



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

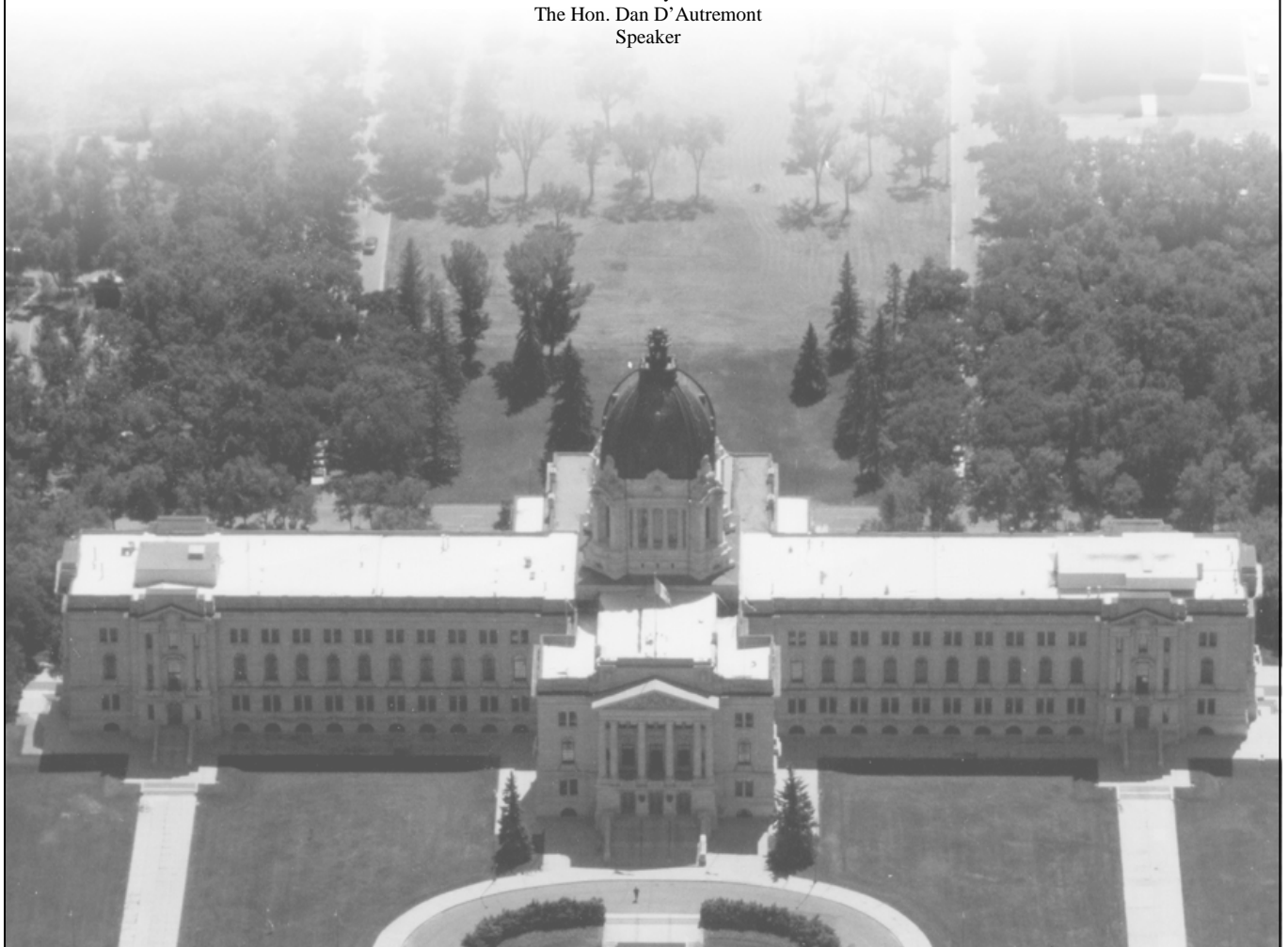
of the

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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Broten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Campeau, Hon. Jennifer	SP	Saskatoon Fairview
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Cox, Herb	SP	The Battlefords
D’Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Docherty, Hon. Mark	SP	Regina Coronation Park
Doherty, Hon. Kevin	SP	Regina Northeast
Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hutchinson, Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Jurgens, Victoria	SP	Prince Albert Northcote
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lawrence, Greg	SP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Makowsky, Gene	SP	Regina Dewdney
Marchuk, Russ	SP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Paul	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Moe, Hon. Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
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
Vacant		Prince Albert Carlton

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, sitting in the west gallery, I've got a group here that have done this province proud. Mr. Speaker, from February 13th to March 1st, 317 members of Team Sask travelled to Prince George, BC [British Columbia], to participate in the 2015 Canada Winter Games. These members included coaches, managers, mission staff, and athletes ranging in ages from 12 to 35. Collectively Team Sask participated in 19 different sports and competed against talented athletes from across the nation.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to share that Team Sask captured 28 medals in Prince George: 6 gold, 8 silver, 14 bronze, and finished in 5th place overall. This is an increase of five medals compared with the 2011 Winter Games. Well done. In addition to this impressive finish, Team Sask Mission Team was presented with the Claude Hardy Award in recognition of their leadership, co-operation, and integrity.

Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to introduce some of the coaches, athletes, and mission staff who are seated in the gallery today. These individuals represent Team Sask participants from across the province.

From Team Sask mission staff we have chef de mission, who is the head of the commission, Lorne Lasuita from the Saskatchewan Games Council. Just give us a wave when I say your names. Thanks. Executive director Mark Bracken from the Saskatchewan Games Council; senior policy analyst Ross Lynd from the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport.

