



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

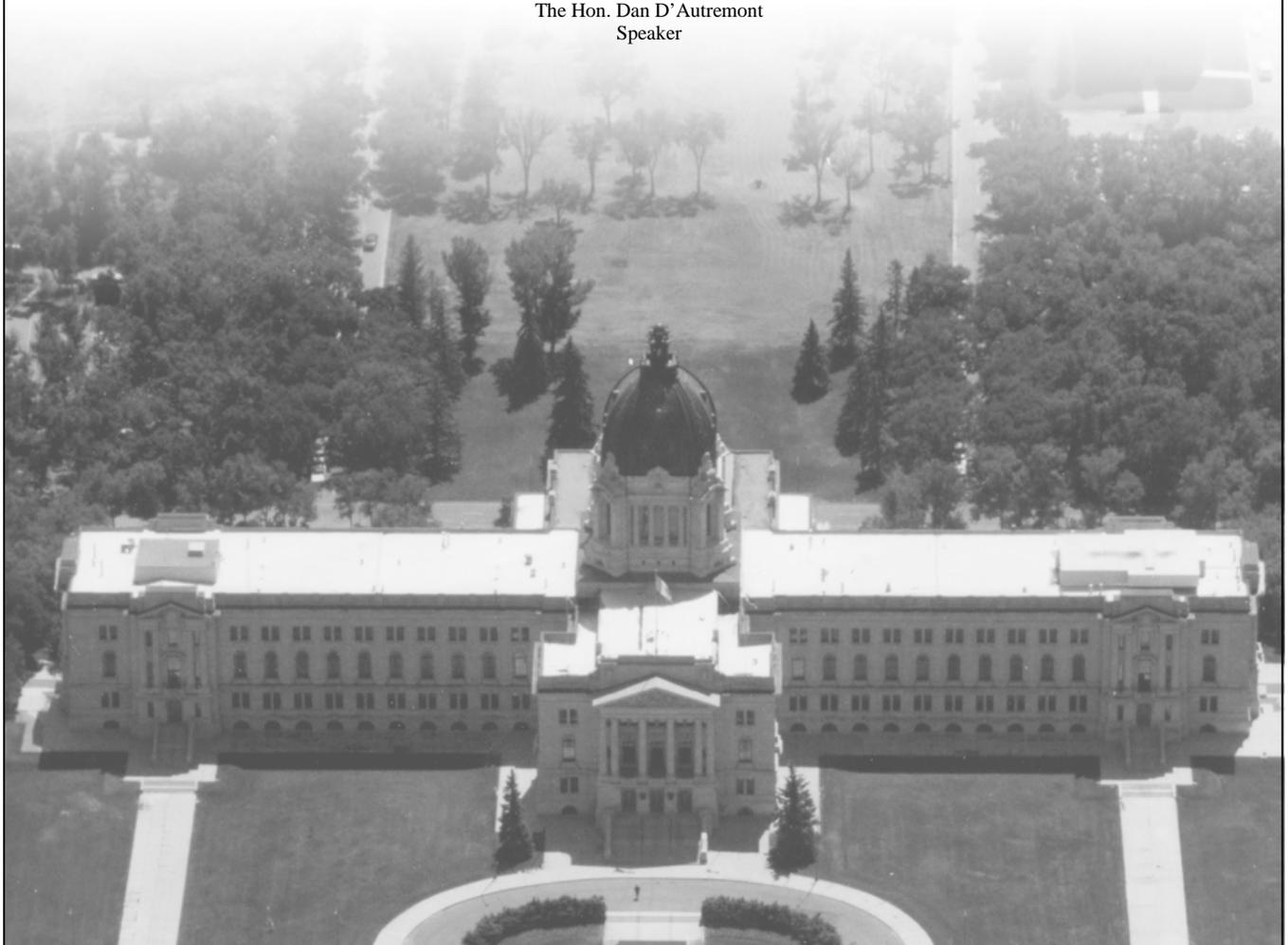
of the

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, Hon. 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, 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 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Salvation Army is a prominent organization that's been serving the people of Saskatchewan for over 100 years. So, Mr. Speaker, it's truly my honour to introduce some members of the Salvation Army that are seated in your gallery. We have with us today Ivy Scobie, who's the executive director of William Booth Special Care Home and Regina Wascana Grace Hospice. We have Major Bruce MacKenzie, the corps officer of Haven of Hope Ministries, Regina; Major Kristiana MacKenzie, corps officer of Haven of Hope Ministries of Regina; Lieutenant Kyla MacKenzie, the executive director of Grace Haven and Gemma House in Regina; and Major Mike Hoefft, the area commander of Prairie West and emergency and disaster services director for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we truly appreciate the amazing work that the Salvation and their volunteers do to support the most vulnerable citizens within our province and to all of those that need assistance, Mr. Speaker. And recently they started their annual Christmas Kettle Campaign in Regina, so I encourage everyone to help with donations because they're used to help fund the programs that the Salvation Army runs year round. So, Mr. Speaker, could all members join with me to welcome these great citizens to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the government in welcoming this delegation of folks from the Salvation Army, and take this chance to thank them for the important work that they do all throughout Saskatchewan and really throughout Canada and internationally as well, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to have them here in the Assembly today with the start of the kettle campaign. As we are into the holiday season, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all members and all viewers to, when they hear those bells in the malls and different spots around the province, to dig deep, pull out a bit more than a few coins and give generously, Mr. Speaker. So I thank these individuals for their work and welcome them here, and I wish them a Merry Christmas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be able to introduce to you and through you, to all the members of the Assembly today, someone who doesn't need any introduction to this House. Mr. Speaker, later this day, we're going to be paying tribute to members on both sides of the House that have decided not to run again. I think four of those members are founding members of our party.

And we're joined today by someone who has already retired

from politics but is still active in the life of the province at STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] in a leadership position, who is also a founding member. And, Mr. Speaker, it's always very good to see the former member for Melfort, the former Finance minister, Rod Gantefoer. And I want to welcome him back to his Legislative Assembly today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Estevan.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on my day of sitting in this honourable Assembly, it is my pleasure, to you and through you, to welcome 50 grade 7 and 8 students from Sacred Heart School in Estevan. And they are accompanied by their teacher, Ms. Megan Vanstone, and chaperones, Mr. Moriarty, Ms. Bourbonnais, and Mrs. Mack. And I look forward to meeting with them later for a photo and just a short visit. But I ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome a very special friend of mine, Al Brigden, seated in your gallery, to this legislature. Please join me. Thank you.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a special day in the history of the legislature and this session as it'll be the final day for speeches for a number of people. So I do also want to join with the government in welcoming a former legislative colleague, Mr. Gantefoer, to the Assembly. It's good to see his face in the Assembly here, Mr. Speaker. And a welcome to the many other people who have come to mark this occasion and to witness the proceedings of the House, Mr. Speaker.

And among them are two individuals seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and that's my mom and dad who are here, Chris and Anne Broten who are here in the Assembly today. It was a bit of a surprise visit. Mom and Dad have actually been in the UK [United Kingdom] for about the last month where my middle sister lives, helping out with grandkids. And so they arrived last night in Saskatoon and apparently were jet-lagged, up early and said, well why not drive to Regina and witness question period? Maybe they wanted to see the member from Greystone, their MLA's [Member of the Legislative Assembly] speech. That could be part of it, but it was a pleasant surprise to see them in the Speaker's gallery today, Mr. Speaker. And I love you very much.

And you know, all of us in this Assembly, we can't do what we do without family. And I want to say a special thanks to Mom and Dad for their help, especially with the kids back home in times when I'm not there. So thank you, Mom and Dad.

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

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And to you and through you, I'd like to welcome my family to the Legislative Assembly today. I know that there's a lot of farewells today but this is a welcome because of the three people . . . I've introduced my wife Larissa and my son Nickson

before, but this is the first introduction for my baby girl Claire, Claire Emma Steinley. So it's her first trip to the Legislative Assembly.

And as the Leader of the Opposition said, you can't do much without family, a strong supportive team right beside you. I always say, beside every good man is a great woman and that's no exception here. My Larissa has done so much to help with our job and make sure everything at home is okay in raising two beautiful, beautiful kids who, thank goodness, look like their mom. And my son already is tired of listening to the dad talk, so with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like all the members to welcome Larissa, Nickson, and Claire to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Tochor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I also am lucky enough to have my family with me. Today I have my parents, Eleanor and Vic Tochor in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. And a new introduction for me is James, which is nine months old, sitting with my wife, Danielle. And Jacob's about to go see where Nickson went so I'll wrap this up. And I'm just so thankful and, as mentioned, we can't do what we do without our loving support of our spouses and families. So thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like everyone to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Norris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I'd like to make two sets of introductions. First and foremost, I'd like to follow the lead of the Leader of the Official Opposition in recognizing Chris and Anne Broten. I just want to say that they have treated their MLA gently and with great respect and great courtesy. And we appreciate the leadership that you've shown in Saskatoon Greystone and right across Saskatoon, and so it's a privilege to be able to recognize these special constituents and for their many efforts. And so I'd ask all members to help again to reinforce that welcome offered by the Leader of the Official Opposition.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm especially delighted to welcome four people to their Legislative Assembly, all back to their Legislative Assembly, and we know previously two have been here, the Barriault brothers, Hayden and Emmett. Hayden has taken on increasing mastery of things governmental. That's according to his teacher and his report card, and so he wanted to make sure he was back. And except for the spilled milk on his shirt, he's ready to go today. I think he's ready to take a seat down here. Emmett of course is continuing with his snowboard and his fascination with one Mr. McMorris. I'm not quoting a name from the Assembly, just a Canadian star.

I'm especially delighted that Jacqueline is here. She's no stranger to her Legislative Assembly. I think she was as happy to get a day away from school as she was to join her dad. And someone who's really special to me, Carol Drury is also here, and so I'd ask all members to welcome my family to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for

Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the House I've had the opportunity in the last month to introduce some of my family. And today I have another one of my children with me. She isn't really a child but for me she'll always be. My oldest daughter, Angela Draude. She's come back from BC [British Columbia] yesterday to be with me today. She's the provincial executive director of Forensic and Mental Health. And with her is her friend Sukh Salh and he's a key account manager for BC Hydro. Angie is known not only for her excellent work, but for her beautiful voice. And I so much miss you when you're in BC.

And with her today is my CA [constituency assistant] Anne Sanderson and her husband Ivan. Anne, you do such a good job. It's not easy being me, and when you're in my office, I ask you to be me. So thank you very much for what you do. You do a terrific job.

And, Mr. Speaker, lastly but not least is my husband Marty. I met him when I was 16 years old, and next year we'll celebrate our 49th wedding anniversary. He's not always been in the House, not very often, but he's always there for me. And I can't tell you how much it means to me, and thank you very much. I love you. Everybody, please welcome my family to the legislature.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition asking for better cell service for northern communities. Residents in Weyakwin, Ramsey Bay, Sucker River, and Wadin Bay want to have the same level of cell service offered in southern communities. Reliable cell service is important for the tourism, trapping, and resource industry in the North. And northerners want to be able to call for help when they need it. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly cause the Government of Saskatchewan to deliver cell service to the communities of Weyakwin, Ramsey Bay, Sucker River, and Wadin Bay so they can promote economic growth and improve the quality of life for northerners.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I rise in the Assembly today to present a petition as it relates to cellphone coverage in northwestern Saskatchewan. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

To cause the provincial government to improve cell service coverage for northern communities like St. George's Hill, Dillon, Michel Village, Dore Lake, Michel Point, and Sled Lake to provide similar quality of cell coverage as southern communities currently enjoy. [Mr.

Speaker], this would provide support for our northern industries as well as mitigate safety concerns associated with living in the remote North.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have been presenting petitions day in and day out here at the Assembly. This petition has been signed by many people from all throughout Saskatchewan, and on these particular pages, people from Sled Lake, people from North Battleford, from all throughout the province of Saskatchewan have signed this petition in support of the cellphone coverage. And 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 the government establishing a human milk bank here in Saskatchewan.

The petitioners point out that the Canadian Paediatric Society endorses the use of breast milk as the exclusive source of nutrition for the first six months of life. They talk about breast-milk-fed babies in neonatal intensive care are shown to having fewer severe infections, shorter hospital stays, fewer readmissions, and better long-term outcomes. And they point out that, unfortunately, illness and distance can prevent newborns from receiving their own mother's milk directly. So to help these babies, the Canadian Paediatric Society recommends that pasteurized donor human milk be available. And in places like Calgary, Mr. Speaker, and Vancouver, those are two places that do in fact have human milk banks, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan lead an initiative in reopening a donor human milk bank for use in Saskatchewan. This donor bank would be a life-saving measure to support premature infants in this province and a resource to assist breastfeeding women to initiate exclusive breastfeeding.

Mr. Speaker, there are more than 300 signatures on this petition, and most of them are from Saskatoon in this case. I so submit.

[10:15]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition for real action on climate change. The individuals who have signed this petition wish to point out that Saskatchewan produces the highest greenhouse gas emissions per capita in all of Canada, and that slashing programs such as the Go Green Fund and Energuide for Houses energy efficiency program will set the province on a backwards course, and since 2009 the Government of Saskatchewan has reduced climate change funding by 83 per cent. So I'd like to read the prayer. They respectfully request:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan enacts a real plan, allocate appropriate funding in the provincial budget to tackle climate change by reducing greenhouse

gas emissions, helping families transition to energy-efficient homes, and encouraging everyone in the province to take real action to protect the environment.

Mr. Speaker, I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Recognizing the Denesuline Nation

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise in my place today in recognition of the Denesuline Nation all across Saskatchewan and beyond. In the Dene language, Denesuline means “the people of the land.” It's important to make sure that members of the Denesuline Nation be recognized in Saskatchewan for their close relationship with the land; in fact their identity as indigenous people in many ways is defined by their relationship with the land.

Members of the Denesuline Nation continue to live off the land in our province, as they have since time immemorial. Elders gather traditional medicines from the forest to heal injuries and sicknesses. Fishers harvest the bounty of our lakes and rivers, including the mighty Clearwater River, the Desnethé in the Dene language. Hunters also provide moose and caribou meat for their families, and trappers collect the furs that keep people safe and warm through the cold northern nights.

Mr. Speaker, this relationship with the land is why we, the members of this Assembly, have to remember our duty to uphold the treaty relationships. The leaders of the Denesuline Nation signed on to Treaty 10 and Treaty 8 to preserve their way of life and build a bright future for their children and grandchildren. We must always respect their treaty and inherent rights.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the Assembly to join me in recognizing the importance of the Denesuline Nation — the people of the land — to the province of Saskatchewan. Merci cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

Completion of Renovation of Saskatoon Schools

Mr. Tochor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to speak about the completion of the renovations at Holy Cross High School in Saskatoon Eastview and Georges Vanier Catholic Fine Arts, also in Saskatoon Eastview. Mr. Speaker, it is important that the youth of our province have access to the best educational facilities so that we can achieve their full potential.

The renovations and additions at Holy Cross High School have added a new entrance, a new office, new industrial arts classroom, five classrooms, and a new gym, Mr. Speaker. The renovations at Georges Vanier included a new gym, dance studio, music room, art room, learning centre, and science lab. The government has committed more than \$29 million towards Holy Cross High School and \$13 million towards Georges

Vanier. Mr. Speaker, these renovations are an example of how our government is helping build a brighter future for Saskatchewan students.

Since 2007 we have committed approximately \$966 million towards 65 major school capital projects and numerous smaller projects which include renewal and maintenance, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to also remind the House that there are 18 new elementary schools now under way in Saskatoon, Warman, Martensville, and Regina.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased with all the amazing work that has been done on both schools, and I am excited to learn that the students now have the opportunity to learn in this great, upgraded facility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Climate Change March

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan people are increasingly concerned about the impacts of climate change, and at the same time people are becoming more aware of the economic and social opportunities which a clean energy economy would offer. They want to see their government take decisive action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

So this Sunday afternoon, November 29th, people will be rallying in Saskatoon in advance of the Paris COP [Conference of Parties] 21 Climate Conference. They represent a wide spectrum of organizations including faith groups; labour, justice and peace coalitions; and the Council of Canadians. These climate change activists from all across the bridge city will be meeting at Vimy Memorial at 1 o'clock to begin their march to Oskayak School.

There will be an impressive list of speakers including Bishop Don Bolen, Idle No More co-founder Nina Wilson, and SEIU-West [Service Employees International Union-West] president Barbara Cape, Rachel Melana-Chan, and Jenna Gall, who's going to Paris as a member of the Canadian Youth Delegation.

Saskatonians will be calling on government leaders, including our own Premier, to co-operate with the worldwide move towards a low-carbon economy, to recognize the opportunities which this shift can offer to our economy, and to enable Saskatchewan to once again become a leader on the world stage.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in thanking everyone involved in organizing this event and to those who will be there marching, demanding real action to address the climate change crisis here in Saskatchewan and throughout the world. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Estevan.

New Computerized Tomography Scanner in Estevan

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, come January the people of southeast Saskatchewan will no longer have to make the trip to Regina to access CT [computerized

tomography] scanning services. The new CT scan unit in Estevan will provide patients with advanced diagnostic services right at home. Mr. Speaker, our government is following through on its promise to partner with health regions, foundations, and communities to improve access to quality health services.

Since 2007, capacity for CT services in Saskatchewan has increased by 36 per cent. In 2015-16, about 101,500 patients will receive CT services, up from 74,500 patients in '07-08. This expansion of CT capacity will increase our ability to meet increasing demand for advanced diagnostic services while reducing wait times.

Mr. Speaker, individuals, families, and the corporate community have shown their support for this improvement of health services in southern Saskatchewan. I'd like to highlight one especially generous donation of \$500,000 by Ron and Shirley Carson from Lampman that energized the St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation fundraising campaign. It is fitting that the medical imaging area will be named the Ron and Shirley Carson Diagnostic Centre.

The detailed three-dimensional images provided by a CT scan will guide the treatment of people who have been injured in a vehicle collision or on the job. With critical injuries or illnesses, every minute counts. Mr. Speaker, we thank all those who have made this amazing addition to our southern hospital services possible. Thank you.

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

Saskatoon Police Constable Wins Award

Mr. Parent: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate Saskatoon police Constable Ryan Beerling, a member of the Saskatoon police crisis negotiation team, on receiving the 2015 National Tactical Officers Association Crisis Negotiators Award.

In 2014, the Saskatoon police crisis negotiation team and Constable Ryan Beerling as lead negotiator, responded to two active shooter standoffs within a 10-day period. Mr. Speaker, on August 12th, 2015, the crisis negotiation team responded to a call with an individual armed with a rifle and suffering from serious mental health and addictions issues. The suspect intended to commit suicide by having the police shoot him. The suspect continued to fire his rifle whenever he became agitated and fired between 15 and 20 shots over the standoff. Mr. Speaker, Constable Beerling successfully negotiated for 13 hours to bring the situation to a peaceful and safe resolution, with the suspect eventually surrendering to police.

On August 22nd, 2015, four adults and two children managed to escape from a home before a suspect barricaded himself and started to fire as police arrived on the scene. Like the previous incident, Mr. Speaker, the police, the Saskatoon police relied on his negotiation skills. Constable Beerling was able to talk the suspect out of the residence and to surrender to police with no harm to himself and police or the public.

I want all members to congratulate Constable Ryan Beerling on

his award and his commitment to community safety that saves lives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Government Investment in Northern Saskatchewan

Ms. Jurgens: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise in this House today and bring attention to some of the exciting things happening in Prince Albert and Saskatchewan's North.

If you listen to the members opposite talk about the North, well so often it leaves you feeling depressed. Mr. Speaker, that sentiment could not be further from reality. According to Statistics Canada, the employment rate in Prince Albert is trending steadily upward and has been for months. Just driving through P.A. [Prince Albert], you can see an optimism like I've never seen before. There are many new small- and medium-sized businesses popping up. When I speak to constituents, they are excited about what lies ahead for our region.

Mr. Speaker, our government is working hard to fix the infrastructure deficit left by the NDP [New Democratic Party]. A few examples of how our government has invested in Prince Albert and our North are: we built the equivalent of eight city blocks of housing for affordable housing. We are investing in fire services. We have spent millions on building and fixing highways, and we've expanded correctional facilities.

Prince Albert is an attractive place for investment and a great community to raise a family. While the NDP keep talking down Saskatchewan's success, the people of this province and P.A. are optimistic. They know we are better off under this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Record of Government and Opposition

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, as today is the last day of session before the election in the spring, many voters will be looking at both sides' records. We are happy to lay out our record next to the NDP's. Even with challenges facing our resource sector, Saskatchewan is still growing and creating jobs, thanks to our diversified economy.

In this fall session alone, our government has invested in Saskatchewan by opening the Biggar & District Health Centre; the Southwest Integrated Healthcare Facility; the Kerrobert and District Health Centre; the Dr. F.H. Wigmore Regional Hospital; Newmarket Place, a long-term care addition in Tisdale; the Canora Health and Wellness Centre; the new Hudson Bay community school; major renovations and additions to Georges Vanier school, as well as the Holy Cross High School; and the new Estevan truck bypass.

