Plains hospital which

actually was one of the best hospitals, larger hospitals, for rural Saskatchewan. Number one, you could get to it in a heartbeat, very quickly. You could find it very easily for rural people that weren't used to the city. And what did the NDP? They closed that too. Mr. Speaker, people in this province cannot afford and will not forget what happened under an NDP government.

They also talk about in long-term care, Mr. Speaker, and they'll probably . . . I'm sure a member opposite will say, well the member from Melville-Saltcoats has no idea what he's talking about. Well I do, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to long-term care, because my mother and father both went through the system. And that system, I would repeat every time I have the opportunity to speak, is that the quality of care they received in the health care system, in the long-term care system in the Lakeside Manor Care Home in Saltcoats, Mr. Speaker . . . And for the NDP to get on their feet day after day and criticize the care given by the workers in our health care system, I think should be embarrassing for the members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I know a lot of the people that work in that system and I can tell you one thing. I couldn't do the job that those people do in those long-term care homes. It is not an easy job. And those people do it with compassion and care every day that they are at work in dealing with our parents and someone from our families, Mr. Speaker.

And for the members opposite, after their record for so many years at losing facilities, closing beds across this province, they have the nerve to get on their feet and say, after all the increased dollars that we've put into the system . . . We've built what, 13 new long-term care homes, Mr. Speaker; 750 more workers in those same care homes for pretty well the same number of residents. Mr. Speaker, it's almost laughable on their side of the House that they have the nerve to get on their feet.

And then the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader get up, and they don't want to answer for their past record of the NDP because they say, well we weren't here when that happened. Well, Mr. Speaker, I was here in '95 and I remember when that same group over there and same members on that side of the House blamed Grant Devine for every problem they had in this province. And all of a sudden they don't want to be responsible for what they did when they were in government. Well, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't work that way.

And as I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, it's timely, this debate is timely today because we need to know, and the people of Saskatchewan need to know, if they ever got to be government again, what they would do, Mr. Speaker. I mean we saw the last election in 2011 under Mr. Lingenfelter, and his right-hand man happens to be the Leader of the Opposition today, the same guy. And he's the same guy that had another \$5 billion he was going to spend to fix all the problems. I was going to be going home past Yorkton on a twinned highway. Can you believe it?

Well we actually did something about it. We got passing lanes going out there that has improved the quality and safety of travel out there tremendously. But it was affordable, sustainable under a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker.

You know, Mr. Speaker, and I guess the Leader of the Opposition, if I was him I'd want to distance myself from Mr.

Lingenfelter too. But he can't; it's not that easy. Because if I remember right, and correct me if I'm wrong, he was the guy that signed off on their campaign policy. The same guy. And now all of a sudden the Leader of the Opposition says, no that was back in 2011. That's not me. Well it was him. And I think every one of us on this side of the House know exactly what he would do and his eight other colleagues would do, if they ever got to be part of government.

I mean we all know what the member for Lakeview would do. My mother was in the care home when he was going to raise fees, 3,000, up to 3,000 bucks a month. And the only reason he backed down was partly because of opposition members, but mainly because of the backlash that he had from people across this province who didn't like what they were doing with long-term care.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to miss these speeches. Because I'm going to go home, and I'm getting older. And when I'm out of this House and I turn the TV on and I see the few members that are left on that side — and I believe it's going to be few and fewer — Mr. Speaker, I'm proudly going to bust the TV because I'm going to tell my grandkids and my great-grandkids, I was there when they did that. They're not going to believe it. They wouldn't think anybody would do it. My grandkids especially would say, aw, papa, you're just, you're pulling our legs. Well I'm not. And the people of Saskatchewan know I'm not.

You know, we've got people in every community across this province that will say, and they're not all diehard Saskatchewan Party supporters, well we will never tolerate an NDP government in this province again. And you know, Mr. Speaker, we saw what happened in Alberta for — what? — 30 or 40 years. They're the natural governing party. And you know, there was a point in our history here, the NDP, well the CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] and then the NDP, when it's convenient they have to change their name because it's not popular to be where they are. Probably about due for a name change right now.

But, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I don't think I've said one thing that the members on this side don't know to be true, factual. And I've noticed, Mr. Speaker, by the number of members left listening to my speech, they probably don't want to hear the truth, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, you know, there's so many things I could talk about. The Minister of the Economy, the member for Kindersley just touched on a little bit of the NDP's record today. And what was that — a pawnshop, I think he talked about? Now there's a venture for you. You know, the business people on that side of the House said, if we're going to grow this province, we've got to sink some money into pawnshops. I mean, my God, I didn't think it could get any worse, and it did.

And, Mr. Speaker, you know, just when the NDP thought it couldn't get worse, you know what the federal leader did yesterday? He came out with a press release — I can't believe this; it's just like a windfall — but he said if the NDP gets to form government federally, they'll bring in the gun registry. I heard from constituents today that I haven't heard from for years that are riled up again because they thought that problem

had gone away.

So, Mr. Speaker, as you can realize, I have a lot more I'd love to say, but at this point I have colleagues that also want to get in on the debate and have some good things to say about the NDP. But I'll be listening. Tell us what your policy is; I'll be listening with bated breath.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move the following motion:

That this Assembly does not support the NDP's policy to raise taxes on Saskatchewan businesses which was adopted at the NDP's most recent convention.

I so move.

The Speaker: — The member for Melville-Saltcoats has moved:

That this Assembly does not support the NDP's policy to raise taxes on Saskatchewan businesses which was adopted at the NDP's most recent convention.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always a pleasure to follow my fellow Norwegian Saskatchewan friend when he gives his speech. And I know that the mister bear-clearing will be happy to hear some of my comments because I have listened for almost 20 years now to the minister and when he was in opposition and now when he's an MLA, and basically we're getting a consistent variety of comments that go right across the board. I think he summed it up himself, is that in the legislature when he's in opposition, he could say anything he wants. I think he also does that when he's in government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the point of this particular debate today is who is listening to the people of Saskatchewan. And what we know is that this government is getting to a point where they're older, maturer, and maybe not hearing so well because when we go and listen to Saskatchewan businesses, they say, what's wrong with our naive Premier, with our naive economic minister who don't even understand the basic rules of procurement so that Saskatchewan businesses can compete here in their own province? We have people coming to us day after day after day who are saying, what's wrong with this Premier?