Mr. Speaker, we also have with us members of Team Sask women's curling team: skip Kaitlyn Jones, third Sara England, second Shantel Hutton, lead Rayann Zerr, joining us today with their coach, Clint Krismer. This team captured a bronze medal for their skills on the ice. I wouldn't be surprised if we see them competing in the Scotties in the near future.

Seated in the gallery, Mr. Speaker, we also have Matthew Pullar who represented Saskatchewan in the sport of judo. Matthew displayed his remarkable strength and skill against 10 other athletes and earned a bronze medal in the up-to-66-kilogram

male category. Also joining us today is Madison Hart. Madison is an impressive archer who brought home a silver medal in the female individual compound event.

Some family members of our visiting athletes are here as well: Shannon England, Sara's father; Shirley Schmirler, Sara's grandmother; Carla and Kevin Jones, Kaitlyn's parents; Jeff Hutton, Shantel's father; Nadine, Rose, and Eugene Zerr, Rayann's relatives; Peter and Jeannie Yakymyk, Rayann's relatives; Terri Pullar, Matthew's mother.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the Year of Sport in Canada, I am proud to see so much athletic excellence here in our province. Team Sask has made Saskatchewan proud, and I ask, Mr. Speaker, that all members please join me in congratulating and welcoming these guests to their legislature. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I too would like to extend a warm welcome to all the officials, the athletes, their families to your legislature today. We're very, very proud of your accomplishments in Prince George and, like the minister said, we look forward to even bigger and better things from you in the future.

It takes an incredible amount of support and community effort to bring these athletes to the peaks that they have reached already, and certainly I think a big congratulation goes out to all their communities as well: the teachers, the coaches, and the family members who support all these individuals as they pursue their dreams. So again on behalf of the official opposition, we too would like to welcome all these fine folks to their Assembly. And now you get to see the sport of question period, so you're going to enjoy that as well. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the House, it is my pleasure to introduce three individuals in the Speaker's gallery here today from Carrier Forest Products. They are Bill Kordyban, president of Carrier Forest Products; Mr. Terry Kuzma, woodlands manager for Carrier Forest Products; and Mr. Dave Knight, woodlands manager for Carrier Forest Products.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the pleasure of getting to know these gentlemen over the last number of years, and they have achieved great things in our province. Perhaps the biggest achievement is the purchase and successful operation of the Big River saw mill, as we all know that it was shut down in 2006 and it held its grand reopening about a year ago. This is a significant investment in our province and we want to thank them for the investment and for the people that they employ in Saskatchewan. I look forward to meeting with them later today. I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to the legislature.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to just join with the minister here today and welcome these leaders here today from Carrier Forest Products and thank them for their work in our province and their investment and the employment they provide, and join with the minister to provide a warm welcome to these individuals here today.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members, I would like to extend a welcome and introduction to a number of individuals seated in your gallery. Seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, are a number of the constituency assistants for members belonging to the official opposition, and I would like to take a moment to thank all of them for their commitment to their job, their commitment to serving our constituents and people from across the province, and also thank them for their patience in dealing with all of the MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly], Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to have them here in the Assembly and I just want to express our gratitude and appreciation for all the work that they do on a daily basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I'd like to take this opportunity to also recognize someone seated in the west gallery. Rose Zerr served for 30 years as the journal clerk of the Assembly. She didn't actually get to see what happened on the floor here very much, but she read and wrote about it. So I'd ask members to recognize Rose and welcome her to her Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for greater support for education here in Saskatchewan. And we know that education is one of the most vital services the government can provide to its citizens, but yet this government has failed to deliver a long-term plan and vision and the necessary resources to prioritize the delivery of educational excellence. And we know that this government has failed to develop a real plan to close the Aboriginal education gap, support English as additional language students, support community schools and their communities and students. I'd like to read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on this government to immediately prioritize education by laying out a long-term vision and a plan with the necessary resources to provide the best quality education for Saskatchewan that reflects Saskatchewan's demographic and population changes, that is based on proven educational best practices, that is developed through consultation with the education sector, and that builds strong educational infrastructure to serve students and communities long into the future.

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

Mr. Speaker, the people signing this come from Cupar, La Ronge, Langenburg, Cut Knife, and Vanscoy. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents as it relates to that government creating an unsafe condition on Dewdney Avenue with their failure to properly plan safe flow of heavy-haul truck traffic. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the provincial government to immediately 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 today are signed by concerned residents. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition. Homelessness is a major problem in La Ronge and other parts of the North, and getting worse. Shelter is a basic need for everyone, but under this government it's getting harder and harder for people to find adequate housing, especially families, seniors, women, and children who face abusive situations. The problem is getting worse because of the rising level of poverty and skyrocketing home ownership costs. 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 Saskatchewan government to build a homeless shelter in the Lac la Ronge area to meet the needs of addressing homelessness in the Lac la Ronge area.

It is signed by many good people of northern Saskatchewan. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I am proud to stand in my place to present a petition on building a second bridge for Prince Albert:

The petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to guarantee that a second bridge that serves central and northern Saskatchewan as well as the city of Prince Albert will receive a commitment from senior governments.

Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are from all throughout Saskatchewan and, on this particular page of many pages, the people that have signed the petition are from

primarily from Moose Jaw. I so present.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition in support of safe staffing levels in long-term care. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners point out that many aspects of long-term care are deteriorating under this government. The petitioners talk about that this government has removed the regulations requiring a minimum standard of care for seniors, which results in neglect; and they point out that chronic understaffing in long-term care facilities results in unacceptable conditions, including unanswered calls for help, infrequent bathing, and a rise in physical violence amongst residents. 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: 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, once again this petition is signed by a swath of citizens from across Saskatchewan, including Regina, Kelvington, Melfort, Pilot Butte, Warman, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Makwa, Raymore, Buffalo Narrows, Lloydminster, Moose Jaw, Preeceville, and Tisdale. I so submit.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition in support of retaining Yarrow Youth Farm. The petitioners point out that the government is planning to close Yarrow Youth Farm and create an open-custody wing in Kilburn Hall to accommodate Yarrow's residents, that the provincial Advocate for Children and Youth declared he could not endorse such a rationalization as low-risk teens could be influenced and pressured by close proximity to high-risk youth who may be involved in serious crimes or gangs, and that Kilburn Hall is a more institutional environment that could intimidate and alienate teens that have committed minor offences. And so here is the prayer:

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 keep Yarrow Youth Farm open to ensure a caring home environment for youth who have committed minor offences and provide support to help these young people redirect their lives by setting more positive goals.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by individuals from the city of Saskatoon. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Batoche.

Children's Wish Foundation Grants Wish

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Garrett Gamble Jr.'s week changed quickly last Thursday with a surprise wish granted from the Children's Wish Foundation. Eleven-year-old Garrett suffers from Morquio syndrome, a rare disease that affects his bones, heart, and hearing. But even more importantly, Garrett is an avid hockey fan, and his dream of hanging out with the Toronto Maple Leafs for a day is coming true.

After finding out at the school assembly in Duck Lake, Garrett will be meeting with Brendan Shanahan to sign his one-day contract with the Leafs, officially becoming a member of the team. Garrett will meet the entire team at their morning skate at the Air Canada Centre. He will also lead the Leafs onto the ice and puck drop during a ceremonial faceoff.

Mr. Speaker, the Children's Wish Foundation grants between 50 and 60 wishes a year in Saskatchewan alone, with every wish as unique as the child receiving it. A wish to a sick child can make a tremendous difference.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure Garrett will have lots of stories to share with his school when he comes back to Duck Lake. I would ask all members to join me in thanking the Children's Wish Foundation for their tireless efforts, as well as to wish Garrett Gamble Jr. and his family a great trip. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

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

Tribute to Medicare Pioneer

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the Assembly today to recognize a medicare pioneer who sadly is no longer with us. Mildred Hjertaas passed away earlier this month at the age of 94. She was married to Dr. Orville Hjertaas who is remembered as the Vice-Chair of the Medical Care Insurance Commission and is one of the doctors who broke ranks during the doctors' strike. Together Millie and Orville founded the Prince Albert Co-operative Health Centre in 1962 where she worked as a registered nurse.

Millie was never named to the Order of Canada or awarded the Saskatchewan Order of Merit for her years of work on the front lines building medicare in our province, but her contribution behind the scenes should never be forgotten. Far too often our official recollections of history fail to capture the important role played by women like Millie, whose work never took on the high-profile status of her male colleagues. Nevertheless she had a lasting impact on the lives of her patients and all of us here today who enjoy the benefits of our universal health care.

I ask all members to join me in remembering Millie and her family today, and in recognizing the contributions of Millie and all of the other women who worked tirelessly to bring

affordable, accessible, and equitable medicare to everyone in our province and across our country. Thank you.

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

Saskatchewan Health Care Excellence Award

Hon. Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to rise in the House today to recognize the Eden Care Communities for winning the Saskatchewan Health Care Excellence Award this past weekend. Mr. Speaker, Eden Care Communities was recognized for its resident-centred approach to seniors' care and housing. A long-term special care home tailors its activities and offerings to the residents' needs, which helps to combat boredom, loneliness, and helplessness.

The Eden's motto is that it is their home, not an institution, and that the residents have a large say in the care that they receive. They are focused on making their residents' lives full of respect, dignity, and spontaneity.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to providing the best care for all seniors in our province. That is why our budget includes a \$10 million investment in new, targeted funding to support seniors living in their own homes as well as improving the quality of long-term care. Our government wants our seniors to be happy, well cared for, and respected in their care homes, and we commend Eden Care Communities for the great work that they do.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in congratulating Eden Care Communities on winning the Saskatchewan Health Care Excellence Award and for all the work that they do in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Annual Banquet of Hindu Society of Saskatchewan

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday evening I had the pleasure to attend the Hindu Society of Saskatchewan's 30th annual vegetarian banquet, along with the Leader of the Opposition and members from Saskatoon Nutana, Silverwood, Meewasin, Greystone, and Fairview.

As always, the food was fantastic. The guest speakers, National Chief Perry Bellegarde of the Assembly of First Nations, and Swamini Shivpriyananda of Chinmaya Mission, Toronto, were thought provoking and well received. The music and dancing was vibrant and upbeat. Mr. Speaker, there were people from all over Saskatchewan to show their support for our province's Hindu community.

It was a very enjoyable evening, and all of the money raised each year goes towards a very worthy cause, the Shri Lakshmi Narayan Temple in Saskatoon. Our city's only Hindu temple was built in 1985. We were delighted to be part of this sold-out event that supports the growth and expansion of this important cultural and spiritual institution.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that the Hindu community in Saskatchewan continues to grow by leaps and bounds. India,

Pakistan, and Bangladesh are among the top countries that newcomers to our province arrive from.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Hindu Society of Saskatchewan on another successful banquet and to join me in thanking the Hindu community for their contributions that enrich our province, Saskatchewan. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Saskatchewan Physician Honoured for 50 Years of Service

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, working for half a century is a milestone, but having the same career in the same community is even more impressive. For 50 years Dr. Michael Bishop has been practising medicine in the Kamsack area. In 1965 Dr. Bishop left his home in England and moved to Kamsack to set up a medical practice. He stayed in Kamsack and raised three children with his wife, Sally.

