



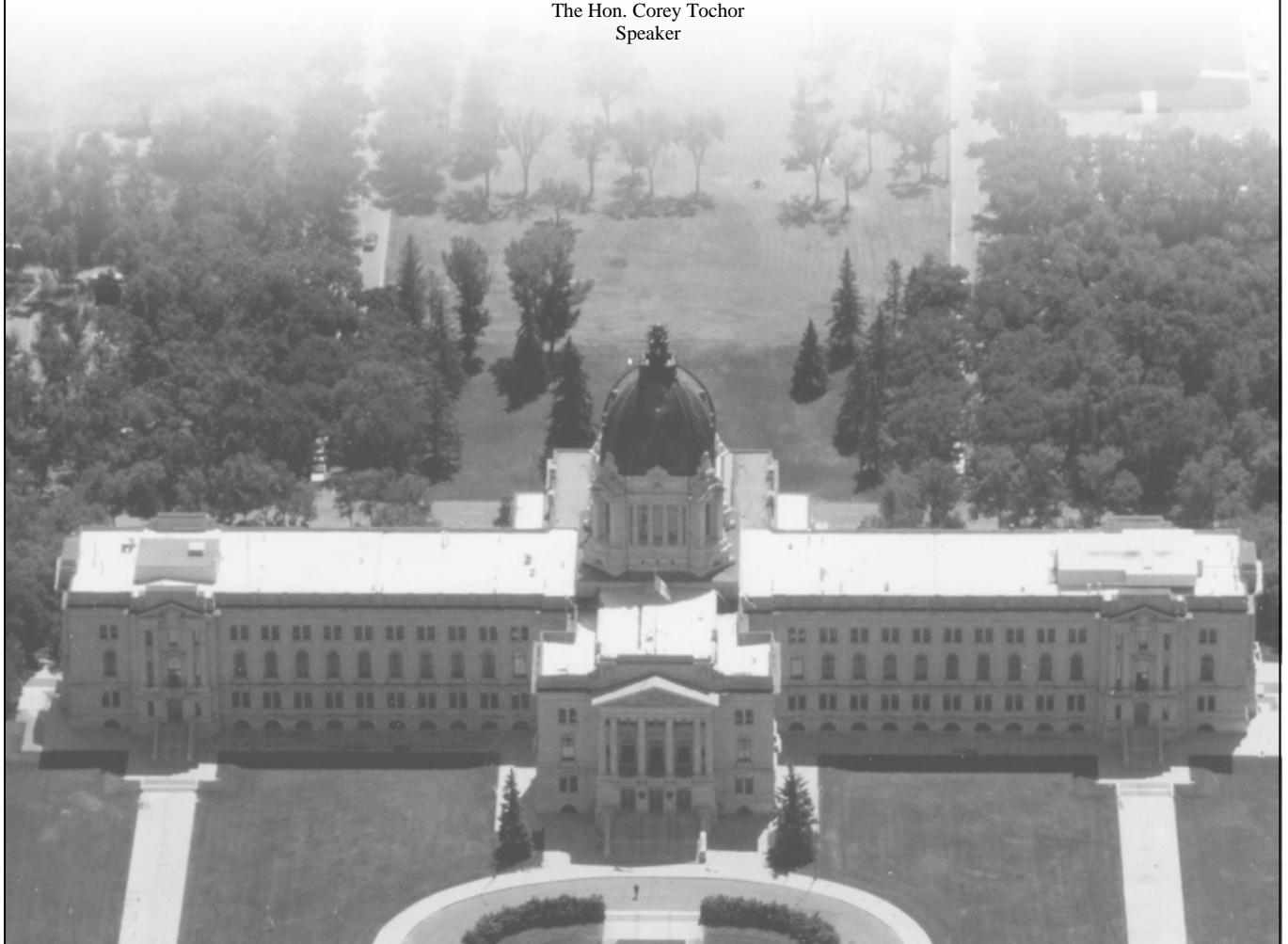
FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)
Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Corey Tochor
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
1st Session — 28th Legislature

Speaker — Hon. Corey Tochor

Premier — Hon. Brad Wall

Leader of the Opposition — Trent Wotherspoon

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Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

Makowsky, Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

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McMorris, Don — Indian Head-Milestone (Ind.)

Merriman, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)

Michelson, Warren — Moose Jaw North (SP)

Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)

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Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

Olauson, Eric — Saskatoon University (SP)

Ottenbreit, Hon. Greg — Yorkton (SP)

Parent, Roger — Saskatoon Meewasin (SP)

Phillips, Kevin — Melfort (SP)

Rancourt, Nicole — Prince Albert Northcote (NDP)

Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)

Ross, Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)

Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)

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Stewart, Hon. Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)

Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)

Tochor, Hon. Corey — Saskatoon Eastview (SP)

Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)

Wall, Hon. Brad — Swift Current (SP)

Weekes, Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)

Wilson, Hon. Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)

Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 50; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 10; Independent (Ind.) — 1

Clerks-at-the-Table

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Principal Clerk — Iris Lang

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Rochdale.

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the rest of the House, a group of 26 grade 7 and 8 students from MacNeill School here in Regina. These students are seated in your west gallery, and they're accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Scott Bansley and their student intern, Ms. Jennifer Chyz.

Now I had the opportunity to meet and talk to some of the student-teacher interns earlier this year, and it's a treat to be able to have one here in our Legislative Assembly today. And I look forward to meeting with this group of students and their teacher and their intern teacher to discuss the proceedings today. So welcome and thank you very much for coming to your Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce guests seated in your gallery today from Merit Contractors. Founded in 1988, today Merit represents about 11,000 employers and 43,000 workers in Saskatchewan covering virtually every segment of the industry. They provide support and advocacy on behalf of contractors, working to ensure open bidding and a fair, level playing field for all contractors as a voice for open-shop contractors.

With us today are Ian Knibbs, Coram Construction, who is chairperson of the board of directors; and board members Darren Swanson from Rococo Construction Services and Joe Yungwirth from Miller Contracting.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Merit Contractors for their work on behalf of contractors throughout our province. Their members are truly building our province, and we thank them for their outstanding contribution. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members to welcome the guests today to their Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Deputy Premier in welcoming these individuals from Merit here to their Legislative Assembly and wish them continued success in their endeavours, and again welcome these individuals to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you in the Speaker's gallery, I would like to introduce

two special guests, friends of mine, Sharon Hodgson from Big River and her sister Jan Healey of Rosetown. Both ladies are very accomplished in the arts, enjoyed the paintings. And some of you may know their brother's paintings, Glen Scrimshaw.

And while I'm on my feet, I'd like to introduce Joe Yungwirth, a neighbour and good friend of mine from Buckland. Welcome to your Assembly, all three of you. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you seated in your gallery, it's my pleasure to welcome family of Norman MacAuley, former MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Cumberland to their Assembly here today. They're from La Ronge and from Prince Albert. I'll read their presence into the record when we get into remarks later on with condolence motions, but it's my pleasure to welcome these guests to their Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise in my place again to present a petition for a second bridge in Prince Albert, as we all know how important a second bridge for Prince Albert is to not only the Northeast, Mr. Speaker, but the entire northern part of our province. And:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan ask that the Saskatchewan Party government stop stalling, hiding behind rhetoric and refusing to listen to the people calling for action, and begin immediately to plan and then quickly commence the construction of a second bridge for Prince Albert using federal and provincial dollars.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are from all throughout the land. And the particular pages that I'm presenting today, they're from Saskatoon. They are from Regina. They are from Lumsden, and they are from Moose Jaw. And I so present.