Now earlier this week the Premier copied the speech from the member from Regina Rosemont from last week and said, we're no longer going to be boy scouts. Well finally they're listening a little bit to the fact that they are totally naive as it relates to the procurement policy. We also know that there's a whole other aspect to this which is around buying locally and doing things locally. They have basically changed some of the procurement policies of government but also de-emphasizing our Saskatchewan businesses. And Saskatchewan businesses are complaining.

Now I think what we have is bluster from that member. We know that the bluster comes from a Liberal who turned to a Sask Party conservative right wing kind of guy. And now we're not quite sure where they are, but we know that they have that

perspective.

And what happens, Mr. Speaker, is that they then return to some of the kinds of budgeting practices that we've seen in this province before where we borrow money to pay for everyday expenses. And, Mr. Speaker, on December 3rd Murray Mandryk — that's only yesterday — he said basically the summary report from our Finance minister is masking problems. And he goes right to the heart of it and shows that this government has been borrowing money through the Crowns to pay the everyday expenses. And we all know where that gets us. It gets us to a point where we have a great deal of difficulty in paying back those debts. We had that situation just over 20 years ago and it caused difficulties for all of us. But the people of Saskatchewan pulled together and sorted out a whole number of those particular issues.

Now when you talk to people and listen to people in Saskatchewan now, they're saying, where's all the money? What happened to the money, Mr. Speaker? Because we know that over the last seven or eight or nine years, we've had some of the best times that Saskatchewan's ever had, and here we have the headlines in the paper, "Summary budget masking problems" on finances.

We know that there's no ability to put any money aside out of the extra revenues that we've received from our resources. Any concept of using and building a heritage fund or an overall pension fund like they have in Norway or Alaska or other parts of the world has been squandered by this Minister of Finance and this Premier. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the people of Saskatchewan find that acceptable. They are very concerned that what happens is the money seems to have gone. Where did it go?

Part of what, part of what happens in this particular government is that they're making some very strange choices. We heard a bit of it today. We saw it in the auditor's report yesterday that they hire consultants willy-nilly. They don't even keep a record of why they're hiring the consultants so that the auditor can actually go and tell us how the money's being spent. Mr. Speaker, that is unacceptable. And I'm surprised that the member from Saltcoats is part of that type of government because I know he's pretty careful with money.

But when you've got government that's spending, government that's spending money across the board, where does it go? So what happens for our local people? They say, lookit, SaskPower's borrowing money hand over fist. We've got an 8.5 per cent SaskPower increase. We've got 27 per cent energy rate hike. We've got hikes in the SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] rates. We've got SaskTel increases. So what we have, Mr. Speaker, is a government that's trying to talk about taxes but then going off into the Crown side and raising the fees on a regular basis so that they can transfer that money back into the accounts to pay the everyday amounts that are owing. And so, Mr. Speaker, we know that there are concerns around how this has been done.

[11:30]

Now another aspect is that they're very afraid to actually show what the finances of the problem are. So what do they do? They

go to the extent of, in the mid-year statement last week, picking a price for oil that's substantially higher than our neighbour. If you calculate the difference between those two prices, guess what? It equals to be just a little bit more than the surplus that they've declared. That seems to be quite convenient to me, Mr. Speaker. And it goes right to the heart of their sham, their sham of how they're managing things that are going on here.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan want the straight goods. They want to know, where has the money gone? Why are we in the situation where there's things that are not being dealt with? Why are we short-staffing all of our, in our health care facilities? Why are people saying, I don't feel this boom? I've got all these extra expenses; I'm getting hammered on a whole number of areas. And, Mr. Speaker, that becomes a fundamental question for all the people of Saskatchewan. Where did the money go?

And, Mr. Speaker, we have a refusal of a whole number of these people to actually give the information to an independent auditor to see where the money's gone. When we do get the audit reports, we show that some of the records are not very good to deal with that. We know they've spent \$40 million on this pet project of the Premier, and now I guess the Minister of Crown Investments, where they hired John Black and Associates. And what do they get — \$131.26 in P.A. Mr. Speaker, this is a problem and it identifies for Saskatchewan people why we have to be very careful with this type of government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when we are living in a province that has an abundance of resources and practical things are not being dealt with, we know that choices have been with the government. We know that we don't have the savings account that we all hoped that we would have when we hit a boom time like we have now. It looks like the chances of ever getting a savings account under this government are zero.

And so, Mr. Speaker, government is about making choices. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that the Minister of Finance and the Premier have made a number of choices around doing things in more expensive ways. There's no question about that. And, Mr. Speaker, it relates to building capital structures. It relates to how they deal with schools. It relates to a whole number of areas. Now we have the Minister of Finance, who has long experience in the whole school system, going back to the municipalities and say, well can you give us a bit more money to help us pay for some of the schools? That's exactly the kind of thing that the people of Saskatchewan don't want to hear or see.

Mr. Speaker, the ultimate question for this government is, where did the money go? When are they going to account for what's happened with all the money that we've had in this . . .

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed. Next speaker. I recognize the member for Saskatoon Greystone.

Mr. Norris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to be able to join in this debate, though I do so with quite a disadvantage following my colleague from Melville-Saltcoats. His position was articulated with a — what would you say? — very unique and invigorated approach.

Appreciate it. He was impassioned. He was persuasive, and that's because he spoke from his heart and from his experience in ensuring that, as he rolled up his sleeves to help create not simply a new party but a new chapter for this province, that it was focused on the future and for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, as we think about the motion that my colleague from Melville-Saltcoats put forward, that is:

That this Assembly does not support the NDP's policy to raise taxes on Saskatchewan businesses which was adopted at the NDP's most recent convention.