Dr. Bishop had plenty of opportunity over the years to move to Manitoba or Alberta. However Dr. Bishop said, and I quote, "Never. Saskatchewan is a great place to live." Mr. Speaker, Dr. Bishop's children must also agree. All three still live in Saskatchewan and have started families of their own right here in Saskatchewan.

At the age of 78, Dr. Bishop has now scaled back his workload. He goes to a nursing home once a week and tends to some of his regular patients when needed. The Sunrise Health Region announced earlier this month that a new family physician, Dr. Balbir Chhina, is now practising in Kamsack alongside Dr. Bishop.

On March 31st, tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, the Kamsack Legion will host a celebration to commemorate Dr. Bishop's 50 years of service. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of the Assembly to join me in thanking Dr. Bishop for his tremendous work and continued service. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hoopla 2015

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan's own version of March Madness kicked off last Thursday in Saskatoon for Hoopla 2015.

Organized out of Bedford Road, Bethlehem, Mount Royal and Tommy Douglas high schools in Saskatoon this year, Hoopla features 48 teams and 54 games from across the province. Mr. Speaker, with multiple divisions and both girls' and boys' teams playing, Hoopla is a unique and exciting tournament in our province.

For the boys, the winner of the 1A class was the team from Coronach. The 2A bracket was the team from St. Brieux. 3A winners was the Regina Christian School. 4A boys winners were the team from Melfort, and the 5A division winners was the team from Regina LeBoldus, defeating Saskatoon St. Joseph.

The girls 1A winners was the team from Middle Lake. The 2A girls was the team from Wynyard. The 3A girls winners are from Caronport and the 4A girls' team was Moose Jaw Peacock. The 5A girls winner was the Holy Cross Crusaders.

With many exciting games and some fierce competition, this event could have not been possible without the Saskatchewan High Schools Athletic Association who organized the tournament. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members to join with me in congratulating all of the 48 teams who competed this weekend as well as all the parents, volunteers, coaches, and trainers who supported all of our young athletes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Provincial Cheerleading Championships

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month Yara Centre in Moose Jaw was filled with upbeat music, colourful uniforms, and dazzling pompoms as more than 1,400 cheerleaders from across the province assembled in the Friendly City for the 9th Annual Saskatchewan Provincial Cheerleading Championships.

This event brought together scholastics and all-star programs with cheerleading, pom squads, and jazz teams. Athletes as young as four years of age competed, demonstrating the strength, fitness, coordination, and enthusiasm that combine to make this sport of cheerleading.

Mr. Speaker, over 3,500 attendees came to see flyers, tumblers, bases, and thirds complete stunts including jumps, tosses, flips, and lifts. Spectators were also treated to choreographed dancing and pompom routines. There were more than 100 performers during the two sessions.

The all-star cheerleading team and the Vanier Collegiate cheer and pom teams were co-hosts of the competition. Cheerleading is a growing sport in Saskatchewan, with new programs starting in recent years and the number of talented teams competing on the national and international stage.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating all the athletes who competed in the 2015 provincial cheerleading championships, and in thanking the volunteers in Moose Jaw who made this event such a success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provision of Seniors' Care

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier has previously said in this House that health care workers should have no fear in speaking out about their concerns and about their ideas. The Premier said that health care workers should "... feel completely confident, completely comfortable and protected in bringing forward any information they have in the interests of patient safety and patient care."

He said that health care workers do not have to worry about

bringing their concerns forward to health region officials, to the government, or to the opposition. And he said health care workers don't have to worry when they speak up and write letters to the editor. Is that still the Premier's position?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, certainly it's my position. It's the position of the Minister of Health, both ministers involved in health care. It would be the position of the government. I would take it from the member's line of questioning that there may be an example where this commitment's not been honoured and, if that's the case, we want to hear the details, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, Peter Bowden has been a care aid at several care facilities in Saskatoon for over a decade. He's speaking out today because he wants Saskatchewan people to know the truth about the quality of care being provided to seniors in care facilities. I met with Peter earlier today, Mr. Speaker, and I can tell the Premier that Peter cares passionately about seniors with dementia. He wants to see real improvements to their quality of care. Will the Premier meet with Peter today to hear first-hand the concerns of care aids here in Saskatchewan, and will the Premier guarantee that Peter won't face retribution for speaking up?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the Minister of Rural and Remote Health will meet with Peter to canvass the issues that he has raised to determine exactly what his concerns are and also to listen to any solutions and constructive suggestions he may have.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, I know Peter was looking forward to the opportunity to sit with the Premier and convey the concerns that he and care aids have experienced. And Mr. Speaker, I think it's important for the Premier to clearly state that no retribution would be received for the words that he expresses because Peter is incredibly concerned about the care of seniors.

He talks about horribly inadequate staffing levels. He says, on paper it's roughly one care aid for 23 residents during the night, but in reality it's usually just one care aid for 28 residents. And for part of the night, Peter says, they have just one care aid for 32 residents with dementia. He talks about residents with dementia fighting with one another or punching and kicking staff, and he talks about a quality of care for our most vulnerable seniors that is far from adequate.

Does the Premier recognize that these types of staffing levels are not safe and do not provide the quality of care that seniors deserve and require?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

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

government has understood, since we had the honour of first being elected in 2007, that the staffing complement was not adequate in terms of, not just seniors' care in Saskatchewan, but also in terms of acute care and the number of doctors practising. And that's why adding to the complement of health care workers has been at the top of the list of priorities for this government, spanning two different ministers of Health, Mr. Speaker. It's why there are 400-plus more doctors practising today. And we've completely overhauled the process for attracting foreign-trained doctors. We're training more here in the province.