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

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition from the citizens of Melville-Saltcoats who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan. And I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to take the necessary steps to stop the federal government from imposing a carbon tax on the province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Churchbridge, Saltcoats, Yorkton, Langenburg, Calder,

Melville, Stockholm, and Esterhazy.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition regarding wetlands in Saskatchewan. Wetlands serve a very vital function in our ecosystem. They take the form of marshes, bogs, fens, swamps, and open water. Wetlands are home to wildlife, including waterfowl. They clean the water running off of agricultural fields. They protect us from flooding and drought, and they are a playground where families can explore and play. In the worst cases, such as some areas in the prairies, as much as 90 per cent of our wetlands have disappeared. As they continue to disappear, so too do the many benefits they provide. I'd like to read the petition. The petitioners are respectfully requesting the Government of Saskatchewan to:

Increase funding to do the proper inventory work, putting Saskatchewan in a better position to manage the water resource;

Speed up the evaluation of high-risk watersheds where there is significant damage annually from flooding. This evaluation must include a recognition of drainage works that could be closed or restored that will alleviate some of the issues downstream with respect to flooding and nutrient loading; and

Create a sound and transparent mitigation process that adequately addresses sustainable development. The sequence should first focus on avoiding the environmental harm whenever possible, before a secondary focus on minimizing the harm with compensation being sought only when the development is deemed essential and the first two stages cannot be met.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is signed today from citizens who live in Regina, Saskatoon, and Moose Jaw. I so submit.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much. I rise today to present a petition in support of Wakamow Valley Authority in Moose Jaw. And we know that as a result of the passage of *The Wakamow Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2016* on June 30th, the Wakamow Valley Authority lost statutory funding of \$127,000 from the Saskatchewan government in addition to \$30,000 of supplementary funding. And this loss of annual funding negatively affected the ability of Wakamow to maintain its lands and repair its facilities and provide services to the community.

And, Mr. Speaker, on June 21st, 2016 the provincial government, including the two MLAs from Moose Jaw, voted in favour of this bill, resulting in cuts to Wakamow and subsequent job losses. I'd like to read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on this government to immediately repeal *The Wakamow Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2016* and reinstate statutory funding to the Wakamow Valley Authority.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from Moose Jaw. Thank you.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present to you a petition condemning the Sask Party's cuts to the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program. After nearly a decade of wasting the economic boom and blowing through the savings, the government is now forcing the province's most vulnerable to pay for the Sask Party's mismanagement.

The Sask Party's latest cold-hearted cut will take money away from people who are unable to work due to a disability; that many people who are being hurt by the Sask Party cut live with serious illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, cancer, autism, among other illnesses; and that contrary to the Minister of Social Services's claims, the government underfunds clients in regards to shelter allowance, and that shelter allowance should be reflective of the current rental costs. I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to stop their plan to cut the SAID funding and immediately restore funding for those living with a disability; that shelter allowance is reflective of the current rental costs; and that the Saskatchewan Party government implement the recommendations of the advisory group on poverty reduction.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing these petitions are from La Ronge and Air Ronge, and I do so present.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition regarding child care centres and taxation in the province of Saskatchewan. Those signing this petition wish to draw our attention to the following: that across Saskatchewan, licensed non-profit child care centres are taxed inconsistently. Many of our licensed non-profit child care centres pay commercial property tax, and this is not done in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, BC [British Columbia], or New Brunswick.

Child care is essential to the economy, yet most centres struggle with their budgets. This issue threatens both the number of child care spaces as well as the quality of care. Quality child care has an enormous positive impact on a child's future outcomes and yields high rates of economic return. Child care centres are institutions of early learning and childhood development, and it is appropriate that they have the same tax treatment as schools.

And I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan recognize that licensed non-profit child care centres provide programs that are foundational to a healthy society by including them in the Saskatchewan education Act and exempt all licensed non-profit child care centres in Saskatchewan from property tax through changes to the appropriate legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we have received hundreds of these petitions. These ones today have been signed specifically by people in Yorkton, Regina, Lanigan, and Jansen. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition calling for a stop to Sask Party plans to sell off SaskTel. The undersigned petitioners, Mr. Speaker, call attention to the fact that in the last five years alone, SaskTel has returned \$497 million to support government programs and services like education and health care. They point out that once SaskTel is gone there is no getting it back, and of course, Mr. Speaker, that then there will be no telling what else the Sask Party will sell. Mr. Speaker, in the prayer that reads as follows:

The petitioners respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to keep their promise, stop their plan to sell off SaskTel, and keep our valued Crown corporation in the hands of Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, this particular group of petitions is signed by citizens from Swift Current, Mossbank, Saskatoon, and Cabri. I so present.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to reverse its short-sighted cuts to the Aboriginal court worker program. The Government of Saskatchewan cut the budget for the Aboriginal court worker program in the 2016-2017 provincial budget. And as we all know, the Aboriginal court workers play an important role helping Aboriginal people in criminal and child apprehension cases.

Aboriginal peoples are disproportionately represented in Saskatchewan's correctional centres, and Aboriginal court workers successfully help to make our communities safer through reduced recidivism rates. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan reverse its short-sighted and counterproductive cuts to the Aboriginal court worker program.

And the people signing this petition today are from the Regina area. I do so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition to stop the redirection of funding of the Northern Teacher Education Program Council, Inc. A recent report shows that 94 per cent of NORTEP [northern teacher education program] grads found employment in the North. NORTEP has improved teacher retention in northern Saskatchewan. NORTEP has a positive economic impact in northern Saskatchewan. NORTEP provides a high-quality, face-to-face instruction and services to students. The province financial deficit cannot be fixed by cutting indigenous education in the North and a program that has served the North for over 40 years. And the prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to immediately restore the five-year agreement to fund the Northern Teacher Education Program Council, Inc. and to continue funding NORTEP-NORPAC programs in La Ronge.

It is signed by hundreds and hundreds of people of our good province. It will continue to be served in this House. And I would just like to say again, on behalf of the people in northern Saskatchewan, I so present.

[13:45]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Rochdale.

Support for People With Intellectual Disabilities

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Friday I had the pleasure of attending an event at the University of Regina announcing further supports for individuals with intellectual disabilities. This announcement, which coincides with the beginning of Canadian Down Syndrome Week and National Disability Employment Awareness Month, speaks to our government's commitment to ensure that high-quality education is available to everyone.

Mr. Speaker, the programs benefiting from this announcement include Campus for All, an inclusive program that gives students with intellectual disabilities a chance to experience post-secondary education and campus life; 4 to 40, which brings employers and employees together to create meaningful employment opportunities for people experiencing disabilities; and Creative Options Regina, which offers personalized services to support and strengthen individuals experiencing disabilities. Through these programs, not-for-profit organizations, our government, and many passionate people are all working hard to remove barriers for people with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, Down Syndrome Week, National Disability Employment Awareness Month are great opportunities to acknowledge how valuable people are with intellectual disabilities. Anyone who has spent time with people who have intellectual disabilities will find they are very passionate and capable people.

I invite all members to join me in celebrating the work that is taking place here in Saskatchewan to remove barriers for people

with intellectual disabilities. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

New City Council in Prince Albert

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the night of October 31st, the new Prince Albert City Council was sworn in and is now entrusted with the important job of serving our city for the next four years.