The reason we do this is that this is a very troubling policy position, a very troubling proposition. It's troubling for small- and medium-sized businesses in Saskatchewan. It's troubling for large corporations in Saskatchewan. But most especially, most especially it's troubling for Saskatchewan communities and cities, for families, and for our future generations, for our young people, the young people that we remain focused on. That's especially important when we think about the value of the graduate retention program this year where we will have more than 50,000 young people participating in and benefiting from the graduation retention program, the most aggressive youth retention program in the country.

But, Mr. Speaker, what is especially concerning right now is that, as the NDP has approached an existential Y in the road, they've taken the advice of Yogi Berra and they have simply said they're going to take it. That means they're going to go to a default position. They're going to go to their traditional orientation and inclination, and that is, they're going to increase a tax burden on those that are helping to ensure the prosperity of Saskatchewan, and that is our businesses.

Mr. Speaker, this is problematic. In fact, it's so problematic that Dr. David McGrane who's just come out with a brand new book on the future of really Saskatchewan by looking back and comparing Saskatchewan and Quebec, he asks and offers this: on page 246 of his brand new book, he says that "The future ideological direction of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan NDP is now quite uncertain." That's Dr. David McGrane.

Now there are a couple of ways you could address that statement. The first, maybe for political scientists, the future of Saskatchewan, of the NDP, is quite uncertain. And that in and of itself may be a topic for one day or maybe something that voters in this province begin to address. But our topic today is far more important than that, and that is, under the NDP, the future ideological direction of Saskatchewan is actually quite uncertain. And if we take away the word ideological we can simply say, under the NDP, the future direction of Saskatchewan is quite uncertain. This stands in stark contrast to the certainty and orientation and direction that our Premier and this government have attempted to work, to work towards, and that is by focusing on growth and putting forward greater certainty.

Now importantly, what our Premier has reinforced, and this makes the position very unique, he's answered a question: what is the purpose of our prosperity? It's a deep question. It's a probing question. And in the plan for growth he explained that

an expanding economy is the foundation for a growing and prosperous province. The purpose of growth, the purpose is to build a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan residents. And to this end the Saskatchewan plan for growth outlines the government's direction to improve health care and education outcomes while building growing and safe communities and improving the lives of persons with disabilities in Saskatchewan. It's a powerful statement about purpose.

We know that to that, that there were six core growth activities, and I'll get into those. But what did the member for Regina Lakeview have to say about the *Plan for Growth*? "A document like this distracts everybody, and I think his popularity will stay up there as long as there's sort of a myth of a booming economy." That from the member for Regina Lakeview. This came out of *The Globe and Mail*.

What we see in fact is that growth has enabled, first, our population to grow, and as Tony Blair has remarked, an easy indicator of the success of a polity is, is the population moving in or moving out? And of course the answer is, more people are moving in and more people are staying in Saskatchewan. That's a very simple indicator.

What we also see is that this plan for growth has afforded the opportunity to provide greater certainty. That certainty has ensured that a framework has been set for our private sector to continue to grow. That's not simply about the private sector. That's about families staying together here in Saskatchewan. It's about young people planning their futures in Saskatchewan. It's about seeing those young people putting their dreams in Saskatchewan. And that's tangible.

Over this last seven years, there have been more than 70,000 new jobs created in this province and, importantly, we see that those are spread across a great variety of sectors: about 18,000 in the construction sector; in health care, more than 10,000; in natural resources, more than 6,000; in education, more than 5,800; in agriculture, which continues to help grow not simply Saskatchewan's economy but Canada's economy, we see that more than 5,000; and a variety of other sectors have contributed more than 17,000 jobs. The significance of this plan for growth provides us the opportunity to go through and reflect on what these priorities look like and mean for the people of this province.

So investing in infrastructure, the member for Lakeview has asked, where has the investment gone? Well how about into more than 8500 kilometres of highways rebuilt or repaired; into more than 12,600 new affordable housing units providing more opportunities for Saskatchewan families; into numerous new long-term care facilities to ensure that more people have better care, and we know that's a continual work-in-progress; into 38 new schools, and that's important as our population continues to grow; and in fact right in Saskatoon, the new children's hospital. There's an example of where the dollars that are being fuelled by growth, where they're going. Just one example.

We go back to the growth plan: educating, training, and developing a skilled workforce. In post-secondary education alone, more than \$5.5 billion invested in future generations in our post-secondary institutions. We can think about the graduate retention program as I've already highlighted. But we

can also think about the significance of the Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship, the Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship.

We can actually have a look at key areas of infrastructure development, for example the knowledge infrastructure program that we shared with Ottawa, more than \$117 million across the province, right across the province. We know what that meant in communities from Nipawin to Estevan to Swift Current, here in Regina, in Saskatoon, and countless more.

And importantly when it came to the Academic Health Sciences Building, we were able to move forward on a long-standing promise, a promise that was first offered by members opposite in 2003, but construction didn't start. And so what we see today is that both E wing and D wing are up. They're operational. And the college continues to make progress as we've expanded the number of doctors being trained, the number of nurses being trained, and the integration of health sciences being performed both in research and the training capacity at the University of Saskatchewan and to see a distributed model that's ensuring that more people are being trained right across the province.

What we see, Mr. Speaker, is that these dollars, to answer directly the member from Lakeview, these dollars are helping to improve the quality of life for the people of this province. That's based on business propositions that foster and facilitate growth. That includes a reduction in small-business tax. It is just one example of fostering and fuelling the growth, not for its own sake but for the sake and ensuring the security of future generations and of today. Mr. Speaker, that's why I'm supporting this motion.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's always interesting to take my place in this Chamber and join in the debate in this Assembly. It's not an order of the loyal water buffalo that's meeting. So for the members over there saying, Blues Brother quartz I, you know, don't resemble that, so please cut it out.