Mr. Speaker, let's look at the NDP's record when they were in government. They closed 52 hospitals and 19 long-term care facilities. They closed 176 schools, and they created a \$1 billion

pothole by not investing in Saskatchewan's highways.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite demonstrated this session they don't have a plan for the province. When it comes time to mark that X on the ballot, I think it's pretty clear which party has invested in the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Health Care Expenditures

Mr. Broten: — We've just learned that our province's largest health region will be cutting front-line workers. Can the Premier tell us how deep these cuts will be?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. I know the Health minister will want to be a part of this debate in answering some of the questions. And so do I, Mr. Speaker, because the record of the government has been a . . . has been this: that we have significantly increased the number of front-line workers in the province of Saskatchewan including 3,000 more nurses of every designation across the province, Mr. Speaker, including 800 more new positions, more people working in terms of the front line on long-term care, Mr. Speaker, 500 more doctors practicing in the province than when members opposite were in government.

So you know, Mr. Speaker, we know the regions will be making decisions to get to balanced budgets, Mr. Speaker, just as the government is doing that work to get to a balanced budget. We know how important that is for the growth agenda and the overall health of the province of Saskatchewan. We also have requested — I know the region's going to do that, Mr. Speaker, in an optimal way — that it doesn't affect front-line services. They're going to strike those balances. That's the request we've made, Mr. Speaker.

And even with changes that might be coming in Saskatoon, the bottom line is this: there will be many, many, many more front-line workers continuing to work in health care — nurses, doctors, care aids — under this government than there ever were under members opposite.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, I asked specifically how deep these cuts will be. No clear answer from the Premier, Mr. Speaker. I hearken back to the crazy responses we had from the Finance minister saying, Mr. Speaker, that he wasn't aware of the cuts going on. Very clearly we see that cuts are happening, Mr. Speaker, and this government should be clear about that with the Saskatchewan people.

The Saskatoon Health Region has a \$45 million deficit as a direct result of the Sask Party withholding funding for demographic increases. So the CEO [chief executive officer] of the region, the former deputy minister of Health, says, "There

will be job cuts.” He also says they’re looking to cut the number of surgeries because “we’re \$3 million overspent on surgical budgets, year to date.” So my simple question, two questions to the Premier, Mr. Speaker: how many jobs will be cut? How many surgeries will be cut?

[10:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, in this session as in every session, we have to work hard to correct the record after the member opposite asks a question. I wonder if the member is serious about his questions or is just sort of laughing through them. He’s all very serious about the matter when the camera is on him, Mr. Speaker. Then he sits down and there’s a lot of laughter.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of demographic support, in terms of demographic support, this government’s record is nearly 100 million more dollars to support population growth and demographic changes in the province of Saskatchewan. Now that increase in funding, the member for Athabasca will want to know, that increase in demographic funding is driven by two things: one, our effort to ensure health care for the people of the province; and two, the population is now growing in the province of Saskatchewan.

I would also point out with respect to the Saskatoon Health Region that since we took office, since we took office, the increase to the Saskatoon Health Region operating budget has been 61 per cent. Sixty-one per cent increase in funding to that particular region, Mr. Speaker, in addition to the \$100 million more invested because now, now finally in the province of Saskatchewan, the population is growing.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier’s rhetoric on this certainly doesn’t match up with what the health regions’ budgets show, Mr. Speaker. Once again, very clearly we have one story from government and another one that is actually the reality here in Saskatchewan.

Here in Regina, the Sask Party has clawed back 57 million in health funding, and they’ve failed to fund 70 million in demographic increases since 2012. So there have been many job cuts here too, including more than 150 front-line health care jobs eliminated this year alone. The Premier and the Health minister can look at the numbers that are clearly on display. Now the Saskatoon Health Region will be slashing jobs too, and surgical wait times are going to continue to get longer and longer in the weeks and months ahead.

Will the Premier at least tell us, be clear and upfront with the people in the province, how many front-line health care jobs will be chopped in the province? And will he at least tell us how many surgeries will be cut?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, just to be clear and to correct what the Leader of the Opposition has indicated here in

the House — and the Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region, I think, has been very clear on this — is that in terms, Mr. Speaker, of coming in on a balanced budget for this year, knowing that they did receive an increase, we haven’t cut their funding either in Regina or Saskatoon.

But Regina has indicated that they need to find efficiencies and find savings that would equate to roughly 150 full-time equivalents. And the CEO has specifically said here in Regina that that doesn’t mean layoffs, that people will not lose positions here in Regina, but it would be the equivalent. If they can optimize their employment by reducing overtime, by using more straight time, that it would be the equivalent of 150 positions. But he’s been very clear on that.

With respect to Saskatoon Health Region, Mr. Speaker, as the Premier has indicated, a 61 per cent increase, nearly \$400 million increase in the budget from when the members opposite were the government. That equates to about a 7.6 per cent annual increase in funding, Mr. Speaker. We’re going to help that region manage to their budget as we are helping all of our health regions.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, once again from minister to minister, whenever the Premier’s talking, we’ve got to look at the facts here. A fact check, Mr. Speaker. Overtime in the Regina Qu’Appelle’s budget, as was indicated, is a separate line from what he’s talking about. Very clearly, 150 FTEs [full-time equivalent] not being filled when people retire, when people leave. And we wonder why health care workers come to the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and say that they’re being asked to do more and more with less and less, Mr. Speaker, because that is the reality on the ground.

They were straightforward questions to the Premier about how many jobs will be lost, about how many surgeries will be cut. You know, more and more we can see from this Premier and this government, Mr. Speaker, that it’s the government that has changed. And I certainly haven’t agreed with the decisions a lot of the time with this government. But once upon a time, once upon a time I could . . . you could see that they were trying to do the right thing. Now when we get answers, Mr. Speaker, they’re very defensive answers; they’re very bureaucratic answers and they’re very dismissive answers. We’ve seen that time and time again this sitting.

Again, a very specific question to the Premier. Saskatoon Health Region says that they’ve been working with government, they’ve been working with government around these cuts. So surely he knows the answer: what exactly will be cut?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again we are working with Saskatoon Health Region. They haven’t put forward proposals to the ministry for us to have a look at it yet. They’re working through a process with their board and with their executive all across the health region.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear, because the Leader of the Opposition just got up again with respect to Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region saying that people are going to lose employment in Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region to the tune of about 150 people. Mr. Speaker, this is what Keith Dewar, the CEO had to say. And I think I've said this before, but I think I have to remind the member opposite: "The commitment here . . ." And this is Keith Dewar, the CEO of Regina Qu'Appelle: "The commitment here is that no one's going to be laid off."

It is 150, roughly 150 full-time equivalents. That is what they are trying to achieve in terms of savings, but that will not be done through anybody losing a position, Mr. Speaker. And I think the CEO has been very clear, and I hope the member opposite understands what in fact the plan here is in Regina Qu'Appelle.

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

Quality of Care in Long-Term Care Facilities

Ms. Chartier: — That Premier has at least 120 lean promoters in health care, but he is content to chop front-line workers who actually deliver patient care. That is not acceptable. The internal reports about seniors' care that the government finally released yesterday clearly don't reflect the true reality, but even though they're watered down, those reports show huge infrastructure problems and major short-staffing problems. Does the Premier regret saying no to the eight and a half million dollars in urgent requests?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the record needs to reflect the fact that this government has made significant investments in seniors' care over the last seven years. We came from a time, Mr. Speaker, where the government of the day was closing facilities and closing beds all across this province — 1,200 beds in this province, 19 facilities. And, Mr. Speaker, we just heard the member from Carrot River speak. During this session alone we've opened the Biggar & District Health Centre, the Southwest Integrated Healthcare Centre, the Kerrobert and District Health Centre and, Mr. Speaker, Newmarket Place, a long-term care addition in Tisdale, Mr. Speaker, as well as other facilities, including a new hospital in Moose Jaw.

Mr. Speaker, we are seeing from this side of the House record investment into our health care system. Mr. Speaker, we are seeing this year alone \$5.1 billion being invested into health care. That means that we are able to see, Mr. Speaker, continued investment into the maintenance of our long-term care facilities as well as the building, the constructing, and the planning of new facilities across this province.

The Speaker: — Perhaps the member for Athabasca would like to take the opportunity to ask a question, because he has lots to say when other members are speaking. So please respect the rights of the members of the House on both sides to be able to speak in this House without interruption. I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana. Oh, Saskatoon Riversdale, sorry.

Ms. Chartier: — In many of the care homes, including places like Cudworth and Circle Drive in Saskatoon, residents who ring a call bell are still waiting 30 minutes for someone to come and check on them. Thirty minutes, Mr. Speaker. That is not acceptable. In many care homes, including Central Parkland Lodge, there are reports of serious staff shortages and they say, "There is concern from families for residents' welfare." In Gull Lake, residents are left in wheelchairs from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

There was a time when the Premier would have thought that this was completely unacceptable. He would have regretted the fact that he rejected eight and a half million dollars in urgent requests from care facilities. To the Premier: why won't he just admit that was a mistake?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's interesting yesterday the Leader of the Opposition was calling those CEO tour reports a whitewash. Mr. Speaker, now today they're quoting from them to somehow try to make their case.

Mr. Speaker, we have made record investments into long-term care, Mr. Speaker. The Health budget alone, close to 50 per cent of the health care budget goes directly to providing supports for seniors, Mr. Speaker. I can't imagine what, I can't imagine what the state of seniors' care would have been like seven years ago under the NDP for the same number of residents where there were actually 800 fewer full-time equivalents working, where there wasn't the maintenance going into facilities, where we weren't building new facilities in this province, where we weren't providing support for seniors living in personal care homes that had low income, Mr. Speaker, that perhaps didn't have enough income to actually support themselves, Mr. Speaker.

And the one example that I would give just to illustrate the difference between the members opposite and us, under this government, Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region in one facility, Grenfell, we've spent close to \$1 million repairing that facility. You know what the members opposite spent in seven years in that facility? \$50,000 on a 50-year-old building, including \$5,000 in their last year of government, Mr. Speaker. That's the record of the members opposite. We have a much different record and a better record on this side.

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

Government's Fiscal Management

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's clear yesterday that even the watered-down reports were very troubling, Mr. Speaker. And yesterday we also tried to extend the fall sitting, in part because we still haven't seen a mid-year update from that deficit-running government. The Sask Party of course refused to extend this sitting, and it's pretty clear that they're hiding from accountability and no longer willing to have the scrutiny that Saskatchewan people deserve.

You know, they used to talk about wanting to be the most transparent government in the universe, Mr. Speaker. Well that certainly has changed. Doesn't the Premier think the mid-year

update deserves some scrutiny from this Legislative Assembly?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Mr. Speaker, it's interesting coming from that member and that party over there about extending the sitting when they didn't use up all the hours they had available to them when legislation was before this House, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting. On an issue, on an issue as important as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, Mr. Speaker, they would have one member filibuster for I think about eight hours on one motion that supports the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They could have used that time to ask questions about the financial situation of the province.

Mr. Speaker, we will be bringing out the media report by the end of this month, like it's traditionally done every single time in this legislature, Mr. Speaker, with respect to reporting to the province of Saskatchewan, the people of Saskatchewan, what the financial situation is of the province, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — You know, Mr. Speaker, the arrogance from that deficit-running Finance minister is beyond troubling in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. There's a lot of reason for concern. The Finance minister hasn't been forthright about the cuts and clawbacks that he's presiding over, all while spending wastefully on their misplaced priorities.

They've blown through unprecedented revenues, drained the rainy day fund, launched us into deficit, and racked up billions of new debt. And now they're cutting and clawing money back on things that matter, all while spending wildly on their misplaced priorities and refusing to be transparent, Mr. Speaker. To the Premier: how can he possibly justify this? Saskatchewan people deserve so, so much better.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now this member's concerned about a deficit, Mr. Speaker. We just heard the Leader of the Opposition and the Health critic ask for more money to be spent in this province, Mr. Speaker, and now they're worried about a deficit.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you what the credit rating agencies say about the financial management of this province, Mr. Speaker. As recently as October 5th, Standard & Poor's said the rating . . . AAA credit rating. They reaffirmed the AAA credit rating of this province — one of only three provinces in Canada, Mr. Speaker, to have a AAA credit rating. They said, "The ratings also reflect the province's strong financial management, strong budgetary flexibility, and low contingent liabilities."

Mr. Speaker, the debt as a percentage of GDP [gross domestic product] in this province at the end of this fiscal year will be about 16 per cent. When we took office from those members over there, it was at 24 per cent, Mr. Speaker. We are investing in infrastructure in this province like health care facilities, schools, highways, and infrastructure. Mr. Speaker, the time . . . They were closing hospitals and closing schools and still had the debt at 24 per cent of GDP. Mr. Speaker, the people of this

province don't want to go back with the NDP. They want to move forward with the Saskatchewan Party.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, he can yell all he wants, Mr. Speaker, but it's time that that Finance minister is forthright with Saskatchewan people. It's time, Mr. Speaker, that that Finance minister cuts the massive waste of this government on their misplaced priorities and stop asking Saskatchewan people to pick up the tab for their mismanagement, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — I'm not quite sure what the question was there, Mr. Speaker, but perhaps he's trying to make a statement over there. Perhaps finally the Deputy Leader of the NDP — because we know the Leader of the Opposition won't do it — perhaps finally the Deputy Leader of the NDP will muster up the courage of his convictions, Mr. Speaker, and stand here in this Assembly and tell the people of this province what exactly . . . what you would do. What exactly would you do if you were to be on this side of the House? What would that Leader of the Opposition do? He aspires to the highest office in government in this province, Mr. Speaker. We're four months away from an election. He has yet to tell the people of Saskatchewan what he would do with respect to running this government, Mr. Speaker.

[10:45]

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

Carbon Capture and Storage Project

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have learned during this fall session that we just can't trust what the Premier is saying. At the start of this session, we all believed that the \$1.5 billion carbon capture project was exceeding expectations. Why did we think that? Well because the Premier told us it was true, even though it wasn't.

Just yesterday the Premier was bragging that since the Boundary dam project was restarted after a two-month repair, it has been functioning at "very near optimal targets," but has captured an average of just 59 per cent since it was turned back on. Now, Mr. Speaker, if your son came home with a report card with a 59 per cent average, would you pat him on the back and say, well done; that's very near optimal? It's not very near optimal. How has the Premier still not learned his lesson on this, and why is he still spouting off utter nonsense about the carbon capture project?

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

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, our government made the decision in terms of carbon capture and storage a long time ago. We have committed a large amount of taxpayers' dollars to this facility, and we have taken the counsel of people from around the world that are experts in this area because they believe that this is the right thing to do for the province of Saskatchewan. And if you look at experts like Carolyn Preston, she has said, and in just recent days, that:

I'm wholly supportive of the project, and I believe that SaskPower made the right decision for Saskatchewan when it undertook the planning, design, and construction of the power plant retrofit to incorporate carbon capture and storage to assure environmental sustainability of coal-fired generation.

Mr. Speaker, and expert after expert — not people that have backgrounds in history or in English, Mr. Speaker, but people who are actually experts in this area around the world — have said time and time again that they believe that this is the right thing for the province of Saskatchewan to do.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, in recent days the plant has been performing at much better levels than it has been initially. I'll go through a number of days if you like, starting we'll say around Remembrance Day. It captured about 2300 tonnes on that day. The next day, 2200 tonnes. The next day, 2800 tonnes. The next day, 3100 tonnes, and so on and so on . . .

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

Ms. Sproule: — And so on and so on indeed, Mr. Speaker. We keep hearing this kind of language when we know that 59 per cent is not optimal, and yet we have a minister and a Premier who keep telling us that they think that's optimal. Despite all of this, despite all of this, and they're giving all of us, the people of Saskatchewan, inaccurate information for well over a year about the true state of the \$1.5 billion carbon capture project, the Premier has never apologized for that. Will he finally apologize today?

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

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, we have said on a number of occasions that we were unhappy with the performance in the first year of the facility, Mr. Speaker, the commissioning year of the facility where about 400 000 tonnes was captured during that time frame, Mr. Speaker, way off of what we had hoped would be the case.

However, since the plant has been restarted, it's capturing at a much more sufficient level that we think is very, very important — at 2200 tonnes, 2800 tonnes, 3100 tonnes, 3200 tonnes, 3200 tonnes, 2700 tonnes, Mr. Speaker, in recent days. I think that's a very, very important step forward. And since the plant was restarted, we have captured about another 40 000 tonnes total over the last three weeks, Mr. Speaker. I think that's a very, very important step forward in terms of climate mitigation, Mr. Speaker.

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

Government's Fiscal Management and Provision of Medical Treatments

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, if that minister thinks that they have been open and transparent about the carbon capture project, they are absolutely dreaming, Mr. Speaker. If that Premier thinks they've been open and transparent about it, he too is dreaming, Mr. Speaker.

You know, this Premier, this Premier has changed. He has changed. There was a time, there was a time when he would have apologized to the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, for sending out information for well over a year that isn't accurate, Mr. Speaker. But we see his refusal to stand up and talk about this, Mr. Speaker. We see a stubbornness there, and a dismissiveness that does not bode well.

Mr. Speaker, there was a time when this Premier would have insisted that a mid-year financial report was delivered in the Assembly for proper scrutiny. He would have promoted that. He would have wanted that, Mr. Speaker, once upon a time. But not any more.

There was a time, Mr. Speaker, when this Premier would have seen the compassion and the common sense to fund little Kayden Kot's \$14,000 treatment, Mr. Speaker, instead of forcing his parents to come to the legislature to plead and beg for support, and then to leave them hanging, blowing in the wind, Mr. Speaker, without an answer about the treatment for their little son.

My question to the Premier: what is taking so long? Why has this government not reversed its decision to fund the treatment for little Kayden Kot?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that earlier this week the minister provided an answer to that specific question in terms of timelines where the decision is at.

You know, it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, on the last day of the session, the Leader of the Opposition and the NDP have, with one day to go, changed their tactic. Now their new tactic is to say somehow that the government has changed. Mr. Speaker, I would share with members of the House and the Leader of the Opposition that things have most assuredly changed in the last eight years, Mr. Speaker, because when we took over, we had a nursing shortage of 1,000 nurses short in the province. There are now 3,000 more nurses of every designation practising. We had a doctor shortage. There are now 500 more doctors practising. That has changed. We had an NDP government that closed down long-term care facilities. We are replacing them and opening new beds. That has changed.

We had a government under the NDP that closed 176 schools in the province of Saskatchewan. We are opening 40 brand new schools. That is a change. Mr. Speaker, we had a government that talked about those with intellectual disabilities but left a wait-list behind of 440 of those people waiting for a group home space. We've eliminated that wait-list. That has changed. We had an NDP government, Mr. Speaker, that presided over out-migration, and now we have more people living in the province than ever before.

There have been many changes since 2007, Mr. Speaker, and it's why on the 4th of April people are going to say, we are not going back to the NDP.

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

Mr. Broten: — You know, Mr. Speaker, time and time again

this sitting, what the government has been saying — sometimes very loudly as we just saw, Mr. Speaker — what we've seen is what they've been saying does not match up with the reality. They said carbon capture was going great, Mr. Speaker. Well it sure hasn't been. They've said, Mr. Speaker, in the past the Premier talked about eliminating emergency room wait times. Well they quietly walked away from that promise. They talked about reducing the wait for specialists, Mr. Speaker. Quietly walked away from that promise, Mr. Speaker. Time and time again, we've seen in seniors' care again yesterday as well when people came to the legislature, Mr. Speaker, how their experience in caring for their loved ones doesn't match up with the bluster, with the noise that we see from government.

You know, little Kayden is four years old. He suffered a brain injury and paralysis due to a medical error, and his doctors say that he desperately needs to go to Denver for treatment. This is what Kayden's mom says. She says, "We feel neglected and dismissed as we continue to wait for a decision." You know, the original application went in over six months ago, Mr. Speaker. The latest message, they've heard nothing. They've heard nothing. So I'm sure the Premier's bluster is cold comfort to Kayden's mom. And they hide behind red tape. They hide behind red tape.

Once upon a time the Premier would not have done that, Mr. Speaker. He would have acted and he would have fixed this, and he would have seen the decency and the common sense to do so. My question to the Premier: what does he have to say to Kayden's mom?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I would say is what I said earlier. What I would say to the Kot family — who I've indicated in this House that I have known the Kot family for many years, Mr. Speaker — is that we're going through a process that frankly, Mr. Speaker, before this government was elected in 2000, never existed. Before this government was elected, when the government of the day would deny people in this instance out-of-country coverage for health care, there was no appeal mechanism. You got the answer from the NDP. The answer was no, and that was it. You had nothing else. No recourse.

Mr. Speaker, we've put in place, yes, a process that people can appeal to. Mr. Speaker, we are going through that process. We are looking at the recommendations made by that appeal and we will be delivering an answer to the Kot family, Mr. Speaker. As I've indicated, the Minister for Rural and Remote is going to as well. I have a set of eyes on that because I've known Kayden's father since we were seven years old. I think that that's appropriate, Mr. Speaker. But we are going through that process, and that shows another change, Mr. Speaker. Members opposite never had this process in place. We have this process.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order the

answers to questions 1,099 through 1,103.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has ordered responses to questions 1,099 through 1,103. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I ask for leave for retiring members to make personal statements.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has requested leave to allow retiring members to make personal statements. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

PERSONAL STATEMENTS

Farewells

Mr. Bjornerud: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to my colleagues this morning. I know the members opposite are going to really appreciate this because I'm not going to raise my voice once today. This is going to be just nice and fluffy and saying a lot of thank yous . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . It's tempting.