It's why there are 2,600 more, more nurses of every designation working in Saskatchewan today than there were when members opposite were the government, when they had a chance to do more than talk and actually undertake some action, Mr. Speaker. It's also why this government, specific to the member's question, has increased the complement of long-term and integrated care front-line personnel by almost 800 since 2007.

Mr. Speaker, we know there's more work to be done in seniors' care. That's why in a very, very tight budget we were able to allocate additional resources for seniors' care, some \$10 million more on top of some of the emergent funding we've already provided, Mr. Speaker. We know that more is needed to be done. But I can assure members of this House that as we have increased resources for seniors' care, increased the complement of care aids, LPNs [licensed practical nurse], and nurses providing that care, so too will we be working for continuous improvement in the future.

[14:00]

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, in speaking with Peter, he's very clear that staffing levels and the conditions that he and other care aids are working under have gotten worse over the past years, Mr. Speaker.

And this government admits that they don't know if the dollars are getting to the front lines, and that's backed up by the experience of those health care workers who are coming forward. It was the minister himself who said, "I do want to have some assurance from the deputy minister that those are indeed going to the front lines of long-term care, and so we're working to confirm that." Mr. Speaker, they know where they've spent when it comes to lean consultants and those with stopwatches, Mr. Speaker. But when you speak to those on the front lines, it's a very different reality.

My question goes back to an earlier question that I had to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. I asked if Peter can be assured that he will face no retribution for speaking out today. Can the Premier confirm that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, that was his very first question, this member's very first question. I provided that answer; that remains the position of the government.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The second question I asked, if Peter indeed will be safe, and I appreciate the Premier's assurance on that.

Peter says the staffing levels only allow for a resident to be changed once a night. That means many seniors are left for hours, hours with their incontinence pads soaking wet, feeling extremely uncomfortable and cold. He also says staffing levels only allow for a resident to be repositioned once a night. That means these seniors are left in painful positions for many hours and are susceptible to bedsores. How can the Premier possibly defend that kind of neglect of our most vulnerable seniors?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to be able to confirm with the House today that since this government took office in 2007, there's a 781 full-time equivalent increase in long-term care in our integrated facilities, Mr. Speaker. And I can confirm that that is based on payroll, so in fact those individuals are not only being paid, Mr. Speaker, they're being paid for the work that they're doing in long-term care. So I can confirm that for the Leader of the Opposition today.

For LPNs, that's an increase of 40 per cent. For continuing care aids, that's an increase of 11 per cent from the time that they were the government. And RNs [registered nurse] in long-term care and in integrated facilities, that's an increase of 6 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to issues of pain and proximity and positioning, that's why this government in this budget, in what was a tight budget, we allocated \$1 million to begin purposeful rounding training in all of our facilities, Mr. Speaker. This will ensure that our residents know and can be confident to know that a staff member will be looking in on them at a set time, Mr. Speaker, throughout the day, to ensure that they're looking at the 4-Ps [personal care, positioning, possessions/proximity, and pain] around positioning, proximity to personal items, pain, and positioning, Mr. Speaker. That was included in this budget, and we look forward for that to roll out to the regions.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, in speaking and listening to Peter and speaking and listening to the care aids from Santa Maria who came forward, Mr. Speaker, they say there are more managers. They say there are more people sitting behind desks. They say there are more lean consultants with stopwatches, Mr. Speaker. But we hear very clearly from those on the front lines that there aren't more people, there aren't the right resources when it comes to providing that right care for a dementia resident in the middle of the night.

You know, a quote that Peter said that really stands out to me, Mr. Speaker, he says, "When you're helpless trying to help them, that's when it becomes a nightmare." That's the reality that front-line workers are experiencing. Peter says many seniors stay awake and cry all night because of discomfort because they're left in positions and it becomes painful, because they're left in soaking wet incontinence pads. They're

uncomfortable and they get cold because the care aids are simply run off their feet. And that is why Peter wants regulated quality of care standards and regulated staffing levels.

We know in child care settings, Mr. Speaker, we have regulated staffing ratios, but this government refuses to even consider regulated staffing levels for facilities that care for the most vulnerable seniors. What will it take for the Premier to admit that he made a mistake by getting rid of the regulated quality of care standards and by embracing the extremely general guidelines.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition is also wondering why the Government of Saskatchewan got rid of the ability for the Ministry of Health to actually inspect long-term care facilities on behalf of the people that they're serving, Mr. Speaker. What he'll leave out is the fact that the NDP [New Democratic Party] stopped doing inspections in 1996 and actually repealed that legislation about six years later, Mr. Speaker. That's the part that the Leader of the Opposition leaves out. We do have minimum standards that our facilities are obligated to follow, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to staffing, I've confirmed to the Leader of the Opposition that the position of this side of the House — unlike the members opposite that closed beds, that let staff go across the province — we have hired 781 full-time equivalents to work in long-term and integrated facilities, Mr. Speaker. This is based on payroll. This is based on actual people, positions that we are paying, Mr. Speaker.

I can give you an example in Prince Albert Parkland Health Region, from the time that they left office to today, Mr. Speaker. SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses] positions are up 30 per cent; CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees], which represents CCA [continuing care assistants] continuing care aids, as well LPNs, 13 per cent; and health sciences workers in Prince Albert Parkland Health Region up 70 per cent under this government.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this government needs to look at the number of people working on shifts. This government needs to look and listen to people like Peter who are coming forward, who say they are run off their feet, Mr. Speaker, and the right resources are not there.

It was this government that removed the regulated quality of care standards, Mr. Speaker, and instead of getting rid of them and scrapping them, they should've strengthened them. The minister's own staff has said they'd be replaced by extremely vague and general guidelines. We know from the people coming forward that it's clearly not working, and what's so frustrating is this government has heard time and time again about short-staffing.