In terms of the topic that we've got here in front of us today, Mr. Speaker, it's good to see the member from Melville-Saltcoats continuing to make a contribution to the cause over there. You know in opposition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member from Saltcoats had a lot of different things to say. And I'll give him this: he always said it with a lot of passion and a lot of fire, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But when it came to governing and the way that things that had been said in opposition were called to account in terms of what the members had to say come the time to govern, of course that member was clear with the people in Melville-Saltcoats that, you know, I believe the quote is, "In opposition we'll say just about anything." And I'm not saying that so much as any sort of indication as to the way that we approach public policy debates, Mr. Speaker, but I think it was interesting that the member from Melville-Saltcoats copped to the say-anything approach of this government, be it in opposition or in government.

And again, Mr. Speaker, we've got the say-anything swan song

here today. I don't know how many more speeches we'll get to hear from the member from Melville-Saltcoats, but it's . . . I may not agree with the substance, Mr. Speaker, but the style is always, is always pretty interesting. So good to see him up again.

And I guess the other interesting thing is, following in this debate after the member from Greystone, I'm a bit disappointed, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm a bit disappointed. I thought he would use this as an opportunity to announce his candidacy for the federal Liberal Party in the coming federal election. And I guess we'll have to go on and wait for that a bit more, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of that member tipping his hand as to what the future might hold for him. But there's some pretty strong indications that on the south side of Saskatoon the federal Liberal ticket's got a place for the member from Saskatoon Greystone.

And I guess that makes sense as well, Mr. Speaker, because we've seen a bit of a Liberal exodus from this government. We've seen folks sort of inventing or burnishing Liberal credentials so that they can continue to portray themselves as some kind of big tent, Mr. Speaker. But you know, it may be a big tent but in some cases a lot of clowns.

But also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of not announcing today, I think it's interesting seeing the billboard campaign with the government right now in terms of the . . . I think the motif is Saskatchewan strong or Saskatchewan is strong — strong leadership, this, that, and the other. And it's interesting because you know, it sort of reminds me in some ways of . . . And again I know this from history because I wasn't alive then for this election, Mr. Speaker, but it reminds me of the old Trudeau Liberal campaign of The Land is Strong — The Land is Strong.

And of course, they went to the people of Canada, the federal Liberals in terms of, you know, questions like taxation, questions like housing, questions like the well-being of the country. Trudeau and the federal Liberals went to the country and said, you know, the land is strong.

Here again today we see another government coming forward and saying, you know, the land is strong. So there's a retro approach from this Sask Party government that, you know, seizing upon an old Trudeau slogan. Kind of interesting, Mr. Speaker. But maybe it's some kind of parting gift to the member from Saskatoon Greystone as he heads off to that Liberal ticket or hopes to land on that Liberal ticket. Maybe it's some kind of a parting gift to that individual.

But what it gets down to, Mr. Speaker, is, you know, two sort of things that are going on. There's the hype in terms of the land is strong, and there's the reality. And the land is certainly strong, Mr. Deputy Speaker. People are strong and families are strong and businesses are strong in this province of ours, Mr. Speaker. And we've got tremendous bounty in terms of the things that this province has been blessed with. But in terms of the way that the government is trying to portray how well they are doing, how this government is doing on the one hand, and how different issues go unaddressed and go wanting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a lot that needs to be answered for.

And again today we've seen clear reminders in terms of the

inadequate approach when it comes to housing from this government. We see the inadequate approach when it comes to, quite frankly, to women's shelters in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We see that in terms of long-term care. We see that in terms of the general approach of this government on a number of fronts. And one of those fronts is taxation certainly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of the approach that most reasonable people would have is that you'd want to have a progressive taxation system. You'd want to have a fair return to the people of Saskatchewan for their resources.

And you know, you need not look any further than a recent interview that the Premier gave to Robin Sears with the Macdonald-Laurier Institute where he recounted the whole potash play by PCS [Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc.] in terms of taking BHP and Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and how that was going to go. And in the midst of that, the Premier, of course rightly and wisely, asked the former premier of Alberta, Peter Lougheed, his advice. And as recounted by Robin Sears and the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, the Premier is asked by Lougheed, you know, well, Brad, whose potash is it? To which the Premier said, well, Mr. Premier, it's the people of Saskatchewan's. And you know what, Mr. . . . And to quote from the article from the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, Mr. Speaker.

It's interesting to see the way that the barking and the yelling and the shouting will continue from the members opposite, and maybe some of their backbenchers don't have enough to do with their time. Maybe some of their front-benchers, who should know better, who should be working harder, don't have enough to do with their time. But we see this, this isn't the first time we see something like this, Mr. Speaker.

So in terms of what happens at the Sask Party convention, if these individuals are so interested in convention activities, it's interesting that there was a resolution brought forward to introduce financial literacy in high schools in the province. They're supporting that at the recent Sask Party convention and, you know, a straightforward resolution, Mr. Speaker. It seems to be quite a sensible proposition. But of course what happens is you have one of the delegates gets up and says, you know, this is a very dangerous thing, Mr. Speaker, because this might get the students in our high schools thinking about the co-operative sector and the credit union sector. You know? How ridiculous, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But to me it speaks volumes to the kind of yelling and barking that goes on over there and passes for comments over there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of what they're trying to speak to.

And it's this sort of hard right wing, you know, so far out on the right wing they might fall off the edge of the planet, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the way that they approach a number of questions. And to the Premier's credit — I'll give him credit, Mr. Speaker — he's managed to keep the big tent sort of pointed forward. He's managed to keep different markers out in terms of, no we're not a bunch of wacko right wingers, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But in moments like that where the overarching concern of a delegate at the Sask Party convention is about the dangers of exposing high school students to the co-operative sector and the credit union sector, you know, it boggles the mind, Mr. Speaker, on one hand. But on the other hand, any of these questions, unless you've got the hard right

wing sort of prescription, you'll get no end of yelling and shouting from the members as to, you know, this needs to be more right wing or even further right wing or fall off the edge of the planet kind of right wing.

So, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the record of this government, we see again some very different things being preached on the billboards and some very different things happening in the budgets and in the realities of Saskatchewan people. And when it comes to the record of, you know . . .

And again the record of the Saskatchewan NDP is not perfect. I've never claimed that, Mr. Speaker. We're humans. And in terms of what we've tried to do in terms of public policy, I think we had some successes, and I think that we had some things we needed to do a better job on.