But, Mr. Speaker, there's so many people that I have to thank over a 20-plus year span of being elected to this Assembly. But I want to start with my family today, Mr. Speaker. Without our families at home to keep the fires burning and looking after things there, we couldn't stay in here and do our jobs to the extent that we do. And I owe them everything for that, so I thank them very much.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the people of the Saltcoats constituency — the old Saltcoats constituency and now the Melville-Saltcoats constituency — for having their faith in me for the last 20 years, five elections, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the executives who helped me get elected and represented me out there also when it come to election time and raising funds and things like that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk for a second about, or a minute or so, about my constituency assistants. My first constituency assistant was Sharon Elmy who worked with me for a while and then went on to better things and moved. And then I had Lauretta Ritchie, Mr. Speaker, who worked for me for a number of years, and then actually works for the member for Yorkton now.

And, Mr. Speaker, then now for the last many years, I've had Barry Dilts, Mr. Speaker, who was an ex-RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] and was looking for a new venture in life and went on and hired on as my constituency assistant. He has done just tremendous work in helping represent the people of the Melville-Saltcoats constituency. And I owe him a lot because when I'm not there, he represents me and represents the government and does a lot of work on behalf of constituents in the Melville-Saltcoats constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I know all my colleagues will talk about this today, but I want to mention . . . I won't mention names and the staff in the legislature, but I want to thank all of them for what they've done for us over the years, and what they've done for me. But I do want to make some special mention of a few people, Mr. Speaker, and I want to start with Reg Downs and Kathy Young. When we started this party, the Saskatchewan Party, Kathy was our communications gal. And she's here today and still doing a yeoman's job.

Reg Downs, I don't know how you would explain Reg Downs, Mr. Speaker. When I was with the Liberals, he was probably the worst nemesis you could ever think of, and when we got with the Sask Party he was one of the greatest inventions I had ever saw. Mr. Speaker, where we were new and we were inexperienced and we were thinking of doing something on a spur of the moment, there was just that reason that come to the table and it was Reg.

And it wasn't that, what happens tomorrow if I say something today, which I did on a number of occasions. But if we did something today, what would happen tomorrow — that was our thinking. Reg's thinking was if we did something today, what would happen in two weeks, a month, a year, two years down the road. And, Mr. Speaker, that's probably where the saying kind of come from: you know, in opposition you can say anything you want, but not if Reg is around. So, Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues share this with me, but we owe Reg Downs an awful lot.

Another person I want to talk about for a minute because he's an awfully good friend of mine — and I know, maybe not as well known as Reg and Kathy are — but Paul Crozier. And I want to tell you little stories about Paul Crozier. When we were with the Liberals, Paul was a researcher with the Liberal caucus. And when things started to go off the rail with the Liberal caucus in . . . well, the member for Kelvington and the member for Canora-Pelly and the member for . . . Well actually Rod Gantfoer is here today. Glad to see you, Rod. But when things started to go off the rail and Paul was a researcher for the Liberals, it's kind of, you know, a known fact that the member for Kindersley and I had some really intense meetings, didn't we? Yes, they were intense.

[11:00]

But what many people don't know is that Paul was still working for the Liberals that we left behind, Mr. Speaker. And what they would do is if the member for Kindersley and I supposedly were going to have a meeting at night, they'd send Paul out to kind of case the meeting. What they didn't know is Paul would phone me and say, I'm on duty tonight. Where are you going? And I would tell Paul, I would say, I think we're going to the member for Kindersley's apartment tonight, and we're going to start about 7:30. So Paul said, see you there. So he would drive up, park outside in the trees there, in the dark a little bit. And, Mr. Speaker, when I come out, I'd wave to him. And he'd go home and report next morning, and the meeting was over. Unbeknown to them, probably this went on for — well, how long? — six, eight months probably, and I became really good friends. It seemed longer than that, didn't it? Yes.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I really wanted to make special notice of

Paul because Paul is one that had left the province when the NDP were in power and came back now to work for the government. And he's been a real addition for us.

I want to pick out three other young people, Mr. Speaker, that I owe an awful lot to. In fact they've almost ended up like my sons and daughters. But when the Premier give me the opportunity to serve as Ag minister in this province, I had the very good fortune of having a young guy like Tim Highmoor come back from Alberta. Actually a Manitoba farm boy, and then come and work for the cattle association in Saskatchewan. Then of course, like the rest, moved on to Alberta. But when we formed government, Tim was one of the people that I wanted to come back.

One of the others in that office when I was Ag minister is Jill Clark, Mr. Speaker, and Jill was not replaceable. Her knowledge of farming and her caring and concerns for people that called in was amazing. And the other one was Tyler Lynch, Mr. Speaker, and the same story can go on for Tyler: farm boy from Lanigan, Saskatchewan. When people called in, he knew what they were talking about. Jill knew what they were talking about, and Tim knew what they were talking about.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I have three kids, but if I didn't, they would be my kids upstairs. Mr. Speaker, that's how close we grew. It wasn't that they worked for me; it was more like we worked together and shared the responsibility. And I will never forget those three, and I thank you so much for what you've done for me.

And today, Mr. Speaker, you know, it's mixed emotions that we're up here today. On the one side, I'm really looking forward to retirement. On the other side, I'm going to miss you guys. I can only speak for the members on this side right now, but there's 49 Sask Party MLAs, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier and including myself there's 48 Sask Party MLAs. I cannot imagine when this started how that many people can sit in a caucus, and I do not remember one time that we raised our voices with each other. That's amazing when you think about this number of people that get along that good. We have disagreed, like we do I'm sure on the other side at times, and we had disagreements. But the way it works when you voice your opinion and you get your way, great. And if you don't, that's great too because the majority rules. And we get along fine.

And you know when I go home, and I think it's the same with many of us especially that live out of Regina and the large centres, but I go home, and it's kind of like a gate you go through to your family at home — my kids and my partner and, you know, people like that. And then you go to coffee row and these are your friends that you've known all your life. And then you turn around on Monday morning or Sunday night and you come back in here and you come through, it seems like that same gate. I come to see my other family in here.

And you know what I'm going to miss most? Not really the job. I mean it was great, and it was an experience that many people would be glad to have. It's you people — that's the friends that I've made over these years. And you know, payday is going to be a bad day because there's no cheque coming. But I can tell you that it's not the dollars that I will miss. I didn't start for the dollars, and I'm not worried about it when I leave. Because it's

you people I'm going to miss; there's going to be just like a vacuum out there.

And it's good to see Rod in here today. And you know there are some that aren't here today that I think a lot about. Ben Heppner, the member for Martensville's dad who was my officemate right beside me, just got to be super friends with him. And I always think how much Ben would have enjoyed being in here on the side of government. He did a lot of work to help us get over here, I wish he could have had that opportunity. And I know he's so proud of his daughter to be part of the government right now.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, there are others that left us far too soon. I think most of us or many of us remember Rudi Peters who had the misfortune of cancer and just another super person. Carl Kwiatkowski, for whatever reason we'll never know, left us before his time. Another person that would have looked so forward to being in government. He just lived for this, to be on this side of the House. And that's not explainable. Serge LeClerc was another one that I got to be pretty good friends with in here, we had the opportunity to work with. Mr. Speaker, these people left us far too soon, but we remember that they did a lot to help us get to where we are today.

You know, and I thought today, Mr. Speaker — and I know my colleagues kind of touched on it — I thought of just going over a little bit and touching on the NDP today, but I kind of thought better of it. Actually Reg thought better of it. Once again he come through for me probably.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Premier because, as I said before, he'd given me the opportunity to be Ag minister. And I think I've even talked to the member for Nutana. I would love to see every farmer — I know the member for Thunder Creek, the current Minister of Agriculture is doing a great job, agrees with me — but I'd like to see every farmer in Saskatchewan have a week as Ag minister. It would change their whole perspective on how things work in this province.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't have a lot more to say, and I hope I haven't missed someone. It's just been a great ride. And, Mr. Speaker, as I drive out tonight . . . I want to tell you a little story about when I was a real young guy and I was still in school. And I didn't go all the time, but I went some of the time.

But does everybody remember the yearbooks we used to put together? And you know they'd do that little thing on, okay John Smith, what do you want to be when you get out of school and, you know, all the different things? I missed a lot of school and I missed the day when they did that, so mine was blank. So when they finished the yearbook they couldn't leave it blank, so some of my classmates said, we'll fill it in for Bob because I know he won't mind. And the one thing that I always remember, it said what do you want to be when you grow up and go out into the world? And they filled in bartender. Now I know why they did it because I had on many occasions learned how a bartender functions. And I think I was about 17 at that time, and it was 21 to get in the bar. And we won't go there, but that was how it worked.

But, Mr. Speaker, why I tell you this story today is because when I drive out of here today, I'm going to have the funniest,

little sly grin on my face because some of those same classmates are out there, and I've been their MLA for 20 years.

So, Mr. Speaker, with you included and the members across the way — my Norwegian friend from Lakeview who I've took the odd potshot at, and we've done it in good humour — I just want to thank all of you here that I've had the opportunity to meet and work with. And you know, we know some of us may never see each other again. I want to thank you for the part you've played in my life. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Estevan.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I think my seatmate might have taken some of my speech because a lot of what he said sounds like what I was going to say.

But, Mr. Speaker, seriously this week has been very bittersweet for me. I'm not regretful that I've made the decision, but boy, when I came up those steps this morning I just thought, this is the last time I will come up here for this purpose, a session. This is the last day I sit in this chair. So you know, it's really touched my heart.

And, Mr. Speaker, I just want to, I just want to let you know how this all started for me. I've been involved in politics since 1977, and sometimes you'd think I'd know better. But you know what? In early 1998, right after the Sask Party was formed, a gentleman from Estevan came out to see me. His name was Doug Turnbull, and I'm sure several people on this side know Doug, or knew him, God rest his soul. But he came out to see me.

Doug was an Imperial Oil agent in Estevan, a bulk dealership. And when he come out to my farm, he knew that area like the back of his hand. He come out to me, and I was doing yardwork. And he come up there, and he said to me, you know, can you tell me where this neighbour by the name of Louie lives? So I told him, and I thought it was funny because I knew he knew where this guy lived. And before he left he said, say you wouldn't be interested in running for the Saskatchewan Party, would you? And I said to him, you know what? This is something I really have to think of because, as all MLAs know, it's a huge commitment, and I wanted to make sure my family was okay with it.

Well a couple weeks later he came back. Same thing: he's lost; he can't find Louie. And he said, have you given it any more thought? And I still hadn't made up my mind. And about a few weeks later, he came back again and asked me again. And by this time, I had decided I would do it. And you know, Doug never got lost again. He never bothered me.

But you know, the reason I mention this, Mr. Speaker, is Doug passed away in 2003. And I'm just so thankful he was my first campaign manager and a very, very astute businessman, very brilliant political mind. My association had a farewell for me in Estevan a month ago, and his son was there and I neglected to mention the important role Doug played in my life when his son was there. And I know his son was just in the legislature here a couple weeks ago and received an award for philanthropy, and that's just the kind of family they are. So I just want to let Ed Turnbull know that I haven't forgot what that family has done

for me.

But my first nomination in 1999 was a contested one, and I went out and I worked. And of course, I was successful in that and went on to win the Estevan constituency in the general election of 1999 with, I think it was 46.7 per cent of the vote. In 2003, I won it again, and my plurality was a little more.

And then in 2007, that was the time I didn't know if I was going to run again. My husband was sick at the time and I just didn't know if I could do it. So I asked him, I says, what do you think? And he knew that, you know, we had a very good chance of forming government. And he said to me — and I'm not going to quote him, mind you — but he said to me, go for it. He says, I want to get rid of those guys as bad as every Sask Party person does. So I did that. And unfortunately, as all members know, I lost my husband in 2008.

But I ran again of course in 2011 and won the seat with 79.2 per cent at that time. And, Mr. Speaker, I think I've been the longest serving MLA for the Estevan constituency. I was one of the first 34 women to ever sit in this Chamber, and I was the first woman to represent the Estevan constituency. And I know the replacement, the next MLA from Estevan, is going to be a woman and her name is Lori Carr. And I know that there will be room on this side of the House for her.

But, Mr. Speaker, there are some people I would like to thank. And I have to thank my kids, my son and my daughter, Terry and Trisha, who have kept my farm going. I still have my farm. And they've done a lot of work on the farm and just helped me out in, you know, every way they can. And that's, you know, what all the kids do, I guess.

But my grandchildren too, and I've told this story before. My oldest grandson will be 21. And when I was first elected, he was four years old. And he'd go around with his grandpa, and he couldn't figure out . . . He'd say, Papa, how come Grandma's pictures are all over the place? He just couldn't understand the campaign posters and that. But you know, my grandchildren are big now, and I want to thank them because, as all members know on both sides, our spouses, our kids, and our grandkids make huge sacrifices so that we can be here and do the job we are elected to do.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank my mom. My mom lives in an apartment in Estevan, and she's an avid supporter and she's a very fair critic too. I mean she lets me know when she doesn't think that the things I've said have been right. She's just been there for me right the way through, and I want to thank her and my siblings. They've been so supportive. And my friend Al who is in the gallery, I want to thank him. He's been a rock for me, and thank you so much.

[11:15]

My CAs: Rosalie has been with me for over eight years. Susan and Wilma: Susan has been there for about a year and a half and Wilma is my casual girl. And I want to thank my executive as well, caucus staff, members of Executive Council, and my colleagues. My seatmate has mentioned many of them, but thank you all. You've just been so great to work with. And you know, all the staff in the legislature, from the maintenance to

the people at the front desk, security, and our Sergeant-at-Arms who will be retiring soon as well, thank you for everything you have done.

And I also have to thank . . . I stayed in a hotel for the first eight years, Mr. Speaker, and then I moved into an apartment. And across the hall from me lived just the finest couple you could ever wish for, and we've got to be the very good friends. And Gerald and Geraldine are my friends and they're both in their 90s and they are just amazing. They watch this every day. I hope they are watching now because I think the world of them.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'm just so thankful for everything that's happened in the Estevan constituency, and I want to thank the people of the Estevan constituency for their support. It has been an absolute honour to serve them for 16-plus years. We've accomplished many projects. I guess I go back to 2011 when we had a terrible, terrible flood in the Estevan area, and we had a government that cared, made changes to the PDAP [provincial disaster assistance program] program, ministers that came down and helped the people through these difficult times. So I know those people, and I am very appreciative of that.

CT scanner that I mentioned earlier in a member's statement. Of course the carbon capture at Boundary dam which unfortunately the members opposite wrote off before it was even finished construction. The Energy Training Institute. And something that affects this whole province, and that's STARS. STARS has made many, many trips, and I'm glad that Rod Gantfoer, my friend and former colleague, is here today. STARS has made many, many trips to the Estevan area. You know what . . . And you never want to see that helicopter come in your area, but they are angels. And you know, anyone that's ever dealt with them knows that they're angels. And it's just a sense of security for every area of this province — mine, where there's a lot of oil field and agriculture work and, you know, that's what was one of the most important things.

And, Mr. Speaker, also the people of my constituency are very happy, as were all the people in the province, that it was this government that dealt with the issue of the education portion of property tax. And that was something that had been spoken about since Tommy was in power. Nothing was ever done because, you know, the stars didn't align or whatever, but this government had the fortitude to deal with that issue.

Mr. Speaker, I can also remember when we were first elected to government in 2007 and there was a group of people that wanted to meet with a minister. And I, you know, just . . . You know, we were new in government and kind of used to the way things used to be. And so, you know, I just said I would try to get a minister to speak with them. And I went to a minister's office and he said, well of course, you know, I'll meet with them; are they going to come up or do they want me to go down?

And people have said time and time again how they cannot believe how accessible this government is, meeting with the ministers. And I'm sure there isn't a minister on this side that hasn't been to Estevan or have someone come up to meet them. And many, many, many trips have been made to Estevan by members of cabinet. And I just thank them so much because we have accomplished a lot of things, thanks to the openness of the

government of this side.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues . . . First of all the Premier: it's been an absolute pleasure to serve under his leadership. I thank you for that leadership. And the Premier's become a good friend, and I just am so honoured to have served under him and for the confidence he put in me when he named me as caucus liaison to cabinet. That was a wonderful experience.

And he and the rest of my colleagues, we've shared some really good times and we've shared some times where they weren't so good, they weren't very happy for me. But you know what? I could always go to them and they supported me. And they are my other family and I'm just going to miss them so much.

So I'm not going to be too much longer here, Mr. Speaker. But to the other members that are retiring, I just want to wish them good health and happiness. To those that are seeking re-election, I offer you this advice: whether you won by a landslide last time or whether you were in a squeaker, just get out there and fight like you're in third place or last place, and remain humble. And for as long as you have the love of this province, you will be successful.

And this is the last time I get to do this, so I am going to leave the NDP a little bit of advice too, Mr. Speaker. The people in my constituency wouldn't think it was me talking if I didn't. But I'm going to leave the words of Helen Keller, and I don't have the exact quote, so I will just say that there's only one thing worse than being blind and that's being able to see but having no vision.

And I just got new glasses, Mr. Speaker. And I thought, I should leave the Leader of the Opposition my old glasses because when he looks across and sees the Premier, he could see that the Premier isn't there and wouldn't focus on him and ask him questions in question period when he isn't there.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, I say thank you to the Premier, thank you to my colleagues, and thank you to you, Mr. Speaker. God bless our province.

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

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a rather unusual day I think in the history of this particular facility. I believe it's quite unique to have this many people deciding not to run of their own free will, not the will of the people. And I was just looking at the list of names and the years that they have served in this House and, you know, there's about 150 years of corporate knowledge that is going to be leaving through these doors today when this is all over.

And that's a pretty important segment of our history as a party and certainly as a government, and I'm proud to be able to say that I played a part and I shared in that history. Not only am I proud, but I know that some of my family members are pretty proud. I have an elderly uncle in Calgary who says, if your dad had been alive today he'd have been so proud he'd be popping the buttons off his vest. He said that half a dozen times over the past 16 years or so. And I believe that's true, frankly. My dad was a small-town minister and didn't have a real good education, but he sure was willing to live his life, sort of,

through us. As his sons did various things, achieved new heights, had new opportunities, he lived through us. And he came from a very poor agricultural family and never did have much, but he lived to enjoy some of the decisions and some of the challenges and careers that we were able to, my brother and I, were able to take in our lives.

You know, I've known this day's arrival was waiting for me. I've known it was coming for six months. I've thought about what I would say today, and I thought maybe I would say something profound. I don't think that's going to happen because I don't think, I really don't think anybody who follows politics or has been in this building is looking for the profound.

I think what the people of my constituency respected most was plain talk and honesty and being there when they needed you — being at their kitchen table to talk about their problems and their aspirations and their dreams for the province. You know, I sometimes think that we don't provide really good leadership. We're a little bit behind where our constituents are. We sort of reflect what they want to be and what they have for aspirations in terms of the future of this great province. And so I lived that style of service, I think, and it's served me well because the people kept coming to the polls and voting for me over the last sixteen and a half years.

So if I'm going to offer any advice to anybody today, I'd say politics is a worthy endeavour. I might not have thought that when I first came here. I might have come for the wrong reasons. I did want to serve, but I might have had the wrong motivation. Now that I've been here long enough to have weighed the value of this role, I think it's about service to people — nothing higher, nothing more, nothing less. And if you're here for some other reason, you might make it to that ultimate plateau or that goal that you've established for yourself, some heightened level of responsibility or public recognition, but the point is, if you aren't serving the people who sent you here, you're not doing what the job was intended to be.

I asked the House Leader how long I had to speak. He said about 20 minutes. I said, heck, I'm just getting warmed up in 20 minutes. My voice won't last a lot longer than that, so I'll probably be a little more brief than usual.

Nobody does this job by themselves, however. I have heard that comment from our previous speakers, and it's true. You know, I got into politics because my wife said to me one day, I'm so tired of listening to you complain. If you don't get off the couch and do something about that, I'm never going to listen again. So my wife in a way was the great motivator.

Well so were the circumstances of the day, Mr. Speaker. I tried to address them in earlier comments: you know, when railroads were being abandoned and elevators were coming down and schools were being closed in half a dozen of the communities that I now represent. When you saw people packing up and leaving the province, and the three lanes west and the one lane east that I talked about previously. We lived that in southwest Saskatchewan.

And I remember after coming here, I was newly elected. And in my first speech I outlined all those complaints, all those things

I'd heard at those kitchen tables I'd visited. I outlined them in that speech and I said, we are here to serve notice on the government of the day, we want our due. We will not be ignored any longer. I'm paraphrasing that because I don't remember exactly how the speech went, but that was the substance of the speech.