Here's what the Saskatoon Health Region said when they submitted their urgent request to the government: "The highest priority for Saskatoon Health Region is to improve staffing and

provide basic care in a standard way at all 31 long-term care homes across the region." Saskatoon Health Region said they needed 450 full-time care aids; they got 19, Mr. Speaker. And now this government pretends that it has solved chronic short-staffing.

The minister has even said it's difficult to budget for seniors' care because they don't have the Ombudsman's report. Well, Mr. Speaker, open your ears and open your eyes is what this government needs to do, and they would know that there are real concerns there. And that's why we see this government only devoting \$1 million for non-capital needs in seniors' care facilities in this budget.

My question is for the Premier. After so much evidence of chronic short-staffing, how on earth is that acceptable?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, each and every year that this government has had the privilege of forming office, we have added to seniors' care in this province, whether it be a benefit for those seniors on a low income living in personal care homes, Mr. Speaker, because their option, up until when this government was elected, was basically to be forced into long-term care because they couldn't afford their personal care home, Mr. Speaker. We've changed that. We put a subsidy in place.

Mr. Speaker, for those seniors that are living on their own, which they want to live on their own, the seniors' income plan — touched once by the NDP and then never again for 16 years, Mr. Speaker — we've addressed that a number of times. With respect, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatoon we added 100 beds to Samaritan Place, a brand new facility. The members opposite opposed those new 100 beds. We added funding for 63 new beds at Oliver Lodge. And with respect to that, Mr. Speaker, added funding to Oliver Lodge of 134 per cent over the last seven years. CCAs, the continuing care aids, are up 104 per cent, and LPNs at that facility up 474 per cent under this government, Mr. Speaker.

We know there's more work to be done for seniors in this province, but that work's going to be done by this side of the House, not the members opposite.

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

Housing of Young Offenders

Ms. Sproule: — On March 17th the Corrections minister told the media that her ministry had listened to concerned residents of Buena Vista and there would not be a gate in the alley for young offenders to leave the Kilburn facility. This is the same promise that was made by her official at the March 10th community meeting in front of about 100 community members. But that turns out not to be true because last week this government put a gate in the alley for those young offenders to use. So now contrary to what the minister has said and contrary to what her officials told the community gathering, there is a gate in the alley.

To the Premier: why did this government pretend that it had listened to concerned residents and say there wouldn't be a gate in the alley when that is not true?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are closing an underused Yarrow facility and consolidating it with an empty wing of Kilburn Hall in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. We're responding to the changing realities in our province and our justice system. Our youth numbers are down, Mr. Speaker, and we should actually be quite happy about that. And we've seen this decline over the last 20 years. Our youth institutions remain at 49 per cent capacity, Mr. Speaker. That is why Yarrow is closing and the youth, the five youth that were remaining are being moved into Kilburn Hall.

With respect to the gate that the member asks about, the commitment stands, as what commitment we made with respect to where the youth will enter and exit Kilburn will remain. And that promise is steadfast, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the gate was going up last weekend, and the minister said there wouldn't be one. So I'm not sure what she's talking about.

Randall Buhr drove down to Regina today because he's incredibly frustrated by this government's ham-handed approach to shutting down the Yarrow Youth Farm and relocating an open custody facility into the Buena Vista neighbourhood without proper consultation. But Randall is especially frustrated by the inaccurate information this government gave to local residents, especially when it said there wouldn't be a gate in the alley and now there's a gate.

The Corrections minister completely botched the Dale's House situation here in Regina. She didn't ask the right questions. She repeatedly gave wrong information and the government had to scrap those plans. We see the exact same situation unfolding in Saskatoon.

Will the Premier meet today with Randall to hear first-hand what this government's plan means for Randall's family and the Buena Vista neighbourhood?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, the reasons for the gate . . . I quite frankly don't understand the reasons for the gate at this point in time. But having said that, Mr. Speaker, the commitment that was made when the youth will be exiting and going into the facility will remain the front. We said, we listened to the members of the community. That was what they wanted. They didn't want the youth being, moving into the alley and through Buena Vista area through the alleys. That commitment remains steadfast, Mr. Speaker.

The reasons why we are moving from Yarrow into the Kilburn

facility, Mr. Speaker, is quite frankly we've seen a reduction in the numbers of young offenders in our youth system. And I don't understand the members opposite, when we're operating at 49 per cent capacity within our youth facilities, why we wouldn't consolidate it. And quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan expect us to look at the situation, analyze it, and make sure that Saskatchewan taxpayers' dollars are spent wisely, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, once again there's a huge disconnect between what this minister says and what her officials are doing. Randall's 13-year-old daughter wrote a letter to the government. She says how disappointed she is in the Sask Party government for giving inaccurate information. And she says, "If this issue's not resolved, I will no longer feel safe playing in my own back yard, going for walks with my sister, staying home alone, or babysitting." She also says, "It's extremely unfair that you did not consult with anyone on this."

Will the Premier intervene and put a stop to the plan to shut down Yarrow and relocate it to the Buena Vista neighbourhood?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, of course I will meet with the young person and her mother if they are here today, or any time I will meet with them. Of course I'll meet with them.

And with respect to the open custody area of Kilburn facility, Mr. Speaker, the young offenders were sentenced to open custody, Mr. Speaker. They go to school within the communities. That's exactly what our justice system has been mandated to do. The judge makes sure that the young person is housed into a proper facility and is participating in areas of our community, Mr. Speaker. This will not change, Mr. Speaker. Yarrow will be closed as of tomorrow, and the five youths that were remaining at Yarrow will be moved into Kilburn.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I've seen the comfortable spaces the youth have at Yarrow. I've seen the cells that they're now going to be sleeping in. I would challenge this minister to spend a night in one of those cells and tell me if she thinks that's where they should be.