But one of the things that happened after the '91 election, Mr. Speaker, of course there was a financial situation to be taken care of, a mess that was left on the step of the incoming government. And you know, if I might add parenthetically, Mr. Deputy Speaker, would but that '91 government had been left \$2 billion plus in terms of cash surplus on hand. But they weren't, Mr. Speaker. They were left with a devastating fiscal situation, and they had some very hard decisions to make.

But as the Saskatchewan NDP approaches these projects, Mr. Speaker, we stand for fairness. We stand for getting a good return for the people of Saskatchewan. And again, it's been great to take part in the debate today here, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to recognize my colleague from Melville-Saltcoats for creating a rather stirred debate here this morning, Mr. Speaker. Lessons to be learned from that level of expertise and that level of delivery.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, it was only a couple of . . . Mr. Deputy Speaker, sorry, couple of days ago on Tuesday when several of us in here attended the chamber luncheon and we heard that kind of passion from our Premier as well as 800 businessmen and women from the province and from around the city to listen to that.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by going back a little bit in politics. It's my understanding that James Carville, one of the strategists in the Clinton campaign, apparently had posted some sayings in the war room. And probably one of the most famous ones, and I quote, and I want to emphasize it's a quote. It simply said, "The economy, stupid." That statement has been dissected and it has been added on to. It has been articulated in many different forms over the years. But for me, Mr. Speaker, it really, really talks about the importance of the economy.

I've spent a lifetime in the helping sector. I started out teaching school in the elementary system, small children, trying to help them grow. Moved on to an administrative position. Went on to serve on an elected board. Only trying to help people. Without a strong economy, Mr. Speaker, that is simply not going to happen.

In Saskatchewan we can truly relate to that because for 16 years prior to us coming into government, we had a government that did its very best to fund itself through taxation. And we know the results. We know the results of what happened with that economic philosophy: 176 schools closed, 52 hospitals closed, 19 long-term care facilities closed, 1,200 long-term care beds gone. We haven't even practised yet. They had choir practice this morning. We didn't have choir practice, Mr. Speaker. One Plains hospital closed.

Mr. Speaker, when was the last time you saw in the city of Regina five construction cranes? Take a look outside, Mr. Speaker, and you'll see that. So with regards to Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can see the importance of the economy.

However since 2007, Mr. Speaker, there's been a pronounced paradigm shift. And let me just quote, hot off the press actually, a letter we received — I believe the opposition received it as well this morning — from Steve McLellan, Chair of the Saskatchewan chamber, and let me quote part of that letter. It says, and I quote:

In his November 4th business update, Paul Martin (one of the ABEX MCs) noted an interesting trend, that the overwhelming majority of the evening's winners were companies which were not in existence before 2006. He said, "Basically, this year's event marked the arrival of the new entrepreneurial Saskatchewan" and that "The provincial economy is forever changed."

And they want to go back. If I continue:

It is indeed true [still part of the quote] that the atmosphere in the room that evening was different than at the same event decades ago. There is a sense of optimism, of opportunity, and belief that if you want something enough and work hard enough [Mr. Speaker] it's possible to succeed beyond expectation.

Mr. Speaker, we don't want to go back to that.

Mr. Speaker, there's been an obvious paradigm shift in our province, a shift from a have-not province to a have province, Mr. Speaker. From a place to be . . . from a place to be from, to a place to be; from looking back to looking forward.

In that new paradigm, Mr. Speaker, there have been all kinds of success stories, and I want to, I want to just bring to light a couple of those. And I believe they're the ones that Steve McLellan was referring to. We all know the success story of Hillberg & Berk, a young lady from the province of Saskatchewan who has become one of the leading jewellery designers in the province, in the country, if not in North America, and in fact in Europe when we know that her products and her design and her energy has gone into designing a brooch specifically for Her Majesty the Queen, and worn three times I might add, which is quite a significant accomplishment for one of our Saskatchewan entrepreneurs.

[12:00]

The district brewers, Mr. Speaker. The story of a young fellow

that graduated with an engineering degree, wanted to become a master brewer, went to school further in Chicago and learned how to become a master brewer, came back to Saskatchewan. Why? Because there was an environment, an atmosphere that was conducive to him opening up a business in this province and contribute, creating the — I don't know if I'm allowed to say it; I'm going to say it anyway — Mûs Knuckle, a product, and that's U with an umlaut, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a very famous Saskatchewan product.

Tentree, tentree apparel, Mr. Speaker. A couple of young entrepreneurs, Emsleys by name, contributing not only to the economy of Saskatchewan but environmentally conscious as well, Mr. Speaker.

The Rock Creek bistro in Regina. And as I mentioned before, Mr. Speaker, when was the last time you saw five construction cranes operating in the city of Regina?

Well guess what, Mr. Speaker? Let me just talk for a couple of minutes about affordability, for example. On October the 1st, 2014, Mr. Speaker, our government increased minimum wage to \$10.20 an hour. Since 2007 our government has increased minimum wage six times, 28.3 per cent increase, from \$7.95 to \$10.20. Our minimum wage will be indexed, Mr. Speaker, on the cost of living. Indexing of the minimum wage will provide security for our minimum wage earners and ensure predictability for business owners in this province. That's helping people, Mr. Speaker. That's what I'm used to, and that's what I stand behind and that's what I will continue to advance.

This simply doesn't happen if government continues to fund itself or through taxation. Let's talk a little bit about taxes in this province. Since 2007 the Saskatchewan Party government's tax reductions have saved families almost \$2.8 billion. Saskatchewan residents will save \$480 million this year due to those tax cuts. If that's not helping Saskatchewan families, Mr. Speaker, I don't know what is.

For example, Mr. Speaker, an individual taxpayer pays no tax on his first \$18,650. A family of four earning \$50,000 annually will pay just \$166 in provincial tax compared to \$2,302 in 2007, Mr. Speaker. And I could go on. And what about royalties, in terms of the benefits we gain from royalties for helping Saskatchewan people? In oil alone, since 2007, \$7.74 billion in oil revenues; in the previous seven years under the previous government, 4.12. Potash royalties under our government, \$700 million; the previous seven, 230. And in uranium since 2007-08, \$674 million in royalties; under their previous seven years, 303.