And you know, I'm happy to report that even in opposition, I was able to make a difference for my constituents. Because of that three-lane-east idea, we got that highway, No. 1 Highway, twinned at an accelerated rate, much shorter time frame because of a very serious accident that took a lot of lives. And we got that project done. I'm very proud of that because I was in opposition at the time and I worked with the government to achieve that. I thought that was the best thing I could do for my constituents, not make a political issue out of it but work for a solution. And it has paid big dividends: lanes going west are only two, and lanes coming east are two. But the lanes coming east are a lot busier these days than they were then.

[11:30]

Mr. Speaker, I do want to talk about the support of family and the support of staff because that's equally crucial to our success as elected people. My wife would have been here today, I think, but she's driving west, going back to a job that she's held for 30 years. It has shift work that's needed to be done, and she does it. So she's being responsible. She's going to be there for her 3 o'clock shift this afternoon. And she has done that repeatedly in our, you know, entire political life and previous to the political life.

She's put that job not first, but very high on her priority list because rural health care is a challenge in terms of finding people who will work. And if you have a job there, and somebody won't come in or can't come in, the next person on the line gets called and they're expected to come in. And so a lot of times, she's heading west to go to work; I'm coming east to represent the people of Cypress Hills. We stopped many times in Swift Current to meet and have coffee, and she'd be out there for a week and I'd be in here for a week. On the weekend, it would be the other way around. I'd be going west, and she'd be coming in. It's an arrangement that we lived with, but it was part of our lives.

But my wife paid a big price for me to be able to do this, and so did my kids. I just want that on the record, not so anybody will provide me an element of pity. I don't ask for that. I don't expect that. I knew what I was getting into. But there is a cost to this job; there is a price to be paid. And I'm not the only one who's paid this price. Some of my very dear colleagues here today have paid a bigger price than I. And I want to acknowledge them, and I want to acknowledge their families and the contributions they have made to the success that each of us have enjoyed.

In my office, there are constituency assistants that we all have, but I want to acknowledge a whole group of CAs actually I've had a number over the years. I started out newly elected with Sherry Webster holding down my chief CA's position. I knew nothing about office organization from a political perspective. She'd had experience working with political people. I think Bob Pickering was one of the people that she worked for early on.

After my election, she came in and organized the place and ran it.

Beth Lundsten came in and worked there for a few years. Natasha Dore who is a senior admin here within the government now; I think she's executive assistant to the deputy minister of Advance Education. Lucy Shorey, she went, joined the RCMP and turned out to be one of their spokesmen, public spokesmen in Ottawa. I mean, we had quality people in my office.

Beth Humphrey who's there now, she's put up with me for 14 years. And I don't know what I would do without her in the office. Glenna Gordon served me for probably seven or eight years and just recently retired. Carol Miller, who I introduced here in the House the other day, has been with me for eight years. And Linda Wig is there one day a week, maybe one day every two weeks as needed. These are people who have contributed to my success in ways I'll never be able to adequately address.

I never had to worry about my expense accounts not balancing. They balanced to the penny. I never had to worry about nobody working, that they wouldn't be able to staff the office. I said to the senior CA, this is your responsibility. You've got a budget. You've got an obligation. You find out who can work and who can't, and I want the office covered. They did that amongst themselves.

When you called my office and they answered, you knew you were going to get attended to because they paid attention to people when they called. They made copious notes. They made every effort to solve the problem before the boss got back. And if they couldn't, here was the promise we made to the people of Cypress Hills: if they got, if we had a problem brought to us, we would get an answer back to them in 24 hours. If we couldn't, we'd phone the constituent back and say, here's what we've done, but we haven't found a solution yet. Here's what we're going to do, and here's when we're going to try and come back to you with an answer.

We dealt with our constituents like a good business would deal with its clients — provide service that they could count on. And I'll tell you, I couldn't have done that by myself. Those constituency assistants took that obligation as though it was sort of the reason they were working and the mantra of the place, and they abided by that standard of performance. I was well served by that. And I can't tell my constituency assistants enough how much I appreciate their commitment and loyalty and determination to serve me and the constituents throughout Cypress Hills. It was a pleasure to work with them.

I don't think I ever had an argument or a fight with any constituency assistant. They offered me the greatest respect, and I in turn respected what they brought to my office and my service to the people.

You know, I was pretty naive when I got involved with politics. I was riding a tractor, actually, one day doing some summerfallow, when I heard about the formation of the Saskatchewan Party. And I thought, man, that's an idea whose time has come. I think I could support a party like that.

Then the more I thought about it, the more I got to believe that maybe I could play a role in that party. But when the first convention was held, I was scared to go. I didn't want to be known publicly as a political person, and I had no idea what this new party was going to, you know, start out with and so forth. So I skipped the first convention, but by the time the second one rolled around, I actually attended. And I listened to the speeches by the three people who were running for the leadership of the party at the time, and I was convinced that there was some real quality potential in this party, and that its opportunities were pretty real and there was maybe a future here.

So I said to Elwin Hermanson, who happened to win the leadership, I think I might consider running for you. And Elwin wasn't exactly overjoyed. I don't know; he might have heard something about me. But he was kind of cautious, I'd say. He said, have you really thought about this? Do you know what this is all about? And I said, you know, I've followed politics for a long time, but no, I don't know what it's all about. But if I'm ever going to do it, it has to be now. I don't want to, you know, ignore this opportunity and 10 years from now say, I wish I had done that. So I decided at that point I would do it and take whatever risks were associated with that decision.

I was selling machinery in Shaunavon at the time. And of course that was pretty handy because my boss paid for my truck and gas, and while I was out making sales calls, I'd say, oh by the way, have you heard about this new political party? And you know, I was amazed at how many people thought that was, you know, a good idea, the creation of the Saskatchewan Party. So I signed up a lot of new members that way. When the day was done, kind of, the sales day was done, I'd use the evenings. If I was way out west by Govenlock and Consul and way out there where you can watch your dog run away for three days — that's where that happens — I would go in the evenings, ranch to ranch, and sell memberships.

And we had a contested nomination that year, but by the time it happened, when my opponent showed up with 40 people that he thought he could win the nomination with, I had 340 people in the hall. And I took that first nomination in a handy, clear-cut, simple majority — overwhelming — and that was the start of my political career.

You know, I've never looked back. I've never regretted it. It's been a great opportunity. I've met people that I would never have met before. I've travelled to places I had never expected I would be. I can't tell you how good it's been for me from an intellectual perspective. I love what I do. I love people. But I think I love contributing to the success of this province more than anything else.

You know, my colleague from Estevan talked about vision. If you look at the stats that have developed in this province from a business perspective, an export perspective, over the last seven or eight years comparatively to the previous years, it isn't about what this government has done alone. Yes, we have modified rules and regulations. We've made it simpler for people to prosper. It's about vision. It's about unfettering people's abilities and desires to succeed.

And I think we have brought a change of mind and a change of heart to this population that we haven't seen in probably 100

years. Maybe never. But you know, the early pioneers that came here had the same kind of optimism in a lot of ways, and the people are seeing the potential and opportunity in our province right now like they've never seen it before. And that is the foundation of the Saskatchewan Party government's success. It's not what we have done; it's what they have done. We've just been sort of the mechanism by which that could be accomplished.

Have we had highlights in my tenure in Cypress Hills? I am not watching the clock. I hope somebody else is. Yes, we've had lots of highlights. I said earlier that when I came to this place, we felt like we were the forgotten Southwest. That was the standard phrase anywhere west of Swift Current. Right, Premier? And I determined that that wouldn't happen again. And so one of my objectives was to provide service and infrastructure to the Southwest region that I represented. And we were pretty successful at that.

You know, we rebuilt Highway 32. That was one of our very first promises out of the gate. It took us three years to be able to do the whole project. It stills needs some upgrading now, I'm just saying. I think the minister said, just get in line. But you know, we rebuilt Highway 37 from the Frenchman River Valley down to Climax, beautiful highway. Most of Highway 37 is in really pretty good shape right now. Highway 13 from Eastend to Shaunavon was done.

There have been a number of other projects that have been done, a couple of brand new schools in my constituency, a couple of . . . Well one very important hospital or integrated health centre in Maple Creek that is a fabulous facility.

You know, Leader, the community of Leader has benefited significantly from our government. And I find that really interesting because the NDP had senior people in their government who called Leader home, and they could get nothing out of them — nothing. Judy Samuelson sat in the Premier's office. She couldn't convince them to spend a nickel in Leader. You know, we are putting a new health facility there in the next few years. We've rebuilt the highway from Leader up to the bridge going over the South Saskatchewan north. We've rebuilt a big section of Highway 32 coming into Leader from the east. You know those are the kinds of projects that governments need to deliver, and we've delivered.

I saw a list the other day . . . I didn't bring it with me, but I think the total money invested by our government in the Cypress Hills constituency alone has exceeded \$136 million since we formed government — \$136 million. Nobody can say that we are the forgotten Southwest anymore.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, when you come to a job like this, you might set out a number of goals and plans and, you know, when you accomplish most of what you set out to accomplish, I think it's time to move on. I would say that for the most part I'm satisfied with what I was able to accomplish. There aren't too many things left that need to be done. I mean there's always more things that can be done, but things that were important to me and things that were immediately important to my constituents have by and large been provided. And I think it's time for somebody else to carry that obligation on behalf of the people of Cypress Hills.

I'm afraid to do this, because one of my friends in the opposition side is going to pipe up soon and say that's the first time I ever saw a windmill run on water. I do need to wind up.

I want to tell my colleagues today, particularly on our side of the House . . . Although I don't socialize a lot with my friends on the NDP side, I have a lot of respect for some of them. But I want to say generally speaking that in a political environment, this has been a really good group of people to work with. You know, the member from Saltcoats said he can't ever remember hearing our caucus experience a raised voice. That is remarkable, given the tensions and the egos and all the ambition that sits around a table with, you know, 48 different people. That is amazing. And I think it's indicative of the desire of us all to serve the province first and not our own interests. And I want to compliment my colleagues. It's been a pleasure serving with them and enjoying their company and getting together inside and outside of session for some social gatherings, but for some business meetings and things. I always felt that I was well served by my colleagues, and I appreciate their support and the job that they do.

[11:45]

Mr. Premier, I want to thank you. You've been a good friend for a long time. I remember sitting in the office side by side downstairs in room 135, and the things we talked about, and the, you know, the possibilities of implementing those things if we ever became government. A lot of that has been realized. And I appreciated your confidence in those early years of our government. I enjoyed being Highways minister more than anything I think I could have imagined because that was something I really felt was important. Decent infrastructure supports economic opportunities like nothing else, with apologies to my colleague who thought Advanced Education was more important. We had that conversation several times. But you've provided us with sound and appropriate leadership, visionary leadership, and I want to thank you for that, I really do.

And to all of my friends in the building, whether we're talking about security, Pat Shaw has been, you know, a great friend, and his team; to the cafeteria where I spend way too much time but . . . And everybody in between: financial services, the library, wherever people work, Hansard. You know, I had a fellow from Hansard stop me on the street as I was walking here. He didn't even tell me his name. But he said, I always like listening to you when you're talking because you enunciate well. Well when I have a voice, I enunciate well. But I don't think he's on the job today.

Nevertheless, whoever you are in this big and great building, this wonderfully historic building, I want to say thank you for the job you do. To those folks down there, the clerks, staff, whoever you are, thank you for doing a great job. I appreciated every one of you and the work you did. And we are justifiably proud of the quality of people that serve Saskatchewan through their role here in this.

There's probably many others things I should say and cover, but this is my final speech and my final sentence. Mr. Speaker, you're a great friend. I love you dearly.

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

Mr. Hutchinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, as one of our legislature's retiring members, I really appreciate the chance to offer a few closing comments, if I might, on my time in provincial politics. And as other speakers have done, I want to begin with some well-deserved thank yous. First I want to acknowledge and thank my government caucus colleagues, the folks on this side of the House. And I want to commend their loyalty. I want to commend their camaraderie and their good humour over the years. It means a lot to me. I appreciate it very, very much. You're just the greatest group of people ever.

I also want to congratulate the folks on the other side of the aisle for holding our government accountable for its decisions and its programs, which is exactly what Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition is supposed to do.

Second I sincerely thank the legislative staff in all the many departments, as has been mentioned before, for all their hard work and their dedicated efforts to support us as elected members. They provide us with exemplary service each and every day, as we all know.

In addition I welcome this opportunity to thank two very, very special people who have made my time here both much more enjoyable and much less difficult than it otherwise would have been. And that of course is my wonderful wife, Jocelyn, whose love and support I've always been to count on — it means the world to me — and also my very competent and remarkably patient constituency assistant, Kyle Leonard who's in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker. And to him I simply want to say, it's been great, buddy. Thanks. You're absolutely awesome.

I'd also like to thank the constituents, the good people of Regina South for their continuing support as well through eight years and two elections. Their support has been very gratifying indeed.

Like all the parting MLAs, I'm going to leave this place with a great many memories of serving with the people in this particular room, this Assembly. Together we've worked hard, we've accomplished a lot, and we've certainly found ways to enjoy the experience along the way. This is very, very important, to be sure.

But in the few minutes that's available to me today, I'd rather focus on another very significant aspect of our activities here, and that is the impact of our work on the people that we are elected to serve. Three brief examples will serve to illustrate the point.

I recall working very closely with our partners in municipal government to design and implement a brand new provincial revenue-sharing program, something that they had been waiting to see for a long, long time, as we all know. There was an enormous amount of consultation as we considered all the available options and eventually selected the one that we knew served everybody's needs the best.

I remember the day that we announced the program allocating the equivalent of a full 1 per cent of PST [provincial sales tax]

to Saskatchewan's municipalities. We did it right here in this room. And afterward we welcomed members of SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] and the New North just outside this room in the rotunda. It was an extraordinary day. It was an historic day.

I met my old buddy, Allan Earle, SUMA's president at the time, and with excitement clearly evident in his eyes, he declared that the new financial partnership changed everything and would allow municipalities to move forward on their agendas for renewal and growth in a way that up until this time had simply not been possible.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, even now, years later, municipal leaders still confirm that the extra funding continues to make a great big difference in their communities, but they quickly add that the predictability of this revenue stream has significantly increased their ability to plan for the future of their communities and the constituents that they represent. So on this key file, our work here clearly made a difference in people's lives. And as a result, this is indeed one of my happiest memories.

Here's another one. I had the honour of attending the 20th anniversary I believe of the federal government's treaty commission that celebrates the important relationship between First Nations and the Crown. Special guests at this event included a delegation from the First Nations Veterans' Association of Saskatchewan, a wonderful group of mostly older vets who had served in the Korean War. We got talking. They mentioned an upcoming fundraising dinner that was going to be held for their association in North Battleford, and they asked me if I would like to attend. Yes, I said, I'd really like to be there with you for your special evening, and so it was. The Premier thought it was a great idea as well and immediately provided a letter which would be read as part of my remarks to the group. If I remember correctly, the final sentence was something like this: on behalf of a very grateful province, please accept our sincere thanks for your service and your sacrifice to your communities and to Saskatchewan.

It was pretty tough to read the faces of these very reserved and extremely modest veterans attending the dinner. So I wasn't really sure about their reaction to my remarks and the Premier's letter. Had I done the right thing, I wondered, or had I somehow missed the mark? Well it didn't take long to find out. When I returned to my table, all doubts disappeared in an instant as one of the stoic old vets, with a tear trickling down his cheek, said, that was good; thank you very much. Obviously our gesture of thanks and respect made a difference in the lives of these truly exceptional people and left me with another fantastic memory.

Here's my third and final example. It was my great pleasure, with some encouragement from the member from Swift Current, if I remember, to provide a significant increase in the Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport budget to assist Saskatchewan's regional park system. Now as members from both sides of the House will know, regional parks are operated by our province's rural municipalities and, heck, they do a splendid job. They really do. It's an amazing system that they run. It provides quality recreational opportunities for residents from Saskatchewan and a lot of visitors from adjacent provinces

and states as well.

And the RMs [rural municipality] have a way of stretching any dollars that they receive from government two- and three-fold through local contributions of labour, materials, and funding of their own. That's just the way it is in rural Saskatchewan. When I arrived at the association's annual general meeting to bring greetings, John Froese, their president, pulled me aside. He confided that his executive committee was fully aware of the new provincial contribution and they were pretty excited about it. But he figured I might enjoy passing along the really good news to the general membership myself. Wow, I thought, what an opportunity. You've got to like the way this guy thinks.

However after I finished my speech and made my announcement about the funding, the room went unexpectedly dead quiet. It was actually kind of eerie. It actually was kind of scary. And then suddenly everyone rose to their feet and I got a standing ovation. How cool is that, Mr. Speaker? Another day where our work as MLAs made a big difference in people's lives, and yet another great memory.

What's the point here? Well the point, Mr. Speaker, is that regardless of how difficult scrums can be, regardless of how raucous question period can be — and here I want to offer my apologies for occasional transgressions, Mr. Speaker — and no matter how taxing committee work and adjourned debates often are, our work both in and I might say most especially outside this building can make a big, big difference in the lives of Saskatchewan people.

Sometimes it takes a lot of money, sometimes it doesn't take much money at all, and sometimes it takes no money whatsoever. But regardless of cost, making a difference in people's lives is the reason that we're all here. And I'm completely confident that members will continue in the future, just as they have in the past, to work with this understanding foremost in their minds.

Finally, colleagues, when you reach, as I have, the end of your career as a member of this Legislative Assembly, may each and every one of you retire with as many happy and satisfying memories as I know that I will.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, as one of the few people ever to roller skate in this fine building, as probably the only MLA ever to eat sandwiches in caucus meetings, and — absolutely no doubt about it — the only person ever to bring his dogs into the building and have their names read into *Hansard*, thank you so much for a wonderful time. All the best to each and every one of you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Canora-Pelly.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to rise in the Assembly today and deliver some remarks as the first and only member of Canora-Pelly. As everyone in the House knows, Canora-Pelly was created in 1995, and I've had the honour of serving that constituency since 1995, so that's the reason for that comment about first and only.

Mr. Speaker, before I begin though I would like to, with the . . .

I don't know if I need your permission, Mr. Speaker, but I'm just going to bypass that and move directly to some introductions in the Assembly. Mr. Speaker, you've reprimanded me many times in this Assembly, so I will look forward to that next reprimand.

Mr. Speaker, seated in the gallery are, of course, a number of friends and family, a number of constituents. And I want to introduce Sylvester Hrynkiw. Little wave there please, Sylvester; sorry I had to wake you up. Terry Dennis. Terry Dennis is the former mayor of Canora-Pelly, of Canora and will be the next member representing Canora-Pelly. And of course Carol Sleeva. Carol Sleeva is my current constituency assistant and just does a yeoman's work for me. But I also want to introduce a friend who was my first constituency assistant, and that is Jeff Hryhoriw. Jeff, thank you so much for coming down from Saskatoon.

Also seated in the gallery is a lady who has controlled my last seven and a half years when I was part of this government, and that's Jane Johnson. Not my wife, no, sorry. Jane Johnson has been a great office manager for me when I served as the minister of Education and the minister of Finance, and I want to thank you, Jane. But also, the most important lady in my life is my spouse, Gail. Thank you so much for being here.

[12:00]

Over the past 20 years, 20-plus years, I've had the privilege of working in this magnificent building. Its grandeur has never failed to impress me. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to begin with a set of thank yous by saying thank you to the architects and the engineers of this great building. I've somehow had the reputation of having a very forceful voice. I want acknowledge the fact that the architects and the engineers who designed this building and the great acoustics have allowed me to develop that responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, this Chamber also reminds me of the important work that goes on within these walls. This Chamber which houses sincere and often spirited debate lies at the core of what makes this province and this country so great. Democracy is not always pretty, not always easy, not always perfect but always by far the best alternative to any other form of governing a people. And I am proud and honoured to have been a part of that democratic process.

My earliest days in this place were as an opposition MLA and I learned a great deal about how things work and what things needed to work better. And I must say that I much prefer sitting on this side of the House rather than on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

I do want to comment about one election, Mr. Speaker, the election of 2003. You know, after reflecting . . . We were of course expecting to win that election and become the government of the province of Saskatchewan in 2003. But as I look back, and I'm sure many others in this Assembly have looked back at that election, probably not winning that election is maybe the best thing that could have ever happened to the Saskatchewan Party because what it did, it allowed us as opposition to grow, to develop strong policy, to ensure that we understood what the people of Saskatchewan needed. And I

think the rest is history, Mr. Speaker.

The formation of the Saskatchewan Party was one of the most challenging but rewarding times in my political career. During our time in office and under the leadership of our Premier, Saskatchewan's population has grown significantly and our province has become a leader in Canada. I have greatly enjoyed serving not only the constituents of Canora-Pelly but also all the citizens of this great province. I will miss that interaction and I will miss being part of the team. My time in caucus, my time in cabinet, as a committee member, as a treasury board member — and I know my treasury board colleagues will know how great that group is that are in treasury board — it has resulted in so many friendships.

I want to take some time today to put a few things on the record though, Mr. Speaker. It's my last opportunity to do so and I've found as I've travelled around the province, even just going back home to Canora-Pelly, not everyone watches the Assembly. Not everyone watches televisions.

An Hon. Member: — Say it isn't so.