Returned to council was Mayor Greg Dionne, Charlene Miller in ward 1, Don Cody in ward 4, and Ted Zurakowski who was acclaimed in ward 8. As well as returning members of council, Mr. Speaker, several new councillors were sworn in: Terra Lennox-Zepp in ward 2, Evert Botha in ward 3, Dennis Ogrodnick in ward 5, Blake Edwards in ward 6, and Dennis Nowoselsky in ward 7.

Our new council is a great mix of experienced and new councillors. I'm confident that they will all contribute a great deal to our city and to the people they serve.

I also wish to commend all the candidates in the 2016-17 civic election in Prince Albert for allowing their names to stand. Their decision to run for office indicates a strong commitment to one's community, and one that is always supported by family and loved ones. Although not everyone can win, all candidates can be proud of their dedication to Prince Albert and their willingness to serve.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating Mayor Dionne and the new Prince Albert council and extending our best wishes to all candidates who ran in the recent election. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Batoche.

Bethany Pioneer Village Celebrates 60th Anniversary

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 15th I was able to attend the 60th anniversary of Bethany Pioneer Village in Middle Lake. Bethany Pioneer Village was a vision of Pastor Karl Krahenbil. He saw a need to care for seniors who found living in their own homes difficult and sometimes dangerous.

In 1956 a 124-acre lakefront property on Lucien Lake was purchased and Bethany began. Sixty years later, the construction hasn't stopped. This retirement community ensures that most residents can transition through a variety of housing and care options and remain in the same community throughout their retirement years.

Mr. Speaker, Aspen Manor is a 36-bed special care home offering level 3 and 4 long-term care. Birch Manor is an assisted living home with a campus-like feel to provide social interaction, comfort, and support. Bethany also offers housing units for seniors who would like to live independently.

Mr. Speaker, the mission of Bethany Pioneer Village is to

glorify God by providing a welcoming Christian environment and a caring staff to nurture those in need of physical and personal support. I would like all members to join me in congratulating Bethany on their 60th anniversary celebration and thank them for the wonderful care they provide to seniors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Organization for Heritage Languages Banquet and Awards

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, I, along with the Leader of the Official Opposition, had the honour of attending the annual Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages provincial banquet and awards this past Saturday, October 29th here in Regina. This year's theme was Keeping Languages Alive: Overcoming Adversity.

Unfortunately, the adversity they worry about is the aftermath of the Minister of Education's decision to cut their annual funding of \$227,000. Regrettably, some schools are having to consider closing down as they cannot survive without this support. But SOHL [Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages Inc.] is determined more than ever to preserve and enliven over 60 heritage languages here in Saskatchewan. SOHL's strength are their volunteers, so they recognized two very special people. The first was new volunteer Kalhari Goonewardene, member of the Saskatoon Sinhala Language School, currently a Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] student at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan]. Through all her university work, she still finds time each week to teach the youngest of students at the language school.

The second was long-term volunteer, Olena Shyian, a member of the Ukrainian National Federation, Regina branch Ridna Shkola. Olena has been with the UNF [Ukrainian National Federation] for over eight years. Recently some new initiatives have put in place by Olena has helped increase student registration and retention.

Mr. Speaker, I call on all members to wish the Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages the very best as they prepare for another successful year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Battlefords.

New Beginnings Campaign Benefits Saskatchewan Hospital

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to stand today and share the great news that the Saskatchewan Hospital New Beginnings campaign recently received a \$1 million gift from an anonymous donor. Mr. Speaker, this once again demonstrates the incredible generosity of Saskatchewan residents.

Ensuring that quality care is being provided to those who need it most is a priority for our government. Construction of the new Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford is a key step forward in our commitment to improve mental health services in this province and to act on the recommendations in the

mental health and addictions action plan. This 284-bed psychiatric facility will replace the existing 156-bed hospital and will include 188 psychiatric rehabilitation beds and a secure 96-room unit for male and female offenders living with mental health issues.

Mr. Speaker, construction of the new facility began in September of 2015 and is proceeding on time and on budget with a targeted completion date of June 2018. I know that the people of this great province will continue to give generously to support the New Beginnings campaign in its work to raise funds to purchase equipment and furniture for the new Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford.

This important project will enhance mental health services in our province, and I look forward to seeing the progress as this new building takes shape over the next two years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Westview.

Prairie Prism Multicultural Event

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the beginning of October, I had the pleasure of attending Prairie Prism in Saskatoon. The Prairie Prism multicultural event was a chance to celebrate Saskatchewan's rich mosaic of cultures through cultural entertainment, food, storytelling, and a variety of informative art, dance, music, children's activities, and interactive displays. This event is unique in that it is composed of approximately 20 different agencies who have come together to put on a multicultural event. It is a true community initiative.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is growing at a record pace. We have more people living here than at any point in our history. And central to that growth is immigration. In fact since 2007, more than 77,000 immigrants have settled in over 400 communities across Saskatchewan.

Prairie Prism's goal is to have friends educate friends because intercultural sharing and interaction leads to understanding and appreciation. And that, that is vital to the health of our community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me thanking all the organizers and the partners of Prairie Prism for hosting such a wonderful and inclusive event. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Estevan.

Carbon Capture Facility Uses Green Technology

Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to inform the House that the carbon capture and sequestration facility at Boundary dam 3 has captured 800 000 tonnes of carbon in the last 12 months.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good-news story about how our government has invested in green technology that works. In my constituency, where BD3 [Boundary dam 3] is located, constituents understand that this breakthrough technology has the capacity to transform the way that the world produces

electricity. With 2,400 coal-fired power plants planned or under construction around the world, this technology can do more to help the global fight against climate change than a carbon tax would ever do. Mr. Speaker, imagine for a moment if those power plants used this technology. Global carbon emissions would see a drastic reduction.

The evidence speaks for itself. Our government has made investment in green technology that works; all the while the opposition have said time and time again that they would have cancelled this project and imposed a tax instead.

The CCS [carbon capture and storage] facility has captured the total equivalent amount of carbon as if we took 250,000 cars off the road. That is real change.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of the House congratulate SaskPower, their employees, and all involved in the CCS at BD3 on capturing 800 000 tonnes of carbon this last year. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Auditor's Report and Details of Land Transaction

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, more of the government's secrets are slowly leaking out in the Sask Party's GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land scandal. And really we're right back at the beginning here now.

We know now that the then GTH CEO [chief executive officer] received redacted legal advice from Ministry of Justice officials. The land was appraised, of course, at four times less than the Sask Party ultimately paid. They found that the bypass would take a big chunk of this land and they recommended that all landowners should be told that Highways would be buying the land and that expropriation was an option. Seems like good advice.

To the Premier: why was the GTH CEO let go right after this, and why was the recommendation from Justice ignored?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, everything my friend has just said in the preamble to his question was available to and part of the report that the Provincial Auditor has done into the GTH land acquisition.

Mr. Speaker, let's revisit the conclusions of the auditor wherein she advised the government and the people of Saskatchewan that there should have been better coordination, there should have been better communication between the Ministry of Highways and the Global Transportation Hub. She highlighted a number of specific recommendations to that end, recommendations we accept completely and have moved on already in terms of implementation, up to and including changing the governance of the GTH so that the minister is no longer on the board. We now have former deputy minister and long-term public servant Doug Moen as the Chair.

She also, Mr. Speaker, it's important to point out, she also issued a press release that accompanied the Provincial Auditor's report. And in that press release she said unequivocally and clearly that, according to her work, there was no evidence of any wrongdoing or fraud or conflict of interest by the board of directors, which includes the minister. The next day, she went on province-wide radio, and the transcripts of the interview demonstrate she said there were no red flags, Mr. Speaker.