Mr. Speaker, those are the kind of numbers that talk about helping Saskatchewan families. Mr. Speaker, the unintended consequences of raising taxes, intended or unintended, Mr. Speaker, are significant. Increasing taxes on businesses causes intended or unintended consequences: inadequate income, low wages, high prices, perhaps shoddy merchandise, poor choice, maybe no choice, lost jobs, evictions, homelessness, poverty, and crime. Mr. Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to speak to this motion.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from

Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — All right. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is a pleasure entering into this debate. And I think this is a very important discussion that we have here because, as my colleagues on this side talked about, who's listening and who's out there connecting with people and talking about issues that really matter to people. And I do want to acknowledge and, I'm not sure if thank is the right word, but acknowledge. I just have to say, the member from Saltcoats, I always think of his passion, and when he gets going it's always a pleasure to hear his speeches, I think.

And also from Saskatoon Greystone in terms of . . . and I know those folks have indicated that they . . . I mean it almost sounds like they're ready to campaign. They're ready to go. But we know that they're not going to campaign. I'm going to campaign. And I often think of what the Minister of Finance will tell us when we want to know what's in the budget. He will tell us, so many sleeps or whatever. Have patience; you'll find out when you find out. And they will find out when it's time for them to find out about our campaign. It's good that they're interested. It's very good that they're interested, but we're talking about issues that really, really matter to people in this province, that really matter to this province.

But I do want to talk about what I've been hearing and what happened in September. And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do talk about this every day, and that is the issue about what happened in September when this government let a business off the hook when they had a fixed-price contract. Now the Premier will go on now, and they will laugh. But this is something serious, and I think this is true. I think this is true that past behaviour indicates what will happen in the future. This is what they will say. This is what the Premier will say. And so here they are, and they're all nodding their heads. That's right. But here you have a situation and every day . . . And I think this is a serious matter, that they've indicated that how they relate to business on contracts is up in the air. Who really knows what will happen? If you're a friend of that government, you get treated in a different way. You get treated in a different way.

If you've got a fixed-price contract, it's only common sense that you honour the contract, that you honour the contract. Now they will argue, and if you listen . . . Oh it's silent. Now they won't want to argue except for when I'm talking, you know. But you'll hear over there that they think there's a different take on this. This is not a different take on this. This is the situation, and we saw it exposed in the light of day when they let Deveraux off the hook for their 48 units, a housing project for low-income people. Let them off the hook, and it was a fixed-price contract. And this is a big deal. This is a big deal on many different levels, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But I have to say, and I'm going to quote from a local columnist in *The StarPhoenix* on September 10th and I'll read it here, "But the Saskatchewan Party . . ." and I quote:

But the Saskatchewan Party government's rather bizarre decision to allow Deveraux Developments to walk away from its commitment to build a 48-unit low-income housing unit in north Regina is much more than that.

It is the latest indication that Premier . . . seems unwilling to do anything to displease business . . . even when he knows business is dead wrong and even if it means his government failing on its promises to deliver low-income housing.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a pretty important indictment when this Premier will say, what you do will indicate what you will do in the future. So here is a government that's walking away from fixed-price contracts. Now this one was a \$10 million contract. But we've talked a lot in this House about schools, and they've raised it up in this debate here today about the P3 [public-private partnership] schools and how we know that there's a lot of question marks across Canada about that.

We've heard just recently, in the last couple of weeks, about the BC [British Columbia] auditor raising concerns about what it means for having to borrow at higher interest rates, forcing local school boards to take on loans that at a higher interest rate will add unnecessary costs, will add unnecessary costs because this is how this government approaches business. And then the big question mark out there is, will these huge contracts be at risk? Because we know, we know the government now has a policy of, if you're in trouble with these fixed-price contracts, you can walk away. You can walk away. And especially if you're a friend of this government, you can walk away, because that's what Deveraux did. They walked away.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think they're out of touch. They're out of touch and the Deveraux . . . And I just talked about that. I wish I could go on. But I could go on about the consultants. Now we understand that in the last . . . Since 2008, the use of private consultants has gone up over 200 per cent — 200 per cent. While they're cutting the workforce provincially, it's gone up 200 per cent. And who is the biggest consultant? John Black. John Black and his gravy plane. That is something else. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know the members over there are kind of getting worked up when we talk about this, when we talk about this and we expose this . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — I would ask the members to come to order as the member from Saskatoon Centre has the floor, and I would ask the members to respect his right to speak. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. And so we . . . Did you guys pay the bills? Is there a smart meter out there? It's the smart meters. It's revenge of Sensus. Give us our money or it's revenge of Sensus. Okay, there you go.

All right. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. But I was talking about the use of consultants and how it's really grown out of control with this government. And we could look at specific examples like John Black, or we can look at bigger examples. And this is how this government operates. This is how this government operates. And how can they do that?

But you know, I want to talk about what we're doing and I know people are anxious to hear what we're talking about. And we were talking about the level playing field for businesses, so

we've offered forward the procurement bill. And we wonder why this government won't run with that. It makes a lot of sense. It's a common sense approach. Why is it . . . And we hear the member from Regina stand up and he congratulates people from the Regina Chamber of Commerce, and we think that's a wonderful thing. But all of them, all of them have the question: why can't we have a level playing field here in Saskatchewan? Why is it that this government tends to have an infatuation with going out of the province, going out of the province for their work? We have some real questions about that.

And of course the one that I think is really particularly exciting is around buy local. You know, I represent downtown Saskatoon, and we have the biggest corporations but we also have the most entrepreneurs. And this is exciting and this is really interesting. And they've approached us. They've approached us. And when they've been rejected by that side, when they've been rejected by that side and say, they don't want anything to do with this buy local, ironically, you know, they talk about who they're friends with and who's in their inner circle.