Mr. Krawetz: — I know. My colleague, the member from Kindersley — say it isn't so. But unfortunately it is. And sometimes you do have to correct a record. You do have to ensure that the record is accurate.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to begin by using a quote from a British journalist and politician. He was a politician for a number of years, decades and decades ago. His name is Charles P. Scott. And he said this, and I quote, "Comment is free but facts are sacred." Mr. Speaker, I like that quote because I like to have things accurate. I like to have facts on the record.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do want to spend a little bit of time, and I hope I don't take too much time, because, Mr. Speaker, one of the areas . . . And I'm not going to talk about all of the areas that we have, you know, accomplished so much, whether it's in Health or whether it's in Highways or whether it's in other areas of government, but I do want to spend some time talking about education.

As everyone knows, education has been my life. I've spent 11 years as a teacher/principal. I've spent nine years as an elected school board member. And then when I was over there in opposition, I served as the Education critic for a while, and of course I served for two and a half years as the minister of Education. So I think I have a little bit of an understanding of education. But I have a lot of passion about education.

So I'm going to just put a couple of things on the record, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we came into office in 2007, there was no graduate retention program. There was no Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship. There was no Saskatchewan advantage grant for education savings. None of those things existed, Mr. Speaker.

And you know what also didn't exist in post-secondary education? The rebuilt campus at Weyburn, Southeast Regional College; the rebuilt campus at Humboldt, the Carlton Trail Regional College. The affiliated college over in Muenster, St. Peter's College, didn't have its current standings. And most

importantly in my area, I know the members from the east side of the province — the member for Yorkton, the member for Melville-Saltcoats — will recognize that the Parkland Regional College in Yorkton didn't exist as it currently did. Mr. Speaker, over \$60 million was spent just on those regional colleges. So some people ask, okay, so where did you spend some of your money as Finance minister? Well I can tell you that those colleges are there because of what our government did.

Now I'm going to turn to the Education portfolio, the pre-K to 12 [pre-kindergarten to grade 12]. Mr. Speaker, having been a teacher . . . And I know there are teachers on both sides of the Assembly. Many will understand that the earliest intervention is the best for recognizing what we can do for our children. And one of the situations that really intrigued me, Mr. Speaker, was the fact that the minister of Education was responsible for child care spaces. 2007 there were 8,850 child care spaces. We were last in the provinces and we were last, not because we wanted to be but because of government decision. And I'm not being critical of former member for Nutana, Pat Atkinson, but this is what Pat Atkinson said. She said:

Saskatchewan has the poorest record when it comes to child daycare, and, Mr. Speaker, I take some responsibility for that because I was part of a government that did not put a lot of new resources into child care.

So you can see, Mr. Speaker, that indeed 8,850 spots were not sufficient.

Today, Mr. Speaker, when we include the numbers that we will have at our nine joint-use spots where we're putting in 90 child care spaces in each of those nine, we will have 15,173 spots.

And the other statistic, Mr. Speaker, is about pre-K. In 2007, we had 155 pre-K situations in schools, 155. Today we have 316, double the amount. Much more to do, of course, but we needed to ensure that those spaces were there.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to put a long list on the record now, not for the purpose of in any way criticizing what has come from the NDP in the way of petitions because petitions are a way of the electorate to bring forward concerns. But for those people who don't watch question period and don't watch this Legislative Assembly, I want them to be able to turn to a list that tells them what has happened in the K to 12 system.

Mr. Speaker, when I began as minister of Education, a couple of people over in the Regina Public board made this comment, and I'm quoting verbatim from Don Hoium who was director of education. He says, "We haven't had a new build in Regina for over a decade so we're looking forward to what is quite an expansive capital development in Regina public schools."

Mr. Speaker, when I hear people say that there hasn't been much done in schools — we saw Prairie Spirit come forward demanding that, you know, they take materials out of a school because the ceilings were falling down, even though they received \$1 million of emergency funding from the Minister of Education — it bothers me. It bothers me that someone isn't looking at the whole picture.

So, Mr. Speaker, here's some names: the Oxbow Prairie

Heights School, the Elrose Composite School, the Leader Composite School, Maple Creek Composite High School, Langenburg School, St. Brieux School, Hafford Central School, Hudson Bay School, Porcupine Plains Composite — you can see the member over there in Carrot River Valley's pretty pleased with that Hudson Bay School — Hillmond School, Gravelbourg School, Lumsden Elementary, Balcarres School, Birch Ridge School in Turnor Lake, Churchill Community High School in La Ronge, Stobart Community High School in Duck Lake, Emerald Ridge Elementary School in White City, Humboldt Elementary School, Humboldt Collegiate Institute.

École St. Thomas, Lloydminster; College Park Elementary, Lloydminster; St. Michael School, Weyburn; Weyburn Comprehensive School; All Saints Catholic, Swift Current; École Centennial, Swift Current; École St. Anne, Prince Albert; Carlton Comprehensive, Prince Albert; Sacred Heart School, Moose Jaw; Warman Middle Years; Warman Public; Warman Catholic Elementary; Martensville Catholic; Martensville Public Elementary; Sacred Heart Community School, Regina; École St. Andrew, Regina; École Connaught Community School, Regina; Seven Stones, Regina; Douglas Park, Regina; Arcola, Regina; Campbell Collegiate, Regina.

Scott Collegiate, Regina; Coopertown Public Elementary, Regina; Coopertown Catholic, Regina; Greens on Gardiner Public, Regina; Greens on Gardiner Catholic, Regina; Harbour Landing Public, Regina; Harbour Landing Catholic, Regina; Nutana Collegiate, Saskatoon; Willow Grove Elementary, Saskatoon; Holy Family School, Saskatoon; Georges Vanier Catholic, Saskatoon; Holy Cross Catholic, Saskatoon; St. Mary's, Saskatoon; E.D. Feehan Catholic High School, Saskatoon; Rosewood Public, Saskatoon; Rosewood Catholic, Saskatoon; Hampton Village Public, Saskatoon; Hampton Village Catholic, Saskatoon; Evergreen Public, Saskatoon; Evergreen Catholic, Saskatoon; Stonebridge Public, Saskatoon; Stonebridge Catholic, Saskatoon. And the last, Mr. Speaker — the 65th either new school, rebuilt school, renovated school — is what occurred here in Regina at the École Monseigneur de Laval at the former Usher Collegiate, Mr. Speaker.

So you see, Mr. Speaker, the reason for putting that on the record is for the public of this great province to understand that there has been a lot done. This list, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education may correct my numbers, but I doubt it. He will recognize, he will recognize that this has meant over \$1 billion worth of expenditure on schools.

As many in this Assembly know, education is that passion and I feel very strongly about it because it's something that we needed to do. And I want to thank all of my colleagues, those who were there in '07 who began in cabinet and said, you know, we need to do something. We need to do something about our education infrastructure. It's falling down. Yes, there's more work to do, and I know the critic over there will indicate that there's more work to do. Of course there is, but this is \$1 billion worth of spend on 65 schools.

And I'm not going to get into comparing the NDP record from the previous 10 because I think Don Hoium, as director of education and Regina Public's director, made the very same comment. He said, we haven't had anything for 10 years. We haven't had a major school building in 10 years, when I made

that announcement in 2008. So I think this speaks for itself.

Mr. Speaker, I want to extend . . . I want to take some time to express my sincere gratitude to a number of individuals and groups who have helped me out in so many ways. And this will be the tough part. Talking about education is fun and easy, but this will be the tough time.

I want to begin by talking about people of Canora-Pelly. I'm not going to spend a lot of time saying thank you because, as I've said in my bit of retirement, honoured banquet back in Canora, I don't know who those 50 people were in 1995. Because you have to remember I had that . . . I was known as a landslide winner because I won with the smallest plurality in 1995. I wasn't given a chance to win, but I did. And I won by 50 votes.

So Canora-Pelly, the area has changed a little bit. But I want to thank all of the people of Canora-Pelly for electing me, for re-electing me and, you know, ensuring that I understood, that I understood the needs of Canora-Pelly and the needs of this great province because that's what we're here for. We're here to serve.

[12:15]

I've already mentioned my constituency assistants, my first one of course being Jeff Hryhoriw. Now my current one of course is Carol Sleeva, but I also want to thank Bob Blahay. I've only had three constituency assistants, full-time assistants, in my entire almost twenty and a half years, and I want to thank those three individuals for all their guidance.

Mr. Speaker, here we have a lot of legislative teams. My colleagues have referred to the family here, and the legislative team is strong in this building. And I'm not going to single out anybody other than Jane Johnson for that tremendous support here in the building. As I indicated, Jane has been here, she came over from Education, I think it was November of 2007. And she didn't know what she was getting into when she realized that I was going to be her boss, but we've had a great working relationship for seven and a half years. So thank you very much.

To my Education colleagues — whether it be Audrey Roadhouse or all of the other people that worked in Education for my two and a half years, many of them of course are still there working with the current minister — thank you.

Finance. Finance was a joy to be involved in, I can say that, Mr. Premier, and I thank you for allowing me to serve for even that extra year beyond that announcement that I made over a year and a half ago. Tremendous work done by so many in not always easy times, not always easy times. But I want to thank all of the people in Finance: Karen and Clare and all of the other assistant leaders over there for their hard work.

The member from Melville-Saltcoats mentioned Reg Downs and Kathy Young. I too want to extend my appreciation to them and also to Joe Donlevy. And I'm not going to indicate many other names because the people in Exec Council, when you're in cabinet or even when you're not, they're very, very helpful because you have to . . . If you don't know, you should be

asking. As an MLA, whether or not you are in cabinet, you should be asking. And these are the people that will ensure that we knew what was going on, that we knew as MLAs, that we knew as cabinet ministers, even members in opposition. I recall having to do a particular response to something called the wheat sheaf, and I can tell you I didn't have a clue what I was talking about, but that's for another day to explain that one.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the Premier for the leadership that he's shown to all of the people in the province of Saskatchewan, but most especially here to us as MLAs. Thank you to my fellow MLAs for allowing me to be part of your team.

I want to extend my appreciation to family, and of course much changes over 21 years. I think probably my becoming a member of the Saskatchewan Party is maybe due to my late dad. I also . . . I want to extend my appreciation to all of my siblings: my brothers and sisters and their families. I've had the privilege of having nieces and nephews here when I was delivering the budget on behalf of the province of Saskatchewan, and that's always, always appreciated.

My two children, to Lindsay in Calgary, soon to be married. Of course I think most of you already know that Lindsay and her fiancé were engaged back a few months ago in the summer, and we're planning a family wedding. But also to BOWS, to B-O-W-S — Bryce, Olivia, Willow, and Scarlett — thank you to them.

When I was elected in 1995, both Lindsay and Bryce were, I think, 11 and 16 respectively. So when you have two children, you miss a lot of things. You miss a lot of things back at home. And I want to thank Gail for doing all of that hard work, still being the teacher and principal and finishing off 36 years of education, I think it is, and still ensuring that our kids did what they needed to do. Gosh, this is tough.

Politics at any level is a difficult job because everybody has different expectations and needs, and decisions and choices have to be made — tough choices, choices not everyone agrees with. But in all my dealings, I have endeavoured to be fair and prudent and mindful of how best to serve the people of this province.

Despite what some people might think, I know from my years here that MLAs on both sides of this House worked diligently and with great integrity for the greater good of this province and country. It is a job that requires a thick skin at times — one I don't have right now — but it is also a job that brings tremendous satisfaction when you are able to improve people's lives. As I leave, I have no regrets for the past 20 years. I have greatly enjoyed building a better province and a brighter future for all. God bless Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank you and your colleague, the Deputy Speaker, for listening to me very carefully for two full days. And I think when I heard my colleague, the former Finance minister talking now, I recognized that we all need a lot of time to try to correct the record different times. And I appreciate his comments there.

But today I think I'm going to do something different. I'm going to talk about how as a legislator I'm here because of the people of Regina Lakeview but the people of Saskatchewan. And I'm here because people have trusted me to present their questions, their issues to government when I was in government and to government when I'm now in opposition. And that's a very special task that every one of us has.

And I know that there are very few people who get to sit in these chairs and, as we've heard today, there are very few people that get to be here almost 21 years. And I really do register that bittersweet emotion about the fact that I'm going to some other role where I will listen carefully to people and help them. The next Government of Saskatchewan will see me regularly, whether it's the government from this side of the House or a government from that side of the House, because that's part of who I've always been, but even more so now that I understand how this place works.

There are so many aspects of how public policy is made. And all of us know that the word politics means power, right? And power is both a blessing and a curse because you can do things. You can fix problems. But often you don't have the resources to do that, so how do you make that balance? And I think that's how those of us who have been here for a long time are still here because we've tried to maintain that kind of balance.

And I've very much appreciated the speeches that have been given so far, and I look forward to the ones that are coming because we're at one of those days where we can be positive about what it is to be a politician. We can be very, very positive about the future of our province, and we can be very, very positive about the long-term relationships that we've developed here. And I know that many of the members across the way I've had chances to visit with socially and also in developing and working on policy things. And I know that, much as we've had disagreements for almost 21 years on a number of things, we've also had many things where we've worked together.

And it's interesting how you have a special bond with those people who are your critics. And I was thinking about that when we were talking about Mr. Heppner, because Mr. Heppner was a burr in my side when I was the Justice minister, but he was also that high school teacher who made sure people did the best they could. I think about the critics in my role as Health and the Deputy Premier. He was pretty tough on me for a long time. I know Mr. Gantefer back there, he was pretty tough on me for a long time. But especially the Deputy Premier, he got to see the other side of that. And as I said to him, and I say to my present person that I'm kind of tough on, is that we put together a plan in December 2001, with the assistance of many people, including the present Health minister, and in many ways we've stuck with that.

And it's when they've been freelancing over there that we get into trouble, and so I continue to say that. But also what I know is that we all have to remember, in this place, that we're standing on the shoulders of the women and men who have been before us. And if you can remember that, you can make a very, very . . . I guess you can do positive things for the province.

Now unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I've gotten quite used to being

able to talk forever so I'm going to have to come back to some very specific things here.

I want to say some thank yous. My colleagues who are part of this caucus and our leader are my super-family, if I can put it that way, and each one of them has contributed to who I am. They supported me when I stepped into a role of being the leader as we sorted out what happened after 2011, and we've stuck together very well. I think even the members opposite would agree that we've figured out some very good ways to ask questions and raise issues, and I think that this ability to work together has been amazing.

And so I want to say thank you to each one of you. And if I had my seven hours, Mr. Speaker, I would talk about 10 minutes on each one of them, but I won't do that. But thank you very much to each of you. And I want to thank the Premier and the members across the way for answering questions when they can, but also for the leadership you've shown over the last number of years. There are obviously some . . . There's some fraying at the edges, if I can put it that way, and we'll see what the public thinks next April, but that's a factor as well.

I also want to thank some of the people who got me into politics — and that's Premier Romanow and his wife, Eleanore, Premier Calvert, his wife, Betty, and Dwain Lingenfelter, and Louise Simard who was my predecessor — because they said, you can do this job. I mean you're somebody who can come forward and represent Regina Lakeview.

I want to also thank . . . There's a whole number of people who helped me at the very beginning of getting started, and one of them was the member from Regina South. And I'll say thank you to him for good advice that he gave me in 1995.

At the same time, I also had a very, after I got elected, a very tough taskmaster, a guy named Brian Topp. And all of us know Brian Topp, ran against Mr. Mulcair, and didn't get the national leadership but he's over working hard in Alberta. But more especially his wife, Rebecca Elbourne, was very much a part of my campaign team.

[12:30]

I also want to talk just briefly about one person who was elected with me in '95, and the other members who were elected in '95 also have really good feelings about him, and that's Lindy Kasperski. And Lindy ended up having all kinds of adversity in his life as it moved to the end, and then he died. But he always had a sense of optimism that encapsulated what it means to be a Saskatchewan person. And I thought of that as we were celebrating the, I don't know what . . . I think it was the 40th anniversary of all of the multicultural work in Saskatchewan, and that's where he started his career. So I want to say a special mention of Lindy Kasperski.

Now also in this place we can't do our work unless we have very good staff in our caucus office. And I have a number of the caucus members upstairs, and I want to say thank you to them individually: Lindsay Martens, Cheryl Stecyk, Erin Morrison, Jannet Shanks, Eric Anderson, Doyle Fox, Katherine Norton, Melissa Bendig, Mitchell Bonokoski, and Eric Bell. All of you have been incredible supports for us as individuals, but also as a

team.

And I can say too that the government has thanked some of the people that are working behind us. And I was especially pleased to hear about Reg Downs because his sister used to live next door to me. And Reg was a young guy who was interested in law and things, and I've followed his career for a long time.

But what I want to say is that when you're brought in to work on these kinds of jobs, you also, as staff, both sides of the House, have that special task of trust. There's people that come to you in trust, and I say that you have done an excellent job of working with the trust that people give us, and then also you.

I want to say thank you to my constituency assistants that I have right now. That's Conni Yakimchuk, Cory Oxelgren, and Judy Kerr. Elaine Wood was my first constituency assistant, and she provided very good advice for me for a long time. I think I'd have to say that probably most, at least well probably three or four of the elections, that's how I got re-elected was Elaine was working with me. Also Karen Pattison worked with me, and Bernie Yakimchuk.

When I was a minister, and I was thinking, well it's exactly 20 years ago on November 22nd that I was appointed the minister of Justice. And I want to say thank you to Judy Samuelson for making sure I had very good staff. And my very first executive secretary and sort of a team of secretaries were Wendy Hollinger and Elaine Maksymiw, and all the years I was a minister, those were the main people who kept me out of trouble on all kinds of levels but also were absolutely supportive. My chiefs of staff, I only had three of them: Betty Ann Cox, Heather Nord, and Conni Yakimchuk, and then Michele Kobayashi who also worked. I want to say thank you to them as well for the kind of work that they were able to provide me in Justice, Crown Investments, Health, and then Environment.

Now there's also a sense of working here in this place. And, Mr. Speaker, you're very much a leader of this organization, and we don't always agree with you here or outside of the place but many times we do. I mean we always I think appreciate finally the kinds of things that result, and so I want to thank you for patience, even though you show a lot of impatience sometimes. And then to the Table, the Clerks and all of the Pages, and especially to Pat Shaw and all of the staff that work with him. And as I had a chance to say last week, there are many situations that Pat helped me and my family, and I appreciate that.

Also I want to say a special thank you to the press. And I think Murray Mandryk's been here my whole career, Stefani Langenegger for a long, long time, Emma Graney more recently, and Sarah Mills. And there's a whole bunch of others who I'm not naming out, but I'm going to say Wayne Mantyka has also been here my whole career.

And one person I want to say a special thank you to who's now in the background but taught me a lot about how to deal graciously with the press was John Weidlich at CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation]. And so I hope you'll pass that on to Mr. Weidlich, Stefani.

Now one of the other factors for me clearly has been my family. And I get teased fairly regularly that I seem to have family in every corner of the province, but I'm proud to say that I do. And I have very many connections that have been very helpful in this job as a politician. I'm not going to name them all, but I'm going to say that I'm here because of that.

I want to put it on the record that when my great-grandfather Ole and his son John Farden came to Saskatchewan in 1903 to Macrorie, just near Outlook, they were the first ones that came. But they came very specifically because they wanted their children and grandchildren to have an education and be part of society. My grandfather John married Anna who then my mother, Randi, and Gertrude were born in that family, and those are my roots on my mother's side.

My father's mother came up to Saskatchewan and arrived in Regina on July 4th, 1912, four days after the tornado. And she would tell us about what it looked like to see the worst disaster from a tornado in Canadian history. A couple of years later she married my grandfather — that was Josefine Jacobson. She married my grandfather Andrew Nilson who had actually worked for the fellow who later became the governor of South Dakota before he came up to Saskatchewan, but he came from Norway as well. All of these were Norwegians. But they ended up then living near Parkbeg, Saskatchewan, and that's still where I have my roots on my dad's side. Those are places that are important for me.

I'm going to give a short little poetry piece from my favourite poem by one of the poets from down at Wood Mountain, Andrew Suknaski. And I'm just going to say this last line of this poem:

I claim these things, my ancestral space to move through
and beyond
Chronicling the meaning of these vast plains in a
geography of blood and failure
Making them live.

We all are connected in some way to this place, and that's why we're here. And we need to remind ourselves that we do that.

My geography of blood, my roots, are my parents who are still alive and just live over across the lake — they can see the dome from their condominium — Tom and Randi Nilson. And they're very much a part of my life still and provide lots of advice on a regular basis.

My mother's sister Gertrude and her husband Curtis were my godparents. And my godfather died in the spring in Saskatoon and Gertrude still lives in Saskatoon, but they have provided guidance to me my whole life.

When I moved back to Saskatchewan for one year in 1978, my wife Linda came with me and we've been together now 41 years, and she has been providing a very good, stable influence on my life all of these years. I remember when I said I was thinking about running, she said, well we've been married for over 20 years and I did promise for good or bad, and I'm not sure what this is. I think in the long run she'll look back and say, well there were many, many good things.

And that I think is important to remember for all of us, and especially for some of the younger members or some of the new people who are going to come in. It is hard on your family. You know, our kids have done well but they also missed out on certain things; but they gain on certain things.

But Linda has been very steadfast. She's not here today because she's over at the cancer clinic seeing patients, and that's what comes first in her life.