I know all of this doesn't fit with the member's conspiracy. None of the facts of the case fit with this conspiracy. But they remain the facts of the case, and we accept the auditor's recommendations. We hope that finally the NDP [New Democratic Party] will also accept the auditor's report.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — We see it again here. The Premier loves to hear the sound of his own voice. But Saskatchewan people would like to hear some answers in their Legislative Assembly. Question after question after question and not a single answer from the Premier. And of course the auditor's report was nothing but scathing and it exonerated no one. My question to the Premier that I asked the first time, that wasn't answered: why was the then GTH CEO let go right after this, and why were the recommendations from Justice ignored?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Economy and the GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that the auditor had full authority to canvass all elements of this transaction. She had access to all of the documents, all of the cabinet documents, all of the emails. She had access to all of the individuals involved. She had the ability to do her report on the basis of all of that information. Her conclusion at the end of that report, as stated in the press release which she attached to the report being released, was that there was no wrongdoing; there was no conflict of interest and that there was no fraud.

[14:00]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, so weak. Again the question was to the Premier. Not a single answer, not a single answer from the minister in his place to the question that was asked. I'll move along to another.

We now have a government spokesperson who's apparently talking to the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] and says that the scandal-plagued former minister received a call from an Edmonton lawyer representing a client named Blackstone. So instead of hiding behind redactions, can the Premier tell us who Blackstone is?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Economy and the GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — The email being referenced by the Leader of the Opposition was made available to the Provincial Auditor as a part of her investigation, as a part of her audit. She concluded that the email and the phone call were not germane

to being followed up upon. She in fact said that the day after she released her report, that there were no red flags.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, she had full access to all of this information. Her conclusion was that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no fraud, that there was no conflict of interest. And with respect to the, with respect to the phone call being referenced, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is there was no follow-up by the Ministry of the Economy. There was no follow-up by the Global Transportation Hub. And the auditor didn't feel that the email and call were germane to further follow-up in her audit.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Again, the report that the minister references — the question was to the Premier; no answers — the minister references, was scathing. It exonerated no one. Huge questions exist. And you know, Saskatchewan people should expect answers from their Premier and their government. We've asked day in, day out about questions like, who made that phone call? And the Premier hasn't said a thing, and the minister won't answer the question. Now we hear through this leak that it was some lawyer from Edmonton and a company named Blackstone.

Don't you think the people of Saskatchewan deserve better than this? Don't you think, don't you think they deserve the Premier to take to his feet and provide these kind of facts and not have a slow drip of information? So again, to the Premier: why does he think he can hide from answering these questions? Why won't he come clean? And who is Blackstone?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Economy and the GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well the fact of the matter with respect to the company being referenced, Mr. Speaker, is that the Ministry of Justice looked into who that company was, and we couldn't find out who it was. That was a part of the reason why the sale didn't go ahead. In fact we ... And the auditor referenced that that was the right decision, I believe, Mr. Speaker.

So we did look into that. That particular company's name was canvassed. It wasn't clear who that company was or if that company existed, and who this lawyer was in terms of representing this company. So because we couldn't actually find out — the government couldn't ascertain who the actual company was — there was no follow-up that went on because of that discussion, that there was no follow-up either by the GTH or by the Ministry of the Economy. And the government did the right thing, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we've asked these questions to the Premier day after day. No answers. Now a slow drip of new information. You know, of course this Premier could just turn around and talk 20 feet over to the scandal-plagued minister who's finally out of his cabinet, but he hasn't done that.

We get these tired talking points from the minister, but you'd think that maybe there's a cabinet minister over there that would stand up and provide some of this information. Maybe the Justice minister, who we know was involved in some of this process, maybe the Justice minister would let us know. So I guess to Minister of Justice: who is Blackstone? And I guess from the Minister of Justice: what can he tell us about this operation?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Economy and the GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I answered, responded to the question with regard to that particular company. With regard to the challenges identified in the auditor's report, she made 10 recommendations. The government accepted those recommendations, many of which have to do with improving governance at the GTH with respect to improving communication between the Global Transportation Hub Authority and the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure.

We've been focused on moving forward. How can we implement those recommendations most effectively? How can we improve governance at the Global Transportation Hub Authority? Yesterday, I made a pretty significant announcement in terms of the governance of the GTH, an important announcement appointing a very highly respected former public servant of this province, who served both this government and the former government very, very well, Mr. Doug Moen, who has agreed to serve as the Chair of the Global Transportation Hub Authority. We're focused on moving forward, Mr. Speaker, on making the GTH a great success. We know that that's going to happen and we very much appreciate Mr. Moen being willing to take on that leadership role with the GTH.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, another question, this one to the Justice minister, no answer. The minister with his tired talking points . . . But we know, we've learned now that Justice flagged the ownership of this parcel as a problem in May and cabinet was still concerned about this ownership, we've learned, in November of 2012. Of course that's just before this government stroked the cheque and authorized paying four times more for this land than they ever should have. So to the Minister of Justice: what changed? Why was the advice not taken?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Economy and the GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well in fact, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor said that the government did exactly the right thing in that we were not able to ascertain . . . We were not able to ascertain the owner of the property in question. The government decided, because we were unable to ascertain the ownership of the property, that we weren't going to go ahead with . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize Minister of the Economy and the

GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact the government . . . as I just said, the Provincial Auditor said the government did precisely the right thing in not going ahead with the sale of the property at that point because we couldn't ascertain the ownership of the property.

She did identify challenges, and that's a big part of what she had in her report, 10 recommendations which we take very seriously. We accept the recommendations of the auditor, and as importantly, Mr. Speaker, we accept the conclusions of the auditor as stated in her press release when she released the report. The conclusion that she came to was that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no fraud, and that there was no conflict of interest.

I'm interested in knowing whether the Leader of the Opposition accepts those conclusions as well.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Questions, questions here today of course, day in, day out, to the Premier. Not a single answer, no accountability, no answers, and a deal that's wasted millions of dollars. Questions now today trying to get to the bottom of this from the Justice minister as we've learned of his involvement. Not a single answer from the Justice minister. A bunch of tired and weak talking points from that minister.

But the CBC has also uncovered that the CEO of the GTH got legal advice from the executive director of the civil law division of the Ministry of Justice. It's all in a redacted email with the subject being the name of the Sask Party-supporting Alberta land baron's law firm.

My question to the Minister of Justice: what was in that email, and will he release it here today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Economy and the GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — The fact of the matter is that the Provincial Auditor had access to all of these documents — all of them, including this email along with thousands of others. Her and her team of experts went through all of this material in a very, very detailed fashion, which I think the members opposite know to be the case.

She had full access to those documents. She had full access to cabinet documents. She had full access to any of the individuals who played a part in the transaction. And at the end of the day, at the end of all of that work, at the end of reviewing all of those documents, those emails, including the one being referenced, her conclusion was that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no fraud, and there was no conflict of interest.

And once again I'm interested in knowing from the Leader of the Opposition . . . He claims to support the Provincial Auditor's report, her mandate — in fact I think they called for that mandate — which this government gave the auditor to look into these matters. Will he accept the conclusion that the auditor came to, which was that there was no wrongdoing, no fraud,

and no conflict of interest?

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

State of Provincial Finances

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the mismanagement and the scandal runs deep, so let's try another topic. On October 12th, they passed an order in council and authorized themselves to borrow \$6 billion. Now OCs [order in council] are used from time to time to authorize borrowing when it's needed. But this, this is an unprecedented amount. It's double any debt previously authorized.