You know, we have support even from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business on this. We think buy local is a great idea. Why can't we get behind this idea? Why can't we get behind it and say, listen, we'll do the buy local, and we know what that means, and maybe we do it once a month. But that means people get familiar with their coffee shop, with their bakery, with their local garage, their local garage, their local tire shop, getting to know who their local business people are. And then when you do that it starts to grow and it grows. And we think that's a great idea. It's about supporting small business people, and that's a huge, huge thing.

So, Mr. Speaker, what we'll do is we'll talk about good ideas and we'll talk about common sense ideas like buy local, a level procurement field. That's really important. But we are deeply worried, and we understand why this government wants to divert attention from what their habits are getting to be — using out-of-province, out-of-country consultants and corporations, and walking away from fixed-price contracts. That's not the way to do business in Saskatchewan. People are saying that sends a weird signal to people who expect . . . who want a level playing field. So, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting this motion. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — Time for debate has expired. Questions. I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Certainly there is always a balance to be struck between the funds raised by government and the public services on offer. And one of the things that this government has done, Mr. Speaker, and we're hearing a debate about taxation, is talk about how they're reducing the size of the public service.

But yesterday, Mr. Speaker, from the Provincial Auditor we find out that they've reduced the size of public service on the one hand, but they've increased the use of consultants by 228 per cent. My question is to the member from Regina Douglas Park. How the heck does that work? Why are they increasing

the use of consultants by 228 per cent? Isn't that the true indication of what this government is up to?

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

Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And what a surprise that I would get that question. I'm really taken aback.

Mr. Speaker, we make decisions in government that are best going to benefit the people of Saskatchewan, and we will continue to do that so that we can continue to help our people. And need I say it again? Since 2007 tax reductions to the people of this province total \$2.8 billion. Saskatchewan residents alone this year will save \$480 million from tax cuts. Since 2007 our government increased the personal spousal and child exemption amounts and introduced a . . . [inaudible] . . . income tax credit. If it takes some IT personnel, some separate contracts to help us meet those needs and those goals, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to do that. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the NDP's most recent convention, a resolution was brought forward that stated that the Saskatchewan NDP re-examine its position on the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline. To the member from Regina Lakeview: will you reconfirm your support for the Keystone XL pipeline?

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, we know that in Saskatchewan we have miles and miles, kilometres and kilometres of pipelines, and that what we have are resources in Saskatchewan that need to be sold to the world. Keystone XL pipeline is one of those sort of assets that all of us in our part of the world need.

The more important question I think is, why is this government in a situation where they have cut out all the local engineers, architects, construction companies, all of those, from the procurement policies of the government? You know, we go to Christmas receptions in this season and we're getting a lot of pressure from people to say, tell this government to smarten up.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and of course my question obviously will go to the member from Regina Douglas Park because he's the only one of the three speaking today that's actually running in the next election. So we think it's important to hear his point of view in the next . . . today.

And it was interesting to hear him go through the chamber of commerce award winners. That's very good and we congratulate those people. But here we know in Saskatoon, Aim Electric and Amtech Electric are two electrical contractors in our province here. And why does that member think it's okay to send electrical contracts out of province to sketchy Texas

companies like Grid One instead of supporting our own businesses here in Saskatchewan like the ones he just got up and congratulated?

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

Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And again I referred to the fact that we will continue to do, in this province, what we believe is best to meet the needs of our citizens. And the record is that 1 in 10 contracts approximately go to firms that compete in a fair bidding process to get those contracts, Mr. Speaker.

I want to go on though and add to that a little bit. In terms of helping the citizens and the people of our province, 750 more long-term care beds in our province, Mr. Speaker, that's helping people, Mr. Speaker. And how do we get that? We get that by making sound economic decisions based on what's best for the people of our economy.

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

Mr. Doke: — Mr. Speaker, in last week's debate the member from Regina Rosemont said that "Far too often I see this government far too willing to sell out the interests of Saskatchewan people and businesses . . ." Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that's rich coming from the members opposite because it's clear from the resolution passed at their convention if they were in government they would hike taxes for Saskatchewan business people. It's the same old NDP ideology that ran families and businesses out of our province, just like when they were in government and raised taxes 17 times.

To the member from Lakeview: why would the people and business owners of Saskatchewan trust a party that continually raises taxes and plans to raise taxes again if they form government? Mr. Speaker, I don't want to sound like the judge, but please answer the question.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, that's a very interesting question because I think the Premier was here last week listening to that particular answer by the member from Rosemont. So he gave a whole speech to 800 people a couple of days ago, and he said, no point being procurement boy scouts. Well the member from Rosemont was telling the Premier a number of times, stop being a boy scout. Stop being so naive about how procurement policies for the province of Saskatchewan work.

The business community of Saskatchewan is saying, grow up, you guys. Grow up. Make sure that you give us the same kind of advantages our neighbours in Alberta and British Columbia and Ontario get. That's the answer for that particular question.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This government has gone on record committing to lowering the

corporate tax rate from 12 per cent to 10 per cent over the next three years. This is from 2012. Now of course, Mr. Speaker, we've yet to see that materialize. My question to the member from Regina Douglas Park: are they still on track to cut the corporate tax rate from 12 per cent to 10 per cent, and where will they make up the \$200 million or so that is entailed in that?

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

Mr. Marchuk: — Thanks. Thanks again, Mr. Speaker. And again our record speaks for itself, Mr. Speaker. We've had seven continuous balanced budgets, Mr. Speaker. We will do and we will continue to implement programs that we believe will help to develop the economy of this province in a way that's going to continue to benefit the citizens of Saskatchewan.

I don't need to go over the record again, Mr. Speaker. We've made over 100 promises. We've kept those promises, Mr. Speaker. That speaks to the integrity of our platform going forward. It speaks to the integrity of our government, Mr. Speaker, and we'll continue to do that as we benefit the citizens of our province. Thank you.

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

Mr. Parent: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, we continue to see inconsistencies from the members opposite. It is clear they have no plan because even they don't know what their policies are. Last week we heard the members talk about their procurement and buy-local bills, acting as if they were going to be the champions on businesses in Saskatchewan. This week we are finding out that if they were in government they would hike the taxes on local businesses.