My daughter Ingrid has basically blossomed into an actor and she's living in Vancouver, although she's in Toronto today because one of her films is at the BITS Film Festival tomorrow night. For those who don't what BITS means, that means Blood in the Snow, Canadian horror movies. So I'm not so sure about this one, but we'll find out.

But she also does a lot of things that are really interesting around voice acting, so Barbie, *Strawberry Shortcake*, *My Little Pony*. If you hear a Regina accent when you're listening to those cartoons, that's probably Ingrid's voice that's there.

My younger daughter Solveig, as you all know, is a great student, a great athlete here in Regina, and she's just going to graduate from medical school in Calgary. And I need to thank her as well. She hopes to come and boost the numbers of doctors in Saskatchewan, and so we're waiting to see how that sorts itself out over the next year.

My wife's parents are still alive too. They're in their 90s, and they're also people that have supported us over the years. When I was first elected, they came to be here to help take care of the kids, to assist my parents. So Stan and Betty Lee of Everett, Washington, I want to acknowledge them.

My brother, Ralph Nilson, who many of you know, is now president of Vancouver Island University and his wife, Suzie, is a professor there, and they send all their good wishes to me, but I think to all of us who are serving. And I think from Ralph's perspective, a special message to the member from Canora-Pelly because he worked with him over many, many years. And their children, Anna and Bethany, have benefited well from schooling in Saskatchewan and other places and are well on their careers. But they were all very much a part of my support.

My sister JoAnn lives in Saskatoon and works at University Hospital, deals with the hemophiliac people as a physiotherapist, and her husband, James, an ag economist at the University of Saskatchewan, and their four boys, Nils, Olaf, Torbjorn, and Knut — you can guess where those names came from — they also have been a big part of my support over the years, and so I want to make a special point of thanking them.

And finally, very good friends in Regina who many of you know, Rick Hordern and Nancy Talsness Hordern, and their family, have been incredible supports.

So I mention all these people that are kind of close family in this context because that's how this place works, and it's their sacrifice as well that has helped me. Now I think I'm finished with that kind of a thank you.

There's one special thank you — and I think everybody will understand when I say this right now — and that's to the library, the Legislative Library. I know that they've told me that they're worried that their budget might have to change when I'm not around here anymore. But I've spent a lot of time working with the librarians. They are incredibly helpful. I recommend to every member that there's no other profession really that has a personal librarian and many times people don't use that. Well I've used your personal librarians on many occasions. So I want to say a special thank you to all of the people within the library.

[12:45]

Now it's hard to sum up a political career, and you're always inadequate to describe it in words. But I for years have said there are two things that are important when you're a politician, and those two things were: number one, be good. Everybody's watching you, and if you're doing something crazy, somebody's going to find out about it and it'll cause you all kinds of difficulty. Second thing is you can't do these jobs unless you have a really good laugh at least once a day. And even in the direst circumstances, it's really good to laugh.

I've added a third thing in the last, you know, couple of years, and that's the fact that as a politician, you have to listen. Too many politicians blare at people. And when you sit and when you go to talk to people and that's all you do is you talk and you don't listen, you're not doing your job. And I think that it's a lesson for me. It's a lesson for all of us to remember that point about listening because what people want from us is the fact that we have heard their particular issue, we've heard their particular problem, and we're going to attempt to sort it out. And so if I have any advice to new politicians and the ones that are going to continue for many years to come, it's those three things — be good, laugh every day at least once, and listen.

I want to say thank you to the people of Saskatchewan, thank you to all of you who have worked with me. Thank you especially to my colleagues here in this caucus and our leader, Cam Broten. I'm going to miss all of you greatly. But I will be in the neighbourhood, and I'm sure for another 20 years you'll see my '93 Suburban going around the block. So wave me down, I'll give you a ride, and we'll have a visit. Anyway thank you very much for everything.

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

Mr. Norris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and following in the steps of so many august speakers is a humbling experience. But when I say thank you, I especially mean that for you, sir, for your leadership and your friendship and your patience which I may try once again today.

This is a real and rare opportunity. My story is probably a little different than most here. I'm an adopted son of this province, so when I think about my presence here, I would say when I was young it would have been an unlikely thought. I had envisioned myself probably being maybe in a different legislature, but in a way that makes this all the more special.

Notions of Saskatchewan came in glimpses, fragments. A place

of great innovation, hard work, remarkable in its sense of community, but also great fun, known for its athletes and athleticism. I was intrigued by Saskatchewan, as Peter Gzowski said, this most Canadian of provinces. And I was given stories and glimpses on occasion by playing sports tournaments here, playing hockey, but mostly by some key individuals.

Bob Lemieux who was my first boss at Bhl lumber in Sylvan Lake, he grew up in Willow Bunch. Bob was a terrific athlete. I've since come to know a number of people from Willow Bunch that have independently confirmed that. I maybe believe his stories a little more now. But he demonstrated to me when I was 14 and taught me how to drive a forklift and a 1-ton truck. I probably shouldn't have said that I was 14 doing that. He taught me about a work ethic and a spirit of generosity.

The McCowan family. Wayne McCowan was a graduate from Bedford Road. And again I had that sense that there was something special. Al Schachterle, my first industrial arts teacher. He grew up in Govan and allowed me to grow pretty significantly along the way, and Bob Mills who was ultimately our Member of Parliament who allowed and encouraged me to actually work with him in Ottawa. These were individuals from Saskatchewan, among others, that were truly remarkable community leaders in and around Red Deer and they offered glimpses of this province, early glimpses. That helps to get in part what brought me here, a graduate program at the University of Saskatchewan and a truly wonderful woman who is up in that gallery today.

You know, I had anticipated that as I went to Ottawa, life would change. And I was given the opportunity, an invitation because of another Saskatchewan great, Dr. Gordon Barnhart who, in co-operation with Dr. Asit Sarkar, they took me for dinner one night in Ottawa. And Gordon called me the next day and said, that was a pretty good job interview. Maybe you should come back. And I am forever grateful for that conversation and that act of generosity.

I arrived at the University of Saskatchewan, U of S international at a very, very special time. Peter MacKinnon was just taking over as president, the synchrotron was just announced, and the prospects for the future were incredible almost. But there were some things that didn't add up and I caught on to them early on and they were tangible.

So one of our senior deputy ministers today, I met him at the early construction site of the CLS [Canadian Light Source] and I gave him my business card. And he said, we actually don't have a budget for our business cards within the government and I thought, well that's strange. We've got the largest science project in the country. It's just under way and he's doing his job. But something's wrong. Something doesn't add up.

And then I began to hear from and learn about the experiences of students. What should have been remarkable times of their lives as they were planning their futures, and they were special times, but too often the glance was back west. I began to work with a number of Aboriginal students whose opportunities were, even those within the post-secondary sector, they were truncated. There were things that were going to have to change in Saskatchewan, and that became ever more clear.

And so I had the opportunity to run for the Liberals in 2003 in the provincial election. And so to David Karwacki and Doug Richardson and Tracy Muggli and Nikki Hipkin and Evatt Merchant, a number of others, most especially Curtis Kimpton who has never skipped a beat and never deviated in his support for me, and we just had a great run. And at 27 per cent on election day, I thought, boy, I should probably look to do something else. This is a good idea. It's probably a good idea for someone else.

And so I had essentially come up with my own career plan that that was terrific, but now it was time to focus back on the academics and finish my master's degree and maybe start a doctorate. The work at the university was going very, very well.

And I guess along the way I reflected on something that happened in that 2003 election campaign, which was fortuitous. At the time, it didn't seem fortuitous; it seemed rather intimidating. There was a member, an MLA from Swift Current, and Eric Cline having essentially a head-on debate in the school of business. And I think Karwacki and company at the last moment realized we should have a Liberal participant in that debate or deliberation and so, with little notice, I was able to go over. And the member from Swift Current was sitting on the bench sipping a coffee and looked up with great nonchalance as I was absolutely terrified with the prospect of participating in this debate and deliberation. It proved to be fortuitous because I saw two remarkable orators go at it, and in a sense I was able to learn a lot by watching those two. There might have been a little bit of room up the middle as they were going, and maybe I was able to see a little bit of that.

I didn't think much of that event until the opening of the College Building in 2005, when the member for Swift Current by this time had taken on the leadership role of the Saskatchewan Party — a really remarkable party, and I'll come back to that in a bit. I see Stefani up there, and she knows that I probably am truly just getting started. It makes me think of those early days in committee.

But you know, it was at that opening of the College Building and the member from Swift Current, the leader of the official opposition said, you know, I'd like to talk to you — a lot of people say that — and within an hour and a half my phone rang. It was obvious that this was a different person. This was a person of integrity. This was a person who was going to act, whether I was involved or not. And I said that in our first conversation, but that the province had an opportunity to actually head in a new direction, and I wanted to talk about that direction. So why Saskatchewan? Because it's a special place in Canada. And why here? Because in large measure because of the member from Swift Current and his outreach.

And with the privilege that has been bestowed upon me to have a seat around various tables that have really taken decisions, not easy decisions, but have taken decisions to help renew and transform the province. So I was a policy wonk. I was. The member from Cypress Hills talked about plain talk, which I've come to appreciate, and his wisdom and his vision has been a constant, right from those early days. But I was on the other end. I was interested in, if you want, the technocratic approach to how to bring about not just good governance, but great policies. That was exciting, probably not for most people, but

that was exciting.

So when we think about a population that's grown by 120,000 people, we can think about the significance of what Tony Blair referred to as, are people moving out or are people moving in to a jurisdiction? There's a pretty simple, straightforward proposition.

[13:00]

I was privileged to be able to serve with my many colleagues in helping to shape an immigration strategy that today, for example, allows us to help celebrate robust communities from around the world, including absolutely dynamic Muslim communities here within the province of Saskatchewan, one of the fastest growing provinces in the country. That's a phrase that we're now getting used to.

When I think about jobs, the number of working people in Saskatchewan has grown by over 67,000 people since 2007 — 24 new jobs a day, or one an hour. I am of the belief that one of the best social programs that can be offered, one of the greatest, greatest mechanisms for empowerment and improvement is employment. And so when we think about jobs, they're not ends in themselves but means for families to realize dreams.

When I think about tax relief, I think about those most vulnerable — students and seniors and others — that we have helped remove off the tax rolls. The statistic can just kind of come across as breezy: 114,000 people. That is a remarkable story, not simply in economic terms but in social justice terms, allowing more people to have more means, again, to work towards a good life.

Regarding doctors and nurses — and we'll come to a little bit about the infrastructure investments — but when we think about 500 additional doctors and 3,000 more nurses of all designations working in the province of Saskatchewan, that makes a difference in people's lives. It really makes a difference in people's lives when you combine that with family members that are here because some of the best caregivers are actually family members. And to have them here in the province, to have jobs and opportunities in the province, when combined with more doctors and more nurses means, again, that for our seniors and for others in need there's just better care, stronger communities.

When we think about investments in hospitals, of which there are many, the significance of a children's hospital in this province marks a coming of age for Saskatchewan: the home of public medicare and medicine, as we've come to know it, now being extended with full sincerity and really remarkable resources, not simply from government, but across communities. I've participated in fundraising activities even in the North, communities that are remote and distant, where pledges are being taken by phone, because they know there, and in communities across the province, the significance not simply of this building, which in its own right offers great hope, but of the specialists and of the care that can be afforded people that much closer to home.

We can think about long-term care, and I'll let others speak about the details, but that type of investment is again about

focusing on those, our senior citizens especially, those who have helped build and shape and give the spirit of Saskatchewan that we all know here within the province and well beyond.

I'd be remiss if I didn't highlight the significance of STARS. It was a piece that when I arrived, it was glaringly absent. We'd been fortunate in Alberta to move forward with STARS. To have Rod Gantefoer here today helps make all the difference because we know how critical, how vital this service is for families and for those in acute need.

The progress we've made on housing, in 2014 alone there were over 1,600 rental starts. The numbers can be compared by others as far as what had happened previously. But the significance of housing brings me to a conversation, an image, that I recall on a regular basis. The conversation was with a three-year-old. She was in our northern most women's shelter. I was on crutches, not immune to being a klutz, that wouldn't surprise me. But she asked me, she said, are you okay? And smiled. It was her fourth time that year in that shelter. She didn't have a home. Each time it took her mom six hours by taxi to get there. Housing matters. [Inaudible] . . . matters.

I better change course quickly, so I'm happy to talk about post-secondary education, because it matters because that's an aperture. That's a window. That's a doorway that can transform lives. Eric Howe has undertaken work that allows us and alerts us that without grade 12 that little girl is not likely to make \$200,000 in her life, not likely to make \$200,000 in her life, she and others. With post-secondary education, in fact with a degree, she'll be able to make more than \$1 million statistically. And so they're connected.

Hence the healthy conversations that we've had many times around treasury board tables and cabinet tables, and certainly the member from Thunder Creek offers me a great reminder. Because I used to come in to treasury board before I was named to it and he would say, here he comes again, grab your wallet. But those investments matter. The fact that there's a Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship now, \$2,000, that matters. SAGES [Saskatchewan advantage grant for education savings], the ability of parents to invest and have that investment recognized early on by the province of Saskatchewan matters. The graduate retention program that this year will have nearly 60,000 people engaged and enrolled matters.

Not simply to play defence, but also to raise and wave the Saskatchewan flag to say that we understand the significance of uranium and agriculture and natural gas and potash and gold. But we recognized in the 21st century, like jurisdictions around the world that had far fewer natural resources, that the single most important valuable and vital resource were the people of this province, people that too often had slid across borders to help build other communities in Canada and around the world. Those people now had the option to stay and make that difference right here at home.

The investment in post-secondary education is already highlighted as significant. One of the most significant, and something I'd like to applaud the previous federal government for, was their infrastructure investment that included that. It

allowed us to move forward at key times on investments that mattered but maybe didn't get the headlines.

And so when we think about that infrastructure investment — \$117 million, 21 different projects — it allowed Saskatchewan to move forward in this key sector. And the sector matters. The sector matters because it's enabling and allowing our young people to take key positions within Saskatchewan companies, and those companies are helping to create wealth, increasingly.

And that's why our most recent discussion and deliberation about Trans-Pacific Partnership matters. We know on this side of the House our position because trade is the lifeblood of the province of Saskatchewan. It's not simply trade. It's recognition that the hard work that people do, day in and day out across the province, actually adds value to people's lives.

So when we think about \$20 billion worth of exports in 2007 to that jumping up to \$35 billion dollars in 2014 with a trajectory that continues to rise, we understand Saskatchewan is being noticed and taking its rightful place not simply in Canada but around the world. That is helping to make a difference on the destiny of this province. That is helping to ensure that our province, our province continues to grow because quite candidly, Canada needs a strong Saskatchewan not simply for today but for the future.

And so I was interested in policies that would help facilitate and foster such outcomes. I'll be candid; I didn't anticipate in this period of time that we would see so much progress and the fact that we have . . . With all due respect to my colleagues, I think is much less about what occurs in this building than it is about the spirit and confidence and hope that resonates in communities and for families right across the province. I think we simply reflect that.

So, policies. But along the way an elder said to me, it's not simply about policies but it's about people. Those were words of wisdom. Those were words that helped to open my eyes. Those are words today that, when I begin to think about the thanks I need to offer . . . and they will be insufficient.

Within the constituency office, Kalle, Kathy, Kacey, and Katie all did remarkable work, as is Barb doing right now as she's watching. They have served the people of Saskatoon Greystone very, very well. In fact, I think the people of Saskatoon Greystone actually prefer dealing with them than dealing with me. That probably made things a lot easier.

Obviously when we think about the Saskatchewan Party . . . and I want to talk about this party. The party as we see it today is enlivened and defined by its personalities, and rightfully so, especially as we have so many founding voices here. But it's actually the endearing feature of the party, actually about a philosophical convergence. That convergence is in and around a key principle, a fulcrum, that as long as the party remains focused on it, the party will be in good stead. And that fulcrum is opportunity and the freedom of opportunity.

For most of the 20th century, we saw discussions about a number of issues. So we had issues that were defined by a freedom of rights, and those continue today and they were fundamental. We also saw, on the opposite side of the political

spectrum, freedoms of condition. And we understand that for the most part, our colleagues from across the way are defined philosophically by that concern for an equality of condition. That is a very laudable and traditional approach. But sitting between equality of rights and equality of condition rests the equality of opportunity, and that is powerful and empowering. That helps to define with a very, very strong sense of a commitment to the grassroots to listening, to learning, and serving. That helps to define the Saskatchewan Party on our very best days and days that we need to continue to strive for and days that I am very optimistic about. And so to the party, for everyone involved, I want to say and offer my special and sincere thanks. Without your help, I would not have been here.

[13:15]

To my caucus colleagues — family — thank you. Thank you all for your good wishes, for your support, for your humour, the occasional nudge, all of which was done constructively. A number of you are dear, dear friends, and we will remember these days with the "light of abiding memories," to quote Joseph Conrad.

To my cabinet colleagues and those in Executive Council, what a pleasure and privilege to serve. Great deliberations: earnest, heartfelt, well-organized, and coordinated. And those stretched into a variety of ministries that I had the opportunity — and Crown corporations — of helping to oversee, but really become far more familiar with and engaged by the notion of interdependence. I relied on a lot of people. The errors I made are mine. The successes are shared.

To the mayor of Saskatoon, the Saskatoon part of Greystone, and a number of community and city and civic leaders that opened their doors, opened their arms, and really helped to ensure that I could be part of interesting conversations, optimistic conversations, visionary conversations — not simply about where we were today but about where we were going, where we could go by working together. And so, to Mayor Don Atchison, I want to offer my special thanks for his friendship.

The most important thanks, and there will be many along the way that I can offer, to my family, and to have Jacqueline here, it's absolutely terrific . . . to be joined by the boys, Hayden and Emmett, and I missed . . . and I should have said this, because Emmett was part of the Babineau Warriors that won the Saskatoon city football championship.

To have Carol here makes all the difference. We weren't in contact for 18 years and I'm delighted to have her here. To my sister Leah who just cleans up messes after me all the time. She's an older sister, so she got used to that along the way. To my dad and his partner, Vicki. To my mom and her partner, John. To my grandmother, Sheila Joan Norris. And to many, many others who have enabled me to be here with unwavering and unstinting support, I offer my sincere thanks.

There are a couple more thanks, and I'm going to look up at the gallery now. To members of the media: Wayne, Stefani, Murray, Jennifer, Emma, among others. Stefani, I still have this little piece of paper — I use it as a bookmark — of this old, dead tree casting a long, dark shadow over the old Saskatchewan. And I want to say I appreciated your patience

and good nature, especially at the end of the first session when instead of ridicule you offered, well, at least pity.

Mr. Speaker, I've also offered my thanks to you, and I mean that, for your leadership and your friendship, your mentorship, and your open door. To everyone who serves in this legislative building . . . This morning I started out in a meeting with deputy ministers. It just reinforces how significant, the significance of this building, but everyone that enables it . . . Events last year in Ottawa reminded and reinforced, for the first time in contemporary Canadian history, lessons that others have learned along the way and are reflected by the scars of violence in different legislatures around the world, how privileged this space is and how honoured we all are to be parliamentarians and to earn the public trust. And so to the people of Saskatoon Greystone, I offer my final thanks. It has been an honour.

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

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't sure today when I stood up whether I was going to be sad or what my tone would be, and it's changed within the couple of hours since I've listened to my colleagues speak. Everybody has something to say and brings with them some different perspectives, and it's an honour to be here today.

And I think everyone here knows that I really don't like speaking in the legislature. I never did and that's who I am. And I really think it's your fault, Mr. Speaker, because when I started over there and we started in the Sask Party, then Mr. Speaker came up to me and said, we need you to speak for two hours on this bill. Are you kidding? And that's basically what I told him, and I never did like it. But I do appreciate the opportunity today to stand up, and I'm going to. Because the Speaker did that to me, I'm going to introduce more of my family without permission, Mr. Speaker.

My youngest daughter, Jeanette, came in this morning a little bit later. She has her own company and she travels around a tremendous amount and she does vocational rehabilitation and she's great at it. My two granddaughters. My oldest granddaughter, Brianne, is in university and she's interested in criminology and she's a great artist. And my second oldest granddaughter, Jayden, is also at the U of S and she takes kinesiology and she's on the U of S Huskies volleyball team.

And also with me today is my brother Alan, and he's been in the legislature quite often, and my sister-in-law Cheryl Senecal. It's great to see you. You've been an important part of my life for the last 20 years, and I don't know what I would have done with my home being two and a half hours away if I wouldn't have had some family close. So as many people have said, family is just so very, very important. I also have one son that hasn't been able to come. He's in Toronto. He has my two youngest granddaughters, and he's an engineer and his wife is a public health epidemiologist, so they're very busy people. And I just want to say to them that they've made this life for me very possible, and I'm truly indebted to them.

Mr. Speaker, unlike many of the people in this room, I'm really not a political geek at all. I never got involved in it. I didn't know very much about it. I decided when I ran in '95, I would

do that just to prove that I wasn't a socialist. I proved that I wanted to be independent. So I got in my little '79, it was an old Daytona car, and it didn't have a cellphone, and I wasn't supposed to win because my area hadn't been anything but NDP for about 55 years. And so I just drove around and knocked on doors and talked to people. And on election night, June 21st, 1995, I won by 120 votes. And after that I won by quite a bit more.