But they have gone back for seconds before. In September 2013, \$2 billion borrowing was authorized. And then a year later, in December 2014, \$3 billion borrowing was authorized. Now it's up to \$6 billion. That's billion with a "b". The budget estimates for public debt are adding another \$1.3 billion for the next year. So my question for the Minister of Finance is simple: why is the Sask Party so desperate to authorize \$6 billion for themselves?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that we're on, I think day eight of this session, the midpoint of the third week of this session and the NDP opposition finally decides it's time to ask a question about something even remotely related to the economy here in this province, Mr. Speaker. And I think that that's important.

In answer to the member's question with respect to the credit facility that the order in council passed, it is to provide the government the opportunity to borrow monies if it indeed deems it to be necessary to borrow those dollars. This credit facility, Mr. Speaker, is revolving credit, so we have debt that comes new on an occasional basis we need to renew. We need the order in council — we need the government authorization — to be able to do that, Mr. Speaker.

And because of the fact that we're investing money to borrow in infrastructure in this province, should the opportunity arise and we find the markets are acceptable to our paper, Mr. Speaker — which they are because of a AAA credit rating in this province, one of two in Canada — we will take full advantage of that borrowing authority to take advantage of the markets to invest in infrastructure in this province, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, what's interesting about that minister's response is that Saskatchewan people haven't even seen the first quarter financial update. I know we've heard all their excuses on this but, in the last few months, we have seen first quarter financial reports from SaskPower, SaskEnergy, SaskTel, SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] but still nothing from the Sask Party Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, if all of the Crowns were able to get their act

together and provide transparent disclosure of their finances, is there really any legitimate excuse for the Finance minister to not provide one? Or does it have something to do with the \$6 billion borrowing that they just authorized for themselves?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — As I said earlier in this House and I said to the media, the first quarter ended on June 30th, the exact same day that this Assembly passed *The Appropriation Act*, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the budget that was brought down on June 1st.

We will be bringing out a full mid-year update before the end of November to present to the people of this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I can tell this Assembly and I can tell the people of this province, I think the federal Finance minister was on his feet today talking about slow growth is the new norm here in the country of Canada. It also applies to the province of Saskatchewan. We know, Mr. Speaker, we know that there are pressures on our budget in this province as we speak. We know that 20 per cent of the crop is still lying in the field, Mr. Speaker, which translates into crop insurance claims against the province's summary financial statements.

We know that there are . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well do you want an answer or are you going to sit there and chirp? I'm asking the critic. So I'm saying to the critic, Mr. Speaker, we know that there are increased utilization pressures.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will bring out a full mid-year report before the end of November to present to the people of this province as to the update with respect to the finances of this province.

But I can say there are challenges. There are challenges with respect to our income tax. There are challenges with respect to corporate income tax in this province. We know that 20 per cent of the crop is still lying out in the field. We know that there are increased utilization pressures in health care, education, and social services, Mr. Speaker. We're going to meet those demands. That puts pressure on our budget, Mr. Speaker.

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

Provisions of *The Interpretation Amendment Act, 2016*

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the Crowns had a 15-month year-end to deal with, so forget the excuses. We all know now the Sask Party wants to redefine what privatization means in Saskatchewan. They want it to be 49 per cent. After all, that's what the World Bank uses. But, Mr. Speaker, here in Canada the federal government uses 10 per cent. You see, if a Crown corporation is more than 10 per cent privately owned, well the federal government no longer considers it tax exempt. In other words, once the Sask Party desperately sells off more than 10 per cent of any one of our Crowns, it will have to start paying

corporate income tax to Ottawa.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we've seen the rants on Twitter and in the headlines where the premiers and others pretend they want to defend Saskatchewan. Why are they now selling out Saskatchewan? And why do they so badly want to send our money to Ottawa?

[14:15]

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the changes to *The Interpretation Act* are very simple. We seek to define a word that's in legislation that the New Democrats, when they proposed the legislation on the floor of this House, refused to define, Mr. Speaker. So we're bringing in to the definition of the Act simply the World Bank definition, Mr. Speaker, the most authoritative definition that we could find with regard to the word, Mr. Speaker.

It's simple legislation, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not sure at the end of the day . . . The New Democrats had the opportunity to define that word when they brought the legislation forward, Mr. Speaker. They never did. They never did. They could've had whatever definition they wanted, Mr. Speaker. So we seek the most authoritative definition that we can find, Mr. Speaker, and that's what we're introducing through the legislation.

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

Ms. Beck: — They have the right to their own opinions, Mr. Speaker, but not their own facts. Look at the battles that they've pretended to wage over equalization and federal taxes — the tantrums, the grandstanding, the fearmongering. In the end, the Sask Party are the ones planning to send Saskatchewan dollars to Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, our Crowns were built by generations of Saskatchewan people and for generations they have paved our roads, brought power to farmhouses, heated our homes, and connected our communities. But once again instead of truly standing up for the people of Saskatchewan, the Sask Party is running ahead and leading with their chin. With their wordplay and semantic games, why are they putting our Crowns at risk and forcing them to pay 15 per cent — millions and millions — to Ottawa?

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this change to the legislation is not about privatizing any of our Crowns. It's simply about bringing a definition to it. And, Mr. Speaker, at the end of it, once the definition has been changed, it will allow for all sorts of investments — our Auto Fund, for instance, Mr. Speaker; our Workers' Compensation fund, funds that can't invest in these Crown corporations the way they are, Mr. Speaker. We'll have Saskatchewan people investing in our Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, to give them the equity they need to continue to grow and continue to provide the vital

services to the people of Saskatchewan that the people of Saskatchewan need, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hospital Laundry Services

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, privatization is hurting us right down to hospital laundry facilities — not just the loss of 300 good, mortgage-paying jobs but the loss of the quality of the linens that hospital patients and staff depend on every single day. A recent RQHR [Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region] newsletter noted that their staff have found hazardous, sharp objects in supposedly clean hospital linens: needles, syringes, and even surgical scissors and scalpels, Mr. Speaker.

According to a report in the media today, in September alone, 439 items were returned, and 48 per cent of those were due to staining. The privatization of our hospital laundry system is putting hundreds of patients and staff at risk. That's unacceptable. Mr. Speaker, even the private laundry company now admits they don't check for hazardous materials or sharp objects.

Mr. Speaker, believe it or not, the then Health minister promised this move would improve patient safety. So, Mr. Speaker, will the minister admit his predecessor was clearly wrong and take responsibility for his government's decision to privatize and put hospital staff and patients at risk?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, obviously we're very concerned when anything like this happens that could put front-line employees at any sort of risk. Mr. Speaker, I'm told that, by ministry officials, that these situations unfortunately occurred prior to the privatization of linen services and they also occur from time to time across the country, Mr. Speaker, whether it's services provided by private enterprise or provided by staff.

Mr. Speaker, again I'm very concerned about this. I've asked ministry officials to contact the private provider, have discussions with them, see what can be done to ensure safety. But again, Mr. Speaker, this is not unique to Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, we are talking about sharp objects being found in linens that were promised to be clean. I would think the minister would agree that this is a great risk to staff and patient safety. More concerning, Mr. Speaker, there is no tracking of the number of times a hazardous object is found in these linens. It's true.