Nothing in this government's plan to shut down Yarrow Youth Farm and relocate an open custody corrections facility into the Buena Vista neighbourhood makes any sense. The Children's Advocate opposes it. Defence for Children International opposes it also, saying that it represents a backwards step. The Saskatoon Tribal Council opposes it because they know the value of the Yarrow Youth Farm. And Buena Vista residents oppose it because they were not consulted and they've been repeatedly given false information.

Now that the Premier knows how ill informed his Corrections

ministry is on this file, how reckless this government's plan is, why won't he intervene and at least put this plan on hold until major concerns are addressed?

[14:15]

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite refer to, that this is a good idea to consolidate our facilities. The programming in these facilities is absolutely imperative, and the programming that was at Yarrow will be set up in Kilburn Hall, Mr. Speaker.

The NDP closed three youth facilities while they were in power, Mr. Speaker, 11 years ago, a total of 42 beds. Now these were open custody youth, and the members opposite when they were in government then moved these open custody young offenders into a closed custody facility called Paul Dojack here in Regina, Mr. Speaker.

I don't understand what they're referring to. It's okay when they did it, but when this side of the House decides to do it for good reason, Mr. Speaker, 49 per cent occupancy within our young offender facilities, all of a sudden it isn't a good idea, Mr. Speaker. This is a good idea for the people of Saskatchewan and for the young offenders in the province.

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

Hyperbaric Chamber and Plans for Moose Jaw Hospital

Ms. Chartier: — Since early 2013, the Health minister has been saying over and over again that a hyperbaric chamber will not be included in the new Moose Jaw Hospital. On March 11th, just a couple weeks ago, a Ministry of Health official said definitively that "It will not be a part of the Moose Jaw Hospital." But on Thursday the Premier said, "Its presence in the new Moose Jaw Hospital is potentially an option . . ." And then the Health minister went out into the rotunda and told reporters, "We will look at what it would cost to add some additional space to the Moose Jaw Hospital."

Was the Health minister accurate when he said this government is actually looking at adding additional space to the Moose Jaw Hospital for the hyperbaric chamber?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member opposite. Unfortunately she cut off the rest of what I had to say out in the rotunda, which happens a lot around here. Mr. Speaker, I said it was highly unlikely that that was going to be the case, to add it to the new hospital. But what I said was in the analysis that we're doing in terms of building new space in an existing facility, looking at adding space to that facility, as well as what it would cost to provide the services 100 per cent out of the province, Mr. Speaker, we're going to do an analysis of all of what those costs would be — the upfront capital costs as well as the ongoing costs, Mr. Speaker — before we make any

decisions.

So that was my answer then, Mr. Speaker. That's my answer today. And I'd appreciate it if the member opposite could maybe quote everything that I said out in the rotunda, not just a piece of it.

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

Ms. Chartier: — For several years this government has been adamant, adamant, Mr. Speaker, that the hyperbaric chamber will not be in the new Moose Jaw Hospital. But now the Premier says it's an option, and the Health minister says the government is actually looking at adding additional space to the hospital. He said that last week, Mr. Speaker. That is what both of them said on Thursday. So to the minister: when did this government start looking at adding additional space to the new Moose Jaw Hospital?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I would . . . Not to give advice to the member opposite, but maybe just dispense with the script and ask a different question because I just said, Mr. Speaker, I just said that as we're doing the analysis, we're looking at all the different costs that it would entail, Mr. Speaker, as well as adding space to the facility that is currently under construction. Mr. Speaker, we'll use all that information to make our analysis and make our decision.

But I can say that we're very excited about the new Moose Jaw Hospital, Mr. Speaker, the fact that it'll add an additional MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] to southern Saskatchewan to serve the people of this province. And in fact I think it's important to note, Mr. Speaker, when the foundation approached the government to be able to raise money for additional space as well as a piece of equipment, it was the foundation as well as the region agreeing that the highest priority was an MRI, Mr. Speaker. That's what the foundation has raised the money for. That's the space that they wanted to raise money for, Mr. Speaker. And I think that that's going to be a great addition as well as that entire facility will be to the people of this province including southern Saskatchewan and Moose Jaw.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the minister should lean over and talk to his boss about what he said on Thursday.

Just a couple of weeks ago, the Ministry of Health was firm that the hyperbaric chamber will not be in the new Moose Jaw Hospital. But now the Sask Party government is scrambling, and they're actually looking at adding space to the new hospital after letting their high-priced lean consultants shrink the design way too far. This is the exact same thing that happened in Saskatoon. This government let its lean consultants shrink the size of the children's hospital, then it scrambled to add space back into the design.

To the minister: when did his analysis start? How much

analysis has been done? And how much will this cost to add more space? I'd like to know, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll maybe just correct the member opposite once again in this House. Mr. Speaker, the reason why we had to add additional space to the children's hospital, Mr. Speaker, is because of the fact that this province was growing at even a faster rate than this side of the House thought possible.

Now the members opposite didn't think that the province could grow. In fact for years, decades, Mr. Speaker they were used to seeing the population of this province shrink, Mr. Speaker. But in fact we thought that the population of the province could grow, unlike the members opposite who said it was statistically impossible for the province to grow to the rate of the national average rate of growth, Mr. Speaker. In fact what happened, from when the projection started on the children's hospital, the province grew even faster than the rate of the national average in Canada, Mr. Speaker. That is great news for the province.