Two years later I was part of a move. I was part of a group of eight that started a political party that will forever be a part of the history of our beautiful province. And today as I stand as a proud member of that political party that was in power when our province finally took its rightful place on the Canadian stage and on the national stage, I'm just, I'm honoured, and I'm very humbled to be part of it.

Many of my colleagues and friends have talked about infrastructure and what we've done as government. And it is very important to me. I was on treasury board for a number of years. But for me, it's also the balance between what we do with infrastructure and what we do for the people of the province. And that's where my heart has been for a long time.

There are so many people to thank when you win a term. When you win your seat for five terms, there's a lot of people to thank. I've introduced and talked about my family. They are very, very important to me. In the last 20 years I've lost family. My dad isn't here anymore, and my father-in-law and my mother-in-law and aunts and uncles.

And I had one grandchild, Brianne, when I first started, and there are seven more since then. And there's many things that have happened that, in their lives, that I didn't have the opportunity to attend because I was here. And I thank them for being supportive and understanding that this, it helps me to be who I am, and I hope it'll help make a difference in your lives as well.

We have friends that we've visited and have continued to visit us, and they've played cards and they seldom talk about politics unless I bring it up. But I do know that they have Sask Party signs in their garage, and they probably are not much good but decorating something now, but I thank them for that.

The people I've worked with in the last 21 years, my colleagues who have . . . Sometimes they've inspired me and sometimes they've frustrated me, and lots of times they made me think outside the box and think outside my comfort zone. But they were always there for support, and I knew it. It's an incredible feeling to know that regardless of what happens, you have, people there will have your back. They're a team. It's an incredible team and I know there's no I in team.

I do know that the feeling that we have when we can sit around the table, as some of my colleagues have said, we can disagree and we always come out knowing that we have the best, we've made the best decision we can when we put all of our thoughts and minds together.

It's impossible today to not think about the people that should be here and aren't. My colleague, the member from Martensville, her dad was an important part of who we are, one

of the original eight. And I know that he'd be very proud of her, as we all are. And I didn't know him as well as some of my other colleagues, but I do know that he was an impressive presence and you could feel it when he walked in the room. And I'm always going to be honoured to know that he sat with us.

I think about Rudi Peters, and I don't know how many of you remember him, but there was a time when we were in opposition where we had a chance to defeat the then government in a vote, and Rudi Peters had cancer and he hadn't come in for a couple of days. But that night he made a special effort, and his wife Shirley brought him in for the vote and we won that vote. But it showed to me how much the political world meant to him and what a difference it can make, and he's on my mind.

I know we've lost Serge LeClerc and Carl Kwiatkowski. And everybody that knew him knew about his hair. Carl had perfect hair. And he also was the president of my constituency for a while and I talked him into running. We had a show or a radio program that we did once a month called *Saskatchewan Matters*. We did it for about a year and a half, and we thought it was kind of unique, *Saskatchewan Matters*, and Saskatchewan matters. And we thought we'd get a whole lot of phone calls. We very seldom did. People just wanted to hear us talk, and we could banter back and forth and it was an incredible time. But I wish they were here today to celebrate with us because it would have made a difference.

Mr. Speaker, and to my colleagues, I've had the opportunity, through what the Premier has offered, for me to be a member of cabinet and to take on some different opportunities. I'm going to start with the one with the Public Service Commission because there's something that happens there often that I don't like. In Saskatchewan we don't have public servants. We have people who work in the public service. I don't believe that we have servants. And I have had the honour of working with so very many professional people who work very hard and they, at the end of the day, go home wanting to be proud of their job and they need to know that we're proud of them.

[13:30]

I also want to talk about a few of the people that I have worked with, that they will always be part of my life. Shelley Duke and Kim McKechny and Jackie and Amanda and Kristy and Cathe Offet, and a lot more. I know that some of my colleagues have mentioned Reg Downs. We'll never forget you, Reg. It doesn't matter how far we go or if we ever come back to this building, we won't forget you. You've been just such an important part of our lives and of this party.

And Kathy Young is just plain lovable. She made us all feel special. I don't think she ever called any of us by our right name. The member from Canora-Pelly was Special K. I think I was Junie B. But she's an important part of who we are as well.

Anne is here today from my constituency. I'm so glad to see you. You made a trip in this morning from Wadena, and I thank you for all the work you've done and the research and caring. I'm just amazed, and I'm so happy Ivan, her husband, is here. He's had some health issues in the last while, and I'm glad you

could make it as well, Ivan.

I've been kind of hard on my CAs I think in the number of years. I sound like the member from Cypress Hills when he listed his CAs. Linda started with me in 1995, election night, when we both knew nothing from nothing about politics. And I said, do you want to be my CA? And she said, sure. And we've learned with each other. Nadine, Shelley, Hope, Rhonda, they've all been an important part of our life.

I know that I had the honour of being minister responsible for First Nations and Métis Relations, and during that time I met people that changed my life. They've accepted me into their lives, and it made a difference to who I am. And it's a feeling that I will never forget.

But probably the feeling and what I'm most proud of and will remember for the rest of my life is the opportunity to meet with vulnerable people. And they taught me something that I didn't know: that sometimes vulnerable is just in your mind. It's an ability . . . Everybody has abilities, and everybody has assets. And we can, sometimes those of us who look just about normal can be vulnerable, and we don't recognize it. So foster families and working with group homes and sitting around with families that had issues, that left an impression on me.

And another part of my life is the people back in Kelvington-Wadena who are absolutely fabulous people. They elected me five times after being . . . not even really knowing me. I was right on the edge of the constituency. I think some of you know that I even moved into Kelvington after they changed boundaries a while ago, and I got to meet a whole lot of new people, more people that I have to thank them for their support. I thank them for sometimes their criticism and their ideas and their concerns. But it's been an honour. I never stand in the House and be recognized as the member for Kelvington-Wadena without feeling absolutely proud and knowing that it's something that doesn't happen to a lot of people.

When I was elected in 1995, there had only been 27 women elected before me. There's 700 and about 730 people have been elected overall in the province, and I was the 27th woman. And then when the Premier appointed me to cabinet, I was the 16th woman cabinet minister in 100-and-some . . . 105 years. I think that's going to change and hopefully it will, and I'm looking forward to watching from wherever I will be in my world to see those changes.

Some of the things that have changed for me the most is the road to Regina. It used to be two hours and 45 minutes long, and now it's about two and a half. And I think, I don't know if the road got shorter or whether my foot got heavier, but it doesn't take me quite as long to get here anymore.

I remember talking to the member from Humboldt and asking her to run for us. I remember going to her house in LeRoy and telling her that she would be a big asset to us. I don't think there is too many of the colleagues in this room that I haven't door knocked for and maybe that's why I feel this kind of maternal feeling to many.

I know I was the only woman that was elected, that was part of

the beginning of the Saskatchewan Party, but I didn't feel like there was anything special about that. I just felt that I was part of a group of people that knew that together we could make a difference, and I was proud to do that.

So anyway when people started mentioning it, and again I'm going to mention the member from Martensville's dad because he said to me, I don't want you to go around talking to everybody about you and your seven token men. So I'm going to do that again today.

I want to thank the Premier. Absolutely awesome. I know that you're the most popular Premier in Canada, but your friendship and your leadership is noticed not only in our province, but at the national table. And you're not intimidated by somebody else's opinions or feelings that you should be looking at an issue from another way.

And we can watch you at that table or watch you on TV nationally, and then we come back and come to a party the next night and chat and maybe listen to jokes about tattoos and . . . [inaudible] . . . the comments that can be made, and we see that you're the real person. And that's why there is a popularity, is because people know that our Premier and that my colleagues, all of us, we care about each other and we care about the people of the province. That's why we're here.

I'm glad that the member from Melfort is here — was the member from Melfort, pardon me — Rod Gantfoer. Not only did he make a big difference in here during the party, when we started the party, and as Finance minister, but I have one story about him that I just love. He stood in the House one time and introduced his wife as my current wife, Carole. And then he got to stand up the next day and apologize because we all know that he only has one wife — he will only have one wife — and Carole and the rest of his family made sure that we were aware of it.

There's only one other small story I want to tell you about, and that was . . . I represent the northeast part of the province, and sometimes we did feel like things were forgotten. And when I was elected in '99 and again in 2003, things were changing. The roads were in bad shape, and there was . . . People were depressed in lots of ways. And I remember somebody phoning me and saying, June, you know, 110 years or 105 years ago the province was just starting; we had no railway. All there was was buffaloes running around. And my neighbours last year raised buffalo. And they separated, and they couldn't decide what to do with the buffalo, so they just let them run. So now we are in the part of the province where there's no railway; there's just buffalo everywhere. But that's changed, and our part of, my constituency, has benefited from having our government and recognizing the needs from everyone.

I remember the first statements, the first speeches that were made when we became government, and the Premier talked about there being no oil wells on Albert Street and we had to recognize that all of the province was important. And we started to see the difference in my constituency and right around the province. And I'm so thankful for that.

I think that the most important thing we can remember as we go forward is that it's all about the people that are here. People

will, they might forget what you said and they might forget what you did, but they'll never forget how you made them feel. And I think that's the most important thing we can do.

So as I go on in the next step of my life, whatever the future's going to hold for me, I'm going to remember that I was part of this great political place. I remember the hallways when I walked in this morning and thought, never again will I come in here as the elected member and take my seat. It's just been a rare experience, something that not many people get to do, and I'll hold it dear forever. It's something we can't ever take for granted. So as you stay and some of us go, please try and remember every day that it's a privilege, and it's also a responsibility that we have to take. I'm reminded as I sit here in my seat the things, sometimes we take things for granted that other people are praying for. We can't take for granted what we've gotten.

I don't know what else to say because I've determined that I wasn't going to cry. I know that the Minister of Education told me this morning there's a little bit of a bet going around in the hallways wondering who's going to cry. And I know that the member from Canora-Pelly, you were on the list and I think I was too, but I've decided that that's not how I'm going to go out. I want to go out knowing that I'm happy about my decision to not run again, that I'm happy about the difference I was able to make as part of a political party and part of the democracy that we all enjoy and sometimes take for granted. So as I leave, I just wish you all the very best.

I think I've told you enough about my family to know that we're pretty diverse. My oldest son had a thing about Adams. I don't know if anybody of you ever read the book *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Well what he said was, goodbye and thanks for all the fishes. That's what I'll say to you. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I start today, I can almost just say ditto. I think everyone's saying, it's time to sit down. But a pleasure for me to just take a few moments to extend some thank yous. And first of all, I apologize to my family for inviting them earlier. But my wife has joined me here, my wife, Lois, of 43 years — just an awesome partner and supporter. Thank you very much, Lois.

Our son Byron with our two grandchildren, their two children, Anna and Caleb. Thanks for coming. Our son Graham and his wife, Carla, with their two youngest, Farah and Archer. Archer is in Graham's arms. And then our daughter Stephanie; her husband, Matt. They were married in August this year, so that kind of completes the family. And as everyone's mentioned, family is important.

And I have to mention one other individual and that's my brother Paul and his wife, Kate and their family. He was basically the real strength because he kept the farming operation running and has kept . . . I shouldn't say kept, has kept and continues to do so. So truly grateful.

As you stand here and you contemplate about everything you're going to talk about and all the people you're going to say thank

you. And last spring when we were speaking to the budget speech, I meant to talk about my CAs. Actually I'm thanking the federal government for actually having the fall election so that I could get one more chance to stand up and speak in this Assembly today.

But you know there's some great people that we've had around us. And first of all, I just want to say thank you to the legislative staff, the Clerks at the Table who were there for me as Speaker. Pat, our Sergeant-at-Arms, just a privilege working with you. You may not have always agreed with my decisions as Speaker as we tried to make this place . . . You were looking to make it a secure place where people could come; I wanted to make sure it was as open as we could have it. And I thank you so much and I wish you well in your retirement. And to all of the people working in this Legislative Assembly, whether it's the staff of the Assembly or staff working in the different caucus offices, we have the privilege of working down here because we've got many people behind the scenes that have helped us.

Constituency assistants. My first constituency assistant was Carolle Baskem. When I was first elected in 1986, I thought okay, how in the world do you start an office because no one, the MLAs before that didn't really have an office outside of their home. And someone said, why don't you chat with this lady. She just retired as a receptionist at the RCMP barracks; she'd be a good office manager. And she certainly was. And of course Beth Plewes, Tina Durbin who served me for 21 years, Audrey McEwen who's part-time as of today, and current CA, Jeff Cole. They have certainly been a real asset in managing the office and making sure that constituent issues are brought to my attention. And as we've moved through the years, they've been able to pick up some of the load and make some of the contacts ahead of me, as the MLA, making all those contacts.

I think of my first time being invited to run as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Of course many will know that the individual who was there at the time, you had to actually work to get elected. But there was a time when people came knocking on my door. And one couple stick out in my mind, and some will have heard this story. The summer of 1985 and I had just kind of brushed aside some of the calls and encouragements to seek the nomination. Until this couple spent an hour on the road, and I happened to be working in a hot barn, and he came up to me and he said, I got a better job for you. Then I thought if they're willing to make that drive, then maybe I should think a little more seriously.

Then I chatted with my family and chatted with a gentleman in Moosomin who is, we called him Mr. Conservative at that time. He was not only a doctor. Not only did he assess your physical needs, by the time you left his office, he knew what your political persuasions were and where your thoughts were. So Barrie Davidson and his wife, Alice, who's no longer with us, thank you so much.

[14:45]

You know, you get to meet so many friends over your term. Of course, I've had just an extra year or two. But I've seen three boundary revisions. Another one's coming up. It's time to go.

But I've built great relationships through the years. And as I've

seen, back in '86, it was a significant plurality, an increase; '91, thanks for the member from Canora-Pelly for coming along because it was landslide, Toth in '91. But since then that plurality has grown substantially. And that's because of the people that were willing to support me. That's as a result of just getting out and meeting people where they were at.

In fact, you know what I appreciated about my constituents? You'd be at an event and they'd say, someone would come up to you and say, why didn't you come to our dinner last week? And I'd think, okay, what did I miss? Think for a minute. All of a sudden it struck me and I'd say, well you know what? We've been in session and my wife's been hauling our boys off to play hockey or our daughter to play soccer, and last Friday night was my turn to take the boys to play hockey. And everyone to a T, I haven't had one constituent criticize me for making that part of my life. They said, that's who we expected you to be. Right on. And you know, you can't . . .

Also while I was elected first as a government member and sat on the bench of the opposition members, much longer than I've sat on the government side of the House, I can assure you this. I think a former colleague said, the poorest day in government is better than the best day in opposition. I think that colleague is sitting here this morning.

But you know when you're . . . As an MLA, I think one of the things that I felt was important is building relationships with all people. Members across the floor, I'll be honest with you. We may have our differences but I believe each and every person that's elected to sit in the chairs on this Chamber is there because their constituents felt they should be a voice, and we need to respect that.

And as a result of building relationships. I had the privilege, whether in government or outside of government, to have some pretty good relationships with ministers. And I say to the member from Lakeview today, thank you. As minister of Health you approved the hospital in Moosomin, and those folks really appreciate the integrated facility. Thank you so much.

The member from Cypress Hills, it took a moment when he was the minister of Highways and drove some of the highways, and he'd come to Kipling and he found out, oh, I got a good highway to Kipling. What in the world happened between Kipling and No. 9? And he came back and he said, now I know what you've been . . . the issue that you've been raising. We're going to go ahead. I'm going to make sure that that highway gets approved.

And then the member from Rosetown — was it Rosetown-Biggan at the time? — actually saw to it. And I'll tell you, there's a lot of folks appreciate what was done on 48 between Kipling and No. 9. My only regret is the shoemaker in Kennedy. I'd stop by and see him and he'd say, I don't know if I'm going to live long enough to drive on that highway. Unfortunately he didn't, but a lot of other people did.

But that's just part of politics. And you know, being first elected in '86, there were a lot of projects done in the southeast. And I had to realize, you know, this is a big province. So a lot of issues waited for a number of years, but we got there.

I also must add that the Kipling integrated facility, I think the member, current Deputy Premier was minister at the time. And we did have a challenge there. It took a few years from the time it was announced. Unfortunately we ended up in a position where the Kipling community and surrounding area had to raise 28 per cent of the funding for their facility. But I can tell you this: that was the right thing to do. What we have today is just a marvellous facility.

And even though the doctors in Moosomin at one time said, why would you argue for a hospital in Kipling? I kept reminding them, because between Regina and Brandon there was one facility. And then when all of the patients started to show up in Moosomin, Kipling was suffering, and some of the other communities. I started hearing them saying, when are you going to build that facility? And we have three doctors and a nurse practitioner now working with us.

When I was first elected, there was a sense that this province could be a lot more than it actually was. We had resources that just were not being tapped; at least, in my mind that's what I saw. And so giving myself to being a voice not only for the public was to build a better Saskatchewan. And I think over the years we have certainly done that. While there will be struggles as we move forward, good, sound fiscal planning is imperative, even in the difficult times. And I think the member from Canora-Pelly as Finance minister, and the current Finance minister, they're living out some of that. But I believe they will provide some of that sound leadership.

We've seen expansions of the potash mine in Rocanville and we've seen growth in local communities. I dare say in the Moosomin constituency some 25 to 30 per cent of the population in each community now, I don't even know who they are. That's why I'm not knocking on doors again.

But let me end by saying this. I have one specific request. You know the Canadian constitution says — I better get my glasses on — guarantees the following fundamental freedoms:

- (a) freedom of conscience and religion;
- (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;
- (c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and
- (d) freedom of association.

And I'm going to quote just the first page and a half of a message presented by former Lieutenant Governor Johnson back in 1982 to a prayer breakfast in Kipling:

"Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law." These are the opening words of the *Constitution Act* which was passed by the Parliament of Britain for Canada at her request, on March 29th, 1982, and which came into force on April 17th, 1982, on Patriation day. Thus Canada officially recognized God as a supreme being at the heart and soul of our nation.

This was not the first time that God's supremacy had been recognized by the Canadian government. When Canada was formed in 1867 and became a nation, the Fathers of Confederation, in searching for a title, considered a number of options. Should our country be called the state of Canada? The republic of Canada? The federation of Canada? No, it was called the Dominion of Canada because the Fathers of Confederation turned to the Bible and in Psalm 72, verse 8 they found the solution to their problem. That verse states: "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

Later the lawgivers of our country turned to the Bible for text when they built the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. Under the eastern masonry arch, there was engraved in stone the words I have just quoted: "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea." For the inscription under the western arch, they went to the book of Proverbs, chapter 29, verse 18: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." And for the centre arch they went to Psalm 72 again, in verse 17: "His name shall endure for ever." [And then Mr. Johnson says] So it is very clear historically that the nation was founded by men who believed in God and set its foundations firmly on principles found in the Holy Bible."

This is a great country. We've got an awesome province. We welcome people from around the world. We continue to do so. But if I could say, members — many will be back here — let's not forget where we came from. Let's keep these founding principles dear to our hearts because as an imam said to his Liberal member when the former premier of Ontario, Peterson, was going to remove the Lord's Prayer from their Chamber, this imam said very clearly, what are you doing that for? I didn't ask you to do that. It's because of those guiding principles that allowed me to come, call Canada home, worship freely, and live freely.

Ladies and gentlemen, those are some very significant principles. I believe we're going to have to work hard to maintain them to ensure that we have a province and a country that our children and people from other generations can be proud of.

I thank you all for the opportunity to serve. I'm looking forward to enjoying some time with my wife and family. Thanks so much. God bless. Merry Christmas.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a line I'll borrow from Lincoln, I think at the end of his first inaugural where he said, "I am loath to close." He didn't want to end that particular message at that time. I think we're all loath to close today. Those were remarkable speeches by remarkable individuals who have given much to this province. And so I'll be very, very brief.

Mr. Speaker, I have a quick tribute and thanks, but I do want to say, I do want to say just a little bit if I can, a very little bit about each of these retiring MLAs as they transition to other things and as we're mindful of their contribution today.

To the member for Lakeview, I want to thank him. On behalf of the people of the province of Saskatchewan, on behalf of the government of the province of Saskatchewan, for more than two decades of service to his constituents but also to all of the population.

When he was first elected, Mr. Speaker, the government was met with great, great challenge. Decisions needed to be made that were difficult, very difficult decisions, and quite literally the financial future of the province hung in the balance. And so we need to salute those who were on that front line, and the member for Lakeview was very much a part of that group. And so we thank him for that and then all of his service since then. He also approved the hospital in Swift Current when he was the Health minister and so, Mr. Speaker, I'd better get that on the record. He's always . . .

An Hon. Member: — Louder, louder.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — He's saying louder, louder. But it's all amplified, Mr. Speaker, the microphones, and somebody's writing every word down, I understand.