We asked in a written question last year, and the Health minister's office could provide no answer. Mr. Speaker, the Health ministry's own guidelines require health care providers to report annually on the number of persons exposed to blood and bodily fluids. Given the facts, how is the minister okay with

privatizing hospital laundry services? And will he commit to creating a proper system to track the amount of times hazardous objects are found in hospital linens, or at the very least, commit to following the existing guidelines of his own ministry?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in the first question, we're very concerned about this. That's why I've asked ministry officials to contact the private provider to have discussions whether something could be done more appropriately. But I would reiterate that this is not new to Saskatchewan. It's happened in the past and unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, it happens on occasion across the entire country.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that the members opposite have some sort of ideological bent against any services ever being provided by private enterprise, Mr. Speaker, but in laundry, it makes significant sense. There has been millions of dollars saved. There will continue to be millions of dollars saved that can be used for front-line health care services, core health care services that really do need to be provided by staff.

Mr. Speaker, I would just add that there was a recent editorial in a Calgary paper, a scathing indictment of the government in Alberta for not moving in this very same direction to save millions of dollars that can be saved to be used for front-line services, for core health services, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answer to question 113.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has tabled the answer to question no. 113. I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order the answers to questions 114 through 126.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has ordered the responses to questions 114 to 126.

I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be asking for leave to move a motion of condolence.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Premier.

CONDOLENCE MOTIONS

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's an

honour today to be able to rise in my place and say just a few words about those former members of this Assembly whom we have lost. Mr. Speaker, I will be moving a specific motion with respect to Cyril MacDonald, and I know other members will want to join in on the debate, as it were, although there won't be much disagreement, I'm sure.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's important that we take a moment, I think, every fall, as we are today in the session of the legislature, to pay tribute, to say a few words of gratitude and of condolence to the families and the friends and in memory of women and men that have served this place well, that have stepped forward in public service, that have stepped forward to serve their constituents, to do their very best to represent them both on the floor of this legislature and in their everyday work in their constituency offices or around their constituencies.

And so today we will be honouring the former member from Milestone and Indian Head-Wolseley, Cy MacDonald. And we will honour also Bob Larter from the constituency of Estevan, Norman MacAuley from Cumberland, and Larry Birkbeck who was a member for Moosomin. Mr. Speaker, each of these individuals deserves our tribute, and their families and friends deserve our thanks and our condolence.

We know that is especially true because to those who are left behind, we owe a great gratitude in terms of their willingness to share their loved one with the rest of the province. When someone enters into public service, when they run for office and they are successful and they are allowed to sign that wonderful roll of members, it is the individual that signs it, but it is a family that shares in the cost of public service. And so we say through the record today and through this debate, we say thank you to the families and the loved ones of all of these members who have served this province and this legislature well.

Cyril Pius MacDonald

Hon. Mr. Wall: — So, Mr. Speaker, I will begin today's condolences by moving the following motion:

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

Cy Pius MacDonald, who passed away on November 14th, 2015, was a Member of the Legislative Assembly from 1964 until 1978. He represented the constituencies of Milestone and Indian Head-Wolseley for the Liberal Party. He served as the minister of Industry and Commerce and the minister of Welfare.

Mr. MacDonald was born 29 February, 1928, in Humboldt. He completed his Bachelor of Arts at Notre Dame College in Wilcox and a Bachelor of Education at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia. Mr. MacDonald returned to Wilcox in 1953 where he taught English and coached football and hockey for 15 years. He served on the Notre Dame senate and was recognized as an honorary life member of the Notre Dame Alumni Association and a member of the Notre Dame wall of honour.

After his political career, Mr. MacDonald joined his brother in Calgary and ran an oil service company. In the mid-1980s, he returned to Regina and founded Strategy West, a public relations and event management company, until his retirement in 1992.

And, Mr. Speaker, and colleagues, if I may just interrupt the actual motion wording now to offer some of my own personal perspective on Cy. It is at this point where I had the chance to meet Cy MacDonald and to work with him directly because he was engaged along with the Government of Saskatchewan of the day, with whom I was employed, and specifically worked with the minister that I worked for through his company called Strategy West.

And I just found him to be the quintessential gentleman and more than happy as a veteran, not only of this place but of public life in terms of his business experience, to be very patient with any number of perhaps dumb questions I had at the time. Very patient with what I was trying to glean from an association with someone who had had such a career, who had served in the cabinet of the Thatcher government, who then had gone on to be involved in business and to risk and to create jobs for himself and others.

And I found him to be, as I said, just a great gentleman, and we became friends. And it wasn't until I guess years later, even after I was then elected — I had the honour of being elected to this place in '99 — that we rekindled that relationship and met again and talked a little bit about those days.

But I only have warm memories of Cy, how he carried himself, his comport and his willingness to continue to serve the province of Saskatchewan not long after he had left this Assembly and as he became involved in business and other matters. And so to continue with the wording, Mr. Speaker:

Mr. MacDonald is survived and sadly missed by his wife of 64 years, Anne; his seven children, Katherine, Murray, Marilyn, Margaret, Maureen, Mariann, and Theresa; and their families including 12 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

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

The Speaker: — The Premier has moved a condolence motion. We'll take it as read. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my humble honour to rise and to join with the Premier to remember Cy MacDonald and to offer respect to him and to his family for his service and contributions to our province.

[14:30]

Certainly as described by the Premier and through his service within our province, his contributions were multi-faceted. They were through the business community. They were through his formal service as an MLA for a number of years and as a cabinet minister, but also through education and through sport.

I understand that Mr. MacDonald is survived by his wife, Anne; his seven children, Katherine, Murray, Marilyn, Margaret, Maureen, Mariann, and Theresa; as well as 12 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, and sister Kay MacDonald. So that, as was referenced, the service of a member here includes an entire family. And to all those members of that family, we say thank you.

I recognize that Mr. MacDonald had a Bachelor of Arts from Notre Dame College in Wilcox, a Bachelor of Education from Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, and that Mr. MacDonald was an English teacher. And after his political career he ran an oil service company, I understand, Superior Mud in Calgary with his brother, and then came back to Regina to establish the public relations company that was referenced in the Premier's remarks, Strategy West public relations.

Mr. MacDonald represented the constituencies of Milestone from 1964 to 1975, and Indian Head-Wolseley from 1975 to 1978. He served as minister of Industry and Commerce, and minister of Welfare and Youth. I understand that Mr. MacDonald led an initiative for youth regarding physical, social, and cultural programming. I understand that he was a hockey and football coach for 15 years, helping serve our communities through the development of sport as well. And I understand that Mr. MacDonald served on the Notre Dame senate, was recognized as an Honorary Life Member of their Alumni Association and as a member of their Wall of Honour.

Pulling from Mr. MacDonald's maiden speech read into this, or shared or spoken in this Assembly on February 15th, 1965, and his taking pride of representing rural Saskatchewan, I quote:

As the member for the constituency of Milestone, I take pride in representing a constituency that is symbolic of rural Saskatchewan. Its boundaries stretch from no. 13 Highway to the south, to no. 1 and no. 33 highways to the north. It stretches on the west to the doorsteps of Moose Jaw and on the east to the doorsteps of Weyburn. Its farms include those that are the real breadbasket of Western Canada.

The pride shared by Mr. MacDonald in his maiden speech for that rural riding in that beautiful part of our province is certainly evident. And on behalf of a grateful opposition and a grateful province, we extend our condolences to the MacDonald family and our thanks to Cy MacDonald for his service to the people of Saskatchewan on so many fronts. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour and a privilege to join in this condolence motion for — I'm interested when I see the paper — Cyril MacDonald. I've never ever heard of him called that before. In our area, he's well known, was very well known as Cy MacDonald.

It was already mentioned of course his connection to Wilcox and Notre Dame. There was a movie made, or a show made a number of years ago called *The Hounds of Notre Dame*, and Cy would have been one of those hounds.