To the member from Regina Lakeview: how can the businesses of Saskatchewan trust your party when it is evident that you are speaking out of both sides of your mouth?

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, this is really cute. The member that just asked this question is the secretary for procurement and working with small businesses. We haven't heard a word from him. We heard a little bit from the Premier, where he copied the member from Rosemont's speech from last Thursday when he spoke to the government. And he finally is waking up that you can't be naive or a boy scout when you're dealing with procurement.

Procurement in Saskatchewan has gotten to the point where business people are coming to us regularly and saying, smarten up, go to the government . . . Last night I was at a business event, a Christmas party. I had three people come up to me and say, I've talked to the Premier; he's not listening. I think that we have a big problem in this province when the Premier gets so full of himself that he can't listen to the people of this province.

It's important for the building of our businesses, of our province, that we have a government . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The time for the 75-minute debate has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 607

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Broten that **Bill No. 607 — *The Buy Local Day Act*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am pleased to enter the debate on Bill 607, *An Act to encourage the Patronage of Local Businesses, Suppliers and Services*. There's many opportunities to rise and speak to legislation before us, Mr. Speaker, and occasionally there are bills that really speak to you, Mr. Speaker, as an MLA.

And I'm the daughter of folks who actually had a small business. My parents had a small, local business wholesaling herbs and specialty tomatoes to places like Dutch Growers and the co-op greenhouses, as well as being, they were long-time vendors at the Saskatoon Farmers' Market. I grew up, Mr. Deputy Speaker, spending every Saturday of my life, every Saturday of my life, my early years, working at the farmers' market, Mr. Speaker. And I can remember the days where my parents had to make deliveries to particular places like Dutch Growers or the co-op, the franticness of getting the orders out, Mr. Speaker. So I think buying local is an incredibly important thing.

So in terms of what this bill is about and where it came from, Mr. Speaker, it is a simple, straightforward bill, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out in his second reading speech. It couldn't get much more simple or common sense than this, Mr. Speaker. There is absolutely nothing controversial about it. This should be an easy thing, it's an easy thing for our side of the House to support. It should be a very easy thing for the other side of the House to support as well.

It simply proclaims the first Saturday of every month as a buy-local day. Mr. Speaker, we support it. Local business people support it. An organization called Sasklandia has been pushing for it. The CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] supports it, Mr. Speaker. It is an easy thing to do.

As some members opposite have pointed out, every day should be buy-local day. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? I would love this and I completely agree, but the reality is there are many people who actually don't consider too much or think about where they spend their money. Decisions are often driven by convenience, perceived — sometimes real — cost savings, or simply out of habit, Mr. Speaker. So proclaiming the first Saturday of every month as Buy Local Day is an incredibly easy and incredibly effective way to share how valuable local businesses are to our province's economy and to our

community, Mr. Speaker.

I can look at stats. Stats show that for every \$100 spent at a local business, \$73 stays in the province to pay local suppliers, wages, taxes, and services. Mr. Speaker, I think about my own family again, a supplier to local businesses in Saskatoon. And I know where my family spent their money, Mr. Speaker. You can contrast that with \$100 spent at a business that is not Saskatchewan-owned, and with that only \$43 per 100 stays in this province, Mr. Speaker. So \$73 for every \$100 spent — that is incredible bang for our local shopping buck, Mr. Speaker.

This is a great way to bring benefits of shopping local into the consciousness of consumers who might otherwise not give some of their shopping choices a second thought. So declaring one day a month, Mr. Speaker, as a buy-local day again can help raise the consciousness of local consumers about where we spend we our money and why it's good to spend it here at businesses, Mr. Speaker, that are locally owned and operated, Mr. Speaker.

I think in talking about Bill 607 it's important to acknowledge the folks who have raised this as an issue here in Saskatchewan. You only need to do a simple buy-local search on the Internet to discover there are many places and many communities throughout North America embarking upon a similar campaign like the one proposed with this very common sense bill, Mr. Speaker. There's places throughout North America who are doing very similar things. But this particular idea, the idea of declaring one day a month as a buy-local day here in Saskatchewan came from a group called Sasklandia: Fred Reibin, Kurtis Muench, and Roshan Hoover. These folks are working hard to build a buy-local movement here in Saskatchewan.

They have four key pillars for building a buy-local movement, including connecting local businesses in a local community because getting to know one other and making connections is key to building a buy-local movement in our province; incentivizing and celebrating buying local; increasing the supply of locally produced goods, which will mean more access to local options. And their first plank and the one that we're talking about here, Mr. Speaker, to gain support from the top, as they believe that it's the most effective way to build a movement if you have strong support from the top, and that includes governments and legislatures and not just citizens.

So this is why Sasklandia started pushing for the proclamation of a buy-local day. Very happy hearing the opposition to support this because it makes sense, Mr. Speaker. And I think colleagues on both sides of this House should be happy to support it when it comes time to the vote, Mr. Speaker.

[12:30]

I actually have a fair amount to say on buying local. There's so many great businesses in, I think about my own community of Saskatoon. We've got places like . . . When we think about shopping local, it's not just products that we're buying. It's about shopping, dining, purchasing services like a salon, for example.

We've got the Good Food Junction in Saskatoon, Salon

Williams. Vern's Place, Mr. Speaker, which is just a couple blocks from my house, which if many people know about Vern's Pizza which is where it started, Mr. Speaker, and that started in my community at Vern's Confectionery, Mr. Speaker. The Better Good is one of my favourite shop-local places. Cafe Delish, Little Bird, Earth Bound Bakery. Actually Earth Bound Bakery, it was interesting, started out as a vendor at the Saskatoon Farmers' Market. Farmers' markets are great places, little incubators for businesses often, Mr. Speaker.

So I have much to say on this topic, but I do know, noticing the hour, that I need to move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 607, *The Buy Local Day Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This House stands adjourned to 1:30 p.m. Monday.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:31.]

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