Mr. Speaker, in no particular order to members on our side of the House, I'll start with the member for Canora-Pelly. I could not have done any of this job without you. I probably can't say any more than that, otherwise it'll be a much longer speech because there will be great pauses. So thank you to the member for Canora-Pelly for his leadership of our party and within our government, with our finances, and with education as well. When he and I sat together there, we needed a lot more Kleenex than was ever available. I'm not sure . . . Both of us are like that, I'd offer to the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

To the member from Melville-Saltcoats, you know, I really don't know what to say just very briefly that can quite adequately describe how we all feel about him. Even when he's frankly not being very nice to any of us, he is just a stalwart leader within this government and certainly within our party as a founding member.

I'll just tell this very quick story. When I was first elected, our family was quite young and the member was the Whip at the time appointed by Mr. Hermanson. He sought me out after the very first meeting because I was a little bit worried, frankly, about how will this balance work because we're not moving from Swift Current where Tami was with our, you know, raising our young family. Faith was one. She had just turned one a couple of weeks after the election. And so he sought me out and said, this organization is family friendly. If you have to go, you just go. And he actually reinforced that with all of the members with young families and he reminded us all of that, and that let me know that his priorities and the priorities of this new . . . or a party that I was a part of were in the right place. And I thank him for that and so many other things.

The member for Kelvington-Wadena said in her speech, there was a quote and she was referencing people and the focus that we should have on people, that that is where my heart has been. Well, Mr. Speaker, the heart of our political organization, of our party, has been the member from Kelvington-Wadena. And the good news is this, Mr. Speaker, there's been frankly a bit of a Kelvington-Wadena transplant because while she's leaving, her

heart is, at least parts of her heart are staying and we will be all the better for that.

The member for Moosomin, you know, Mr. Speaker, we throw around the word honourable a lot in this Chamber and in this business, this honorific that we have in politics. And then there are — and we hope to earn that — there are some members who are uniquely qualified to be referred to as honourable members, and the member from Moosomin is one of those individuals, Mr. Speaker. You know, if anyone needs an example . . . And they're on both sides of the House.

[14:00]

If anyone needs an example of how to be an MLA and how to remember why we're here for many, many years . . . I was in third-year university when he was first elected. From that day forward, he has been one of the best serving, representing MLAs in the history of this place or, dare I say, in the Commonwealth. He has always put his constituents first and never forgotten his own faith and principles. And we thank him for that example and also for his leadership as Speaker for some time, Mr. Speaker.

The member for Wood River did not speak today and is not here. Mr. Speaker, he played a seminal role in the formation of our political party and has served in this House well. I remember well his changes and improvements that he made to the disaster assistance program when they were sorely needed, owing to disasters that were occurring around the province, and his many other great contributions. And so we also thank and acknowledge the member for Wood River.

I better be careful on this next one. This is the member for Estevan. And though, you know, we fight a little bit, frankly, her and I, she is a very, very . . . She's become a very good friend and I think the world of her. She's been our caucus Chair for a very long, long period of time and we have been served mightily by her service and her leadership. I just can't say enough about her, and I truly wish she . . . Well I wish this of all the members, that maybe they had made another decision. But we're going to miss you, Doreen, the member for Estevan, and her leadership.

I should point out, in terms of people changing their mind, one more thing very quickly before I move on with the list. The member for Canora-Pelly read a list of schools today and I am hopeful that he missed a school on that list because, knowing him, it will bother him so much that he will see fit, he will see the need to run again so he can come back and correct his own mistake.

The member for Greystone forgot to share that, on that first occasion where we met, that debate between Mr. Cline and he and I in the 2003 election campaign, he won that debate quite handily and quite clearly. I finished a solid third in that. We all know Eric Cline was a very able debater. And that's why I was very interested in seeing that he might consider running for us, and am I ever glad that he agreed to do that, to take his break from his academic pursuits and help lead our government in terms of the different files he's held, significantly in Advanced Education where so much has been achieved under his watch. And I thank him as well for his friendship.

The member for Regina South has already indicated his highlights, and his highlight certainly was . . . well there were many, but the revenue-sharing deal with municipalities is at the top of the list, Mr. Speaker. I think the municipalities would say that. And in advance of it, he travelled the province. And I knew that he would, the member who never turns down a meeting.

And so he got in his car . . . Sometimes there were strange things in his car — we could get into it a little bit later on — as the people at CVA [central vehicle agency] will know, because they had to go over the cars from time to time. And he used every mode of transportation to get around the province and negotiate what turned out to be I think the right formula — one that we've mused about changing, but I think it's pretty clear that formula is here to stay. And so it should be, if I may quote, Mr. Speaker, it should always be known as the Hutchinson formula and it should stay as part of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, you know, what was common to all of the speeches, the member for Lakeview and all of the members on this side of this House, is there was just a great deal of humility in all of the speeches and I guess . . . I hope that we will find that humility each and every day for those of us that are staying, that sense of humility each and every day . . .

An Hon. Member: — Cypress Hills.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Oh, that's right. Thank you. I thank the Deputy Premier because I forgot to mention one of my very first friends in politics, the member for Cypress Hills. He and I first met actually and had a little chance to talk at an election preparedness session at the Travelodge on Albert Street in Regina, and there was an immediate connection there. And I have learned much from the member for Cypress Hills, including many more additions to my vocabulary.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting. In his speech he said today that he would likely lack profundity, that he probably wouldn't have anything to say that was profound, and then he went on to say that the reason for that is that he had come to appreciate the fact that people wanted to have plain speaking and honesty in their representative. I don't know what's more profound than that in terms of the speeches today.

So I thank him for his friendship and his service in the cabinet and in the caucus, and for our time together as officemates when we solved many, many problems in opposition. If only somebody had written things down . . . [inaudible] . . . So I thank the member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Speaker, you'll probably be able to resolve this because you know these questions. But I always wondered, when we're done the session and when we've waited to leave till the mace is gone and you're no longer in the Chair and we're about to leave, do we continue with the tradition — which I quite like — that we would bow to the Chair? And I notice some members do and some don't. I don't know what the answer to that question is, whether we should or we shouldn't, but I think today each of us should, whether we're staying or whether we're retiring. We should take the chance to bow to the Chair because it will kind of reinforce the theme today about humility

and the fact that we have much to be humbled by the chance to serve in this place and to represent the people that sent us. Mr. Speaker, it is true that humble we come into this House and we found out today that humble we shall all leave one day. And so I would encourage us all to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I do have to seek leave of the House if I can, procedurally. I want to ask for leave of the House to waive provisions of rule 51(p) that a brief presentation might be made.

The Speaker: — The Premier has requested leave to do a presentation and waive the provisions of rule 51(p). Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — So the provision, for those who might be watching, governs the prohibition in this House of using props. And I have one today, Mr. Speaker, because on behalf of the province we'd like to present to each of the members who are retiring, this. The members opposite can see that, or members behind can see that, members opposite. And we'll have all of them perhaps for the table for when the session and the proceedings are truly done. And we can — I think there's Sharpies here — and perhaps each would like to sign this as a gift to the outgoing members.

And so we present these with great gratitude to all of these MLAs with love, frankly, for their own love for the constituencies represented and the province that they've served. And, Mr. Speaker, I hope everyone takes the chance to sign these before these members leave today. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to all members for I think what has been a memorable few hours here as we've listened to the reflections from members who have chosen to retire, Mr. Speaker. And a lot of words of thanks have been said by all members, and it's a reminder to all of us of the gratitude that we owe to so many and for the honour and the privilege to serve in this House.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier provided a good overview of the contributions that the retiring members have made and I thank him for that. To the government members who are outgoing, thank you for your service. Some of you have served in opposition and government, some of you just in government. As we would recognize, there is a lot of different views held by both sides, Mr. Speaker, but the notion of service, the notion of being responsible and responsive to one's constituents is something that is shared in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. So I thank outgoing government members.

And I thank the member from Lakeview on our side for his service as well, Mr. Speaker, someone that I've personally appreciated a great amount of discussions with and the wisdom and the advice that he shares. I thank him for his advice on how to be a parent and a legislator and for the member's service as an MLA, as a minister, and as interim leader of our party, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of New Democrats, I want to say thank you

very much to the member for all of his service and we'll miss him greatly, Mr. Speaker. I should say tusen takk, which is a thousand thanks in Norwegian. The members may not know that.

You know, the Premier spoke about bowing as we go in and out of the Assembly, and that's something that I do because of what it symbolizes. And yes, it is deference to the Chair of course, but I think about it also as appreciation and respect for the honour and privilege of serving in a parliamentary democracy, in a democracy where we are held to account, where there is rule of law, and where we can go about our work peacefully, Mr. Speaker. And today as we thanked members for the remarks that they made and as we stood and applauded, Mr. Speaker, I won't say I stood because I agreed with every single point that was perhaps made by members through the speeches, but I stand and applaud everyone's commitment to service and their commitment to the democratic process that we have here in the province. And sadly it's not common enough in this world where we can have members of a legislature retire and other people peacefully be elected to assume seats. And it is an honour and a privilege that we should never lose sight of, especially in the times that we live, Mr. Speaker.

At the beginning of every day of the proceedings, a prayer is said, Mr. Speaker, as you would know very well and as former Speakers would know as well. And probably that prayer means different things to different people. You know, in our seats we have some diversity here. You know, there may be people of different faith traditions, individuals who are atheist or agnostic, and whether it's a time of reflection or whether it's a time of prayer to a creator, it's an important time.

And in my tradition when there is a moment of someone departing and someone leaving, it's not uncommon to have a type of benediction or a type of prayer wishing them well, Mr. Speaker. So what I would like to conclude with is a passage but also a prayer used as a benediction which will be familiar to many members here in the Assembly. It's from Numbers:

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.

Mr. Speaker, that is my wish for all members departing from the Assembly here, and may we all look to their example and do a better job as elected representatives ourselves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I ask for leave of the Assembly to make a few farewell comments.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has requested leave to make a few departing comments. I'm assuming that will include the Opposition House Leader. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and certainly thank you for the opportunity, and we'll afford the same opportunity to the Opposition House Leader.

Just a few thank yous to members of the Assembly and those associated with running the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. To you, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for your guidance and your wisdom, your fairness, although I know there may be a want to name a member or something like that. And from the House Leader's perspective, you make sure that that doesn't happen, and I'm glad to say that that hasn't happened yet.

Mr. Speaker, this is the fourth legislative session of the twenty-seventh legislature and, in all likelihood, our last day of the legislature. I say in all likelihood because I know that in this business things could change. You never know what the next day brings. But certainly thank you, Mr. Speaker, to you, to your office staff who are always very welcoming, whether it's myself and the Deputy House Leader or the Deputy Premier or others who came looking for you. Certainly you do have an open door, and we appreciate that from you and your staff.

Certainly when we talk about wisdom and professionalism and guidance, we have to thank the Clerks at the Table. Thank you very much from myself as House Leader and from each and every member. We do not hesitate to ask you for that guidance, and you certainly provide it. And we very, very much appreciate that.

What a special day, colleagues. I'm going to keep this quite short, but I just want to say thank you to especially those retiring members who give us guidance but serve as mentors. And that's the way certainly that I feel: that we have something to aspire to when we look at the careers of those members who have come before us, those that we have had the pleasure of sitting with and the privilege of sitting with. You've given a good portion of your life to this Assembly and to your province. The Premier always says, leave things better than you found them, and I know each and every one of you on both sides of the House have certainly done that. So thank you very much.

[14:15]

I have one caution. I know that the stories about you — that's been my experience here — the tales will always get a little taller after you leave. And it'll be up to the rest of us to make sure that that indeed does happen. But the folklore is one of the things that makes this place the wonderful place that it is.

To the Premier, to my Premier: thank you for this opportunity to be House Leader. It is indeed a special type of position. It's one where you have to realize you're a representative of your caucus, but you realize too that there's much negotiation that has to take place. So thank you for that opportunity, that special opportunity.

Thank you to those that helped me in this position: Jarret Coels, who's very new to the House leadership position on the government side. Graham Stewart who was there before him just did a tremendous, tremendous job. I have to thank my Deputy House Leader, the Minister of Immigration, the member from Meadow Lake who has a unique understanding of this

place, who has spent time in the House of Commons and brings that knowledge, and certainly helped me do my job.

To people in the Executive Council and others who help us in our everyday operations, thank you for your guidance and your help to ensure that we run this place in a very, very professional manner. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Opposition House Leader, the member from Regina Elphinstone. You find that in this job you have to have professionalism; you have to have courtesy. You have the odd surprise that happens, but that's all part of the job. But at the end of the day what you realize is a friendship that existed before has been cemented and developed and flourished, and I'm happy to say that that has happened in this case.

Mr. Speaker as we're here, and as members have alluded to, we kind of forget sometimes about the work that's been done in our constituencies when we're here. We want to thank our constituency assistants, each and every one. Retiring members had a chance to highlight theirs; I've had an opportunity to have some great ones as well. I want to thank Jacquie Klebeck, who is my current constituency assistant. And I know members would like to do that and thank all of their current constituency assistants as well.

I want to thank those who are responsible for the daily operation of this wonderful Legislative Assembly: Hansard, broadcast services, library services; financial services; the Sergeant-at-Arms, who we have certainly honoured for his participation here as he retires, the Commissionaires and the security people that work under him; the Pages; the interns; the building staff; the cafeteria staff; tour guides; custodial staff. Mr. Speaker, I certainly hope I haven't missed anybody with that list, but they are, each and every one of you, very, very important. To each of you, you truly help make each and every day that we serve in this legislature a pleasure. Your positive attitudes and certainly your friendly hi, hello, good morning, good evening that we see in the hallways mean a lot to each and every member.

To the media — so important to us in doing our jobs, and them doing their jobs, and the changes that have taken place — certainly it's interesting to have question period taking place and tweets being issued live and then following those at the same time. It's just a new dynamic. But we thank you for their attitude, and certainly what they do to help us get our message out.

Mr. Speaker, our families, each one of us, I think, is thinking about later today as we'll go back and spend time with our families — and we'll have time throughout the next number of months — our spouses, our children, our parents, grandchildren, and others. We look forward to spending that time.

As 10 members move on, I know there's 48 others members that are hoping to have a seat in this Chamber going forward, and others who will work very hard to try to earn a seat here. So with that, again, Mr. Speaker, to all members of the Assembly, I wish you well. May you have a safe and happy Christmas season as we look forward to that, and a Happy New Year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to seek leave under rule 61 to move a motion of urgent . . . No, I'm just kidding, Mr. Speaker. It's good to take my place and join the debate . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Surprises. All those kind words and how do I repay them, Mr. Speaker? Anyway, it's good to join the debate.

I just want to say off the top, there's a one-time member of this Assembly, a fellow by the name of Ed Whelan, who once told me as a young long-haired, know-nothing, wannabe politician, I guess, Mr. Speaker, that in political life and public life two of the most important words — the most important two words in political life — they're thank you.

And again I just want to take this time to join what have been an amazing set of speeches and to say thank you to the many people that I have so much gratitude, for the help and the assistance and support.

So at risk of repeating some of what my colleague across the way has said, you know, please forgive any redundancy that might arise. But I just want to say thank you to you, Mr. Speaker, off the top. Not to involve you in debate and also not to tempt you to, you know, realize your wish to throw somebody out of this Assembly, but certainly thank you to you, Mr. Speaker, and your able work that Connie and Sheila and the folks do in your office. Is he about to throw me out? Is that what's going on here? Very good. All right. Oh, there we go.

I want to say as well to the Clerk and all the folks at the Table, I generally try to get down there to ask forgiveness and seek instruction on a daily basis. I miss that when the House is not on, Mr. Speaker. But anyway I just want to say thank you so much for the work that you do to help us serve the people. To member services; to Hansard; to Journals; to the folks in AV [audiovisual]; to the security and commissionaires; to the folks in the Library, my books will be back, honestly; the folks in the cafeteria; all the staff of the Legislative Assembly; the press gallery; the caucus members on both sides of this House — again, Mr. Speaker, it's good to pause at this moment to just say again, the kind of respect that we have for the service and, in some cases, decades of service for working for the people of Saskatchewan. So it's again quite humbling to join the debate at this particular junction.

To the caucus staff, to the folks on both sides of the aisle, certainly again thanks to Jarret and the folks in the opposition House business. But, Mr. Speaker, we had our staff here earlier. You know, sometimes when we have the big debates in this House, you see all the different government staff come marching in and fill the galleries. Well, Mr. Speaker, we've got a pretty lean operation over on our side of the aisle. But of course, you know, nine staffers to nine MLAs, it's a pretty good staff-to-MLA ratio. But they were here and, you know, for the half a row that they filled up, they do so much work on our behalf and on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, and we are very grateful for it.

And then in particular, as regards House business, I want to thank Linsay Martens and Katherine Norton and Mitch Bonokoski, the folks that sort of pitch in and out of the House

business bailiwick. The folks outside of the building that, you know, keep the home fires burning, the constituency offices, again we couldn't do this work without them.

To our constituents: thank you to them, and I'll come back to that, Mr. Speaker.

But as well to family and friends, and as came up in different ways throughout the speeches here that we've had the privilege to bear witness to, Mr. Speaker, you know there have been births, there have been deaths, there have been some relationships fall apart, some relationships come together. There's been a tremendous amount of life going on as we've been part of this particular legislature. And I know that in my particular case, Mr. Speaker, the family that I have, I couldn't do this without them. And they give me so much and I am so very grateful for it. And in that I'm not alone certainly, Mr. Speaker.

I want to end off just a couple, three things, again to reciprocate to my colleague across the way. Thanks again for denying leave for a unanimous motion. You know, I don't know what I'd do if I caught the car, but we'd give it a whirl. We'd give it a whirl, Mr. Speaker. But certainly, to my hon. colleague, the counterpart, the Government House Leader, the Deputy House Leader, it's good working with them. It's straightforward. Again it's not without its surprises or its ups and downs or curveballs and all that, Mr. Speaker, but certainly it's a critical relationship in the proper functioning of this House so that we might serve the people of Saskatchewan. So I thank my colleagues for the good work and the good relationship.

The last thing I'd say is this, Mr. Speaker. As has been noted often, and it should be, we are here to serve the people of Saskatchewan. We're here to serve the people of our individual constituencies. And, Mr. Speaker, in that work we need to have that attitude of gratitude, but I'm also reminded of a couple of things around the why we do that work and the how we do that work. And when it comes to why we do that work, Mr. Speaker, I think of a Cree, a nēhiyāw, teaching, around pimātisiwin, the good life, and what should we be doing as people to live that good life and to add to that good life and the connection that exists between all things. So what are we doing to add, to bring pimātisiwin, Mr. Speaker, I think is something that we all seek out in different ways. But we do well to keep that in mind.

And then the second thing I think of, Mr. Speaker, in regards to how we do the work, it comes from scripture, and it comes from Micah 6:8. And it is of course where the prophet writes, "And what does the Lord require of thee or man or woman, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" And if we can remember those things, Mr. Speaker, as to why we do this work and to how we should be doing that work, I think we do that service to the people of Saskatchewan very well. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Well I will take the opportunity as well to say a few words since, as Speaker, I get to do lot of "order" but not a lot of speaking.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their hard work this session. Thank you to the members for their long hours of service to Saskatchewan and for the long hours and

days away from their family. Thank you for your co-operation, willing or unwilling.

I would especially like to express my appreciation to those 10 members who have made the decision to retire from their position as members of the Saskatchewan legislature. Those members represent the following constituencies: Melville-Saltcoats, Estevan, Cypress Hills, Regina South, Wood River, Canora-Pelly, Regina Lakeview, Saskatoon Greystone, Kelvington-Wadena, and Moosomin. Moosomin will be — what? — almost 31 years by the . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . 30 by the time the election rolls around. So I congratulate you on your 180 years of combined service to Saskatchewan, and I would like to wish you nothing but the best of luck in your future endeavours.

[14:30]

It is time to return to your homes and spend quality time with your family. Thank you to the families at home for their continued support.

While it is unknown as to when the Assembly will sit next, I know the work does not end and committees will continue through the recess period. Ministers will continue their duties and meetings in Regina and Saskatoon or across the province. Private members will work on their constituency issues and in their roles as committee members, legislative secretaries, or critics. Those that are running again will have additional duties to gain the honour and approval of their constituents to return.

I would like to thank the LAS [Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan] staff, the Clerks and officers, the Pages, Hansard, Sergeant-at-Arms — and congratulate him on his retirement — and his staff; the interns, caucus staff, cafeteria staff, Central Services, building staff. You know, we should almost have this to a tune or something. Their hours are often long or, in the case of Hansard, longer than those of the members. Thank you to our constituency staff for their diligence and hard work, especially while the members are in the Assembly.

Thank you to my staff, Sheila and Connie, for their support, especially in dealing with the programs and initiatives such as the SSTI [Saskatchewan Social Sciences Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy] and the educational outreach program which are run out of the Speaker's offices. These programs take a lot of extra time but are well worth the effort.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity and privilege to be selected and serve as your Speaker. I would also like to remind members that there is still time. You may . . . This is your last chance to be ejected. Anyone wish to speak up?

I'd also like to remind you that you can join the CPA [Commonwealth Parliamentary Association] as an associate member, and I would encourage you to do so, so this would not be a goodbye but a see you later. Everyone have a joyous and happy Christmas, a Happy New Year, and a wonderful winter, and drive safe. Thank you.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — This House now stands adjourned to the call of the Chair.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:34.]

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Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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