Mr. Speaker, he was quite well known in the area of course in his early days for attending there when the conditions were far from premium; you know, the stories of when somebody wasn't using a granary, Père Athol Murray would haul that into Wilcox and that became a dormitory for people to stay in through the winter months. That was certainly, no doubt, experienced, and I never got to hear the stories from Cy, but I'm sure he probably had many of those early days in Notre Dame.

I do know that Notre Dame has got quite a tradition of hockey, which is hard to believe because in those days it didn't even have a hockey rink. They went to Milestone to play their hockey games.

And I was talking to a fellow in Milestone just a couple days ago as I was kind of wanting to get a few stories regarding Cy. And he was telling about always remembering when Notre Dame would come, and they'd be playing against Weyburn or Estevan. And Cy, for some reason, seemed to be kind of, maybe not the policeman, but seemed to get mixed up with some of the toughest members, whether it was "Punch" McLean from Estevan or many different names. Cy was known as the guy that certainly tried to keep things straight for the Hounds of Notre Dame. So he had quite a reputation in the area as a player, and then of course on as a coach into the future.

My experience with Cy, even though I was just a very, very young kid, I would say it was probably the reason . . . maybe not the reason, but my first experience in politics. I grew up in a very small town of Lewvan which Cy represented through the mid- to late-'60s and early '70s. And the very first event that I ever went to, a friend of mine — because there was only one other friend in Lewvan when there's only 22 people in the whole town; there was only one friend in Lewvan — and he was going. They were going to Avonlea to Dunnet Park to a barbecue. And I remember Mark O'Byrne asked me if I would like to go, and of course I wanted to. Anything to get out of Lewvan for a young kid was exciting.

So I went to this what I thought was a barbecue, just a barbecue at Dunnet Park in Avonlea. And it was great. It was hot. I remember bits and pieces of it. And I remember there being speeches, which was kind of different for a barbecue, not knowing what I was going to. Well I ended up getting home, and I was telling my dad what I had just experienced. My dad was a very strong conservative, so it broke his heart to think the first political event I went to was for Cy MacDonald as a Liberal in Dunnet Park in Avonlea. I think my dad was a very strong conservative, but I sure . . . He also was a supporter of Cy because Cy had a lot of supporters. He brought kind of the centre right together, and that was probably a large part of his success in those elections.

I also talked to a lady from Milestone who is kind of known as the Liberal around the community. She's really from Gray originally and was a young Liberal. Cy actually started the young Liberal organization, I think, before he was elected in the Milestone area. But this Nita Monson now, but Lafoy before she was married, talked about how Cy really kind of united and brought together not only the youth, the elderly, but the youth especially. They would have bonspiels and really kind of taught the whole importance of democracy, the whole importance of knowing the different issues so that when you do vote, you are

an informed voter, as opposed to just a party-line voter.

And she talked a lot about Cy. She ended up actually working in this building when Cy was in his last term elected in this building. She spent some time working for the Liberal government in this building. But again, Cy really had such a presence, you know. I have had the fortune of the past . . . well since 1999 representing the constituency of Indian Head-Milestone. Indian Head will talk a little bit about Cy, but when you get down to that Milestone-Wilcox area, that's where he spent so much of his time and is so well known.

Just my last story, I just want to say that really kind of impacted my political life was one of my earliest memories of politics, again was of course a barbecue in Dunnet Park, which I'm not supposed to repeat anymore from the McMorris family name, but anyway . . . was at Christmastime we would get a Christmas card from the MacDonald family every year. And it was really quite a fascinating card because it had all the family. It had all seven kids plus Cy and Anne. And my mom, I always remember when she would open that card, I mean, because every year you'd watch this family grow. Even though we weren't directly connected to it, you know, starting in '64 for 14 years, each year — and I think Mom collected every one of those — and you'd see this family of seven grow year after year after year.

And I really want to commend Anne for putting that, and probably Cy had something to do with it, putting that together. Because when I was elected in '99 we decided, I decided, that was really kind of neat because it stuck in my mind. And so we have done one every year until last year, couldn't get the boys home. But what I want to say is how I am so impressed with Anne, because I found it, we found it impossible to try and corral two. They were able to corral seven plus Mom and Dad every year for 14 years to put this family card out, which really connected them I think with the constituency.

So I've met a few of the kids. Don't know all of them of course, but met a few. And you know, Cy needs to be proud of the family that they raised, in light of also carrying on a political career which can be quite demanding.

So from the people of Indian Head-Milestone, and especially from the people around Milestone-Wilcox, our deepest condolences.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask again for leave to present another motion of condolence.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Premier.

Norman MacAuley

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, each one of these that we honour deserve our thanks for their public service. One could ask oneself a question though, as you read the bios or even the obituaries of some of the members, the reasonable question might be, if once one had served in World War II in places like France and Belgium and Holland and Germany, and then upon their return once they had worked in the Saskatchewan government trading store, and once they had served as a special constable for the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], one could rightly ask, what would make them want to continue to serve? Because they could credibly say, I have done my public service.

You know, we often note well, and I think reasonably so, that those who fought in World War II were the greatest generation. And it's hard for any, even the most cursory read of the history of that war, it's hard to disagree with that notion, that they were the greatest generation. And any member of that generation that so fought in that war, that went overseas far from home, in this case to four different countries, could come back and say, I have done my share. And we would rightly respond, no actually you have done more than your share. Public service has been done, not just on behalf of your own legacy but on behalf of your family's legacy and the rest of ours.

And yet Norman MacAuley came back and wanted to continue to be involved in public service through that trading store that was a government-related entity or through his work with the RCMP. He also found time, as you will note when we read the motion, found time to be an entrepreneur, owning and operating a fishing camp. So this was the quality of the individual then that served in this place throughout the late 1970s as a strong voice for the northern constituency of Cumberland on behalf of the New Democratic Party and then quite rightly appointed as the Legislative Secretary for the minister of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we're honoured to have the loved ones of Mr. MacAuley who have joined us today. And so it gives us a unique opportunity to not just say for the record and transmittal that maybe the family and friends might read, but rather in person, for us — all of us, even those who did not know Mr. MacAuley — to say thank you through them to his memory and for his legacy but also directly to them for sharing him with us and supporting him in his public service.

And so I know there will be members that wish to make a number of remarks in the public record, and let me make way for that, Mr. Speaker, by reading the following motion:

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

Norman MacAuley, who passed away on July 6th, 2016, was a member of this Assembly from 1975 until 1982. He represented the constituency of Cumberland for the New Democratic Party and served as the legislative secretary for the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. MacAuley was born on August 10, 1917 in La Ronge. He attended the All Saints Indian Residential School but left school early to work as a fisher and a freighter with his father. In 1941, Mr. MacAuley enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces and served in France and Belgium and Holland and Germany. After settling back in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. MacAuley managed the Saskatchewan government trading stores in Pinehouse and at Deschambault Lake. He also served as a special constable for the RCMP and was an owner/operator of a fishing camp. After his political career, Mr. MacAuley and his wife retired to Kelowna, British Columbia.

Mr. MacAuley is survived and sadly missed by his daughter-in-law Pat, granddaughter Erin, grandson Neil, and great-granddaughter Allison. In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

[14:45]

The Speaker: — The Premier has moved a motion of condolence for Norman MacAuley. I will take the motion as read. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to recognize somebody who has given so much to our province and to so many. In many ways, when you understand the service and the contributions and the life of Norman MacAuley, you have somebody who is sort of that sort of giant within our province that has truly been a builder in so many ways and that has served in so many ways.