I know the members opposite don't like that, Mr. Speaker, but we're a growing province. We're a province that people want to move to because of jobs and opportunity, and most of all, Mr. Speaker, because there's not an NDP government and there's not one anywhere in sight.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Procurement Transformation Action Plan

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Friday I had the opportunity to address our partners at the North Saskatchewan Business Association and announce our government's procurement transformation action plan. That plan has three goals. First, to ensure Saskatchewan businesses are treated fairly and respectfully when bidding on government and Crown contracts, to bring greater simplicity and consistency to public procurement, and to take steps to drive best value for taxpayers.

Thirteen actions will be undertaken as part of this plan. These include, first and foremost, making best value the basis of our procurements. Making decisions based on strictly on lowest cost is not always the most strategic approach. Rather it will consider a wide variety of factors such as lifestyle costs, quality of materials, asset performance, and more to ensure taxpayers are well served.

Further, as our Premier has clearly stated, we are no longer going to be Boy Scouts when it comes to trade. We heard about the differences between how we and other provinces approach our mutual commitments under the AIT [Agreement on Internal Trade]. Moving forward we will steer a course to ensure that we take advantage of all available room within our trade agreements. Therefore the Crowns will follow the AIT only when required to do so — full stop.

We are also taking a number of steps that will improve the procurement process such as developing vendor performance evaluations, simplifying our documents and making them more consistent, and better recognizing businesses who are good corporate citizens such as those who engage well with Aboriginal workers.

These actions were the result of months of consultation. The staff at Priority Saskatchewan undertook over 140 meetings with businesses, business associations, and the public sector leaders to ensure the needs of all partners could be heard and that hasty decisions were not proposed without time to fully consider their impact. Importantly, these actions complement our efforts to seek freer, more open, and more transparent trade.

We will continue to encourage the federal government to pursue international trade agreements to the benefit of Saskatchewan producers and consumers. At the same time we will continue to play a leadership role in the pursuit of renewed AIT in Canada, one which is more like the New West Partnership Agreement.

Mr. Speaker, feedback from Saskatchewan businesses on our action plan has been encouraging and validates our decision to consult widely with local industry before rushing to propose solutions. The Saskatchewan Manufacturing Council and the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters called it a win for Saskatchewan manufacturers. In particular they wrote, and I quote:

I commend Minister Wyant and the Government of Saskatchewan on their initial steps toward the development of a strategic procurement policy that promotes fairness and competitive reciprocity for Saskatchewan manufacturers as well as best value for Saskatchewan taxpayers.

Procurement is both a large and delicate file to navigate. While there is much more work to be done, the action plan set by Minister Wyant through Priority Saskatchewan addresses the core recommendations CME has made to government and charts a clear path forward for timely implementation.

The Saskatchewan Construction Association said that it applauds the Government of Saskatchewan for taking a significant step forward on improving access to procurement opportunities in Saskatchewan, and that the government is demonstrating its commitment to global best practices in developing a fair, balanced, and vibrant Saskatchewan economy.

The president of the NSBA [North Saskatoon Business Association] calls it a very positive direction, while Shantel Lipp of the Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association said her organization was very pleased.

Mr. Speaker, some of the actions will require changes to legislation as it is currently written. Given the industry enthusiasm we are seeing, I look forward to receiving the full support of the opposition as we move forward into levelling the playing field for Saskatchewan businesses.

Before concluding, Mr. Speaker, let me extend my thanks to

everyone who contributed to this project: Lionel LaBelle and the staff at SaskBuilds who led the consultations; the MLA for Saskatoon Meewasin and Legislative Secretary for Priority Saskatchewan, for allowing us access to his extensive Rolodex and expertise in the sector which enabled fruitful consultations; and most importantly, Mr. Speaker, all the businesses who contributed their feedback into developing this action plan. It was the sincerity and level of detail in their advice that allowed us to develop a very successful plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to join with some comments with the minister here today, and certainly I'd just start off by thanking all the Saskatchewan businesses, their representation, their associations for speaking up on this important issue. And to say the least, working with many of these companies, many of these associations, this has been a frustrating and delayed process for businesses across Saskatchewan. And it's been a pleasure though to work with the many economic leaders in Saskatchewan to bring this issue and the importance of it both to this Legislative Assembly to get it on to the radar of government and to urge meaningful action.

Now what we see at this point is still a tad vague in detail. There are some important pieces that are contained within it. But again, this is a plan, and a plan is one thing, Mr. Speaker, but certainly when you look at these industries, these industries that have certainly pressures on their businesses, these businesses that make investment here in Saskatchewan, that provide employment in Saskatchewan, those workers who work in our province, it's important that time is of the essence for government to act. So a plan is one thing. It's going to be critical to see the next steps in an urgent and in a timely way, in a responsible way, towards implementation and towards making sure that those meaningful changes can be brought forward.

So we'll engage in this process. We'll continue to listen with Saskatchewan businesses and make sure that we arrive at something that's meaningful for Saskatchewan companies and that provides best value for Saskatchewan taxpayers.

I'd like to thank certainly all those businesses that have engaged across Saskatchewan that we've met with. I'd like to reference certainly the manufacturers of this province and their council, the fabricators, the construction association of our province, North Sask Business Association, the Heavy Construction Association, and so many other partners that have been raising this issue for some time and working towards meaningful solutions.

But as I would say, Mr. Speaker, it's been a frustratingly delayed process by this government to recognize this issue and then to act. We have a few actions laid out, Mr. Speaker, some of which certainly look to be important. But implementation is going to be key in a timely way, Mr. Speaker. So with that being said, we'll follow this process with interest and add in a constructive way where possible.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order the answers to questions 802 to 806.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has ordered responses to 802 through 806.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To facilitate the work of committees both this afternoon and this evening, 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. tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:29.]

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Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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