Before getting into some of my remarks, I want to welcome family of Norman MacAuley that are here today with us. I want to start with his granddaughter, Mrs. Erin Reid, from Edmonton. I know that Mrs. Pat MacAuley's not in the Assembly here right now, but she's in the Legislative Assembly here today watching these remarks as well, and that's his daughter-in-law who married his son, Angus. We have Mr. Neil MacAuley here, a grandson from La Ronge, along with Allison MacAuley, great-granddaughter from La Ronge as well. We have his nephew Charlie MacAuley, as well as his wife, Lorraine MacAuley, with us here. They're from Prince Albert.

I know in chatting with Charlie before, he said that Mr. MacAuley was his ref. He was his uncle, but he was his ref as well, and he was the first ref that tossed him out of a hockey game for a bit of a tussle on the ice.

We also have Soleh MacAuley, a great-grandniece who comes from Prince Albert.

The life of Norman MacAuley is a remarkable story of service from his youngest years, and an individual who contributed, as I've said, to all aspects of the North: the economic opportunities, so many ventures that were there to support youth throughout the North.

And of course somebody that also had very practical experiences from cutting roads, and I believe was involved in

literally paving the main street of La Ronge — not as minister sending the cheques, but being on the ground paving the main street — and actually cut the first road into English Bay. Along with his son, cut that road and set up a fishing camp there at English Bay.

Someone who served his country as well in the Second World War, and even that story is a remarkable story where Norman MacAuley, I'm told, decided at that point that he needed to serve. And he walked 200 kilometres to Montreal Lake where he then got a ride to Prince Albert to enlist with the Canadian Armed Forces, and in this case the 8th Canadian Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment in the Royal Canadian Army 70th Battery. Someone who served through France and Belgium and Holland and Germany throughout the Second World War.

It's been mentioned that Norman MacAuley went to the All Saints Indian Residential School. He left early to work with his dad as a fisher and a freighter. He spent a life, in many ways, connected to nature and the lakes pulling nets as a commercial fisher but also as a sport fisher and hunter.

And something that's been noted to me by family of Mr. MacAuley is his focus throughout his life on strengthening supports and circumstances for youth, and certainly we know the value of those contributions.

Mr. MacAuley also served as the legislative secretary for the minister of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. He along with his wife, Hetty, I understand they started the first Legion, or the Legion in La Ronge. I know I've been in that building for a debate or two and community gatherings or two. It's a wonderful place.

And of course, upon returning from service in the Second World War, he worked within the North operating the government stores, the trading posts in both Pinehouse and Deschambault Lake. Somebody that I understand built a special bond and relationship with all people in the North, all communities, and certainly that's epitomized in his service as an MLA earning that trust. He also served as a special constable for the RCMP alongside of operating that fishing camp. And he was just so active in his community.

Education was something very important to Mr. MacAuley. He served as the first chairperson in fact of the La Ronge School Board from 1964 to 1975. I'm told by family — I wouldn't typically bring current discussion into condolence motions — but it was passed along that he would take great interest in a program like NORTEP [northern teacher education program]. And they've asked me to speak to that here today and what that means for the North, being the kind of program that we need to build upon.

And I guess one other interesting piece, at one point, on behalf of the government that he was a part of, he coordinated the relocation of a community, Molanosa at the time, to a new and improved site which would now be known as Weyakwin.

And I'm going to just share from Mr. MacAuley's maiden speech which was brought into this House on November 25th, 1975. I will quote:

Now I want to say how happy I am to be representing the constituency of Cumberland in this House. Today I want to thank the people of Cumberland constituency who elected me to this office. I hope I can do a good job for them.

I want to say a few words in Cree for the first two paragraphs so that the people at home can see what has been said here.

And the Legislative Library believes that Mr. MacAuley would likely be the very first person to speak Cree in this Assembly, something that members like our Deputy Leader, the member for Athabasca, have continued on in very fine tradition.

When we describe the life of Norman MacAuley, he's a giant in so many ways who has served his country, who has served and built the North, who has served as an MLA with legislative responsibility, but somebody that's always been focused on building a community.

And it's with condolence that I enter into this discussion to send care to that entire family. And it's with hope that that sort of legacy and that sort of service and that sort of person can continue on to build the province that we love. So thank you to Norman MacAuley on behalf of a grateful opposition and importantly a grateful province. Thank you for your service.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. Being that I am the current MLA for the Cumberland constituency, I wanted to pay my condolences but also respect. There's been some great words that have been shared to the family, and I'm so pleased that the family could come here today to join an opportunity that we . . . And it is an honour to look back on the great work that their grandfather, father . . . And the great work that was done in the Cumberland constituency but throughout the North.

And I think of Erin, who I know personally, and Neil as well, as the grandchildren of Norman. I would just like to say to them, it is an honour to represent the Cumberland constituency. And I know from the stories that I've heard and people have shared that your grandfather was a very proud man, and he did a fine job representing the people in . . . I was thinking, talking with Cheryl in our caucus office who works there now. It's kind of funny because I asked her, well did you know them? You know, Norm when he was here in '75. And she says . . . And I have to say this to Cheryl who works in our caucus office, I said, well you must have been just a kid when you knew him, because I had to take brownie points with her. I didn't want to upset her that she was her age.

But having said that, she said that when Norm was here serving the Cumberland constituency, the good people of the North, his wife would join him. And she would come and make sure that he was comfortable. She said it was amazing to watch. Get him ready, and she was right there working, she said, never getting in the way, always making sure he was . . . Whatever he needed, she said, he was there. Like true partners of someone who had compassion and care and love for her husband and companion, and the role he had. And she was here to support him.

It was kind of funny, she said, you know, Doyle, but after, she would get him ready to come into the House and he would have to do the great work that he had to do and how important it was. She would make sure she'd come around and never get in the way. Always asking and wanting to help out. She said, it's amazing. It didn't matter what you would ask her to do, she would do it. And I was amazed. She wasn't staff but just wanted to be involved. And I kind of thank Cheryl for sharing that little bit of a story of your grandmother and your grandfather, and just showing the support that she gave to him to do the good work.

And many of us in this Chamber have loved ones, spouses, that support us greatly. So I would like to take that time to acknowledge not only your grandfather but the great work and support your grandmother did together. But also on behalf of the Cumberland constituency and to those members in this Chamber, it is an honour to serve. And I've had that honour to serve since 2008, to raise the issues and bring the concerns of the North, as he would have brought the concerns and the issues facing northern people, our Aboriginal brothers and sisters.

So with that, I just want to again say it is an honour to have you in here, and I welcome you to the Legislative Assembly. And you know, it's with condolences that we share with you the love that you had for your grandfather, and to know the good people of the Cumberland constituency and this province are grateful.

You know, the Premier as well as the Leader of the Opposition said some great things —and truly, I know it's from the heart — about your grandfather. So I hope that, you know, brings you some, I guess, sense how important your grandfather was to our province, to this Assembly, and to northern Saskatchewan, the Cumberland constituency. With that I would just say thank you for allowing me an opportunity to share a little bit and pay my condolences to the family. Thank you.

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

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm also proud to stand in my place on behalf of the constituents of Athabasca to pay tribute to Mr. MacAuley and to thank his family who are present today. I look at the bio, and I can almost point out that some of his accomplishments were much the same as my father because my father was also a World War II veteran and he was also a special constable. He also was very good at speaking Cree.

And I can certainly share the sentiments of the Premier when he says that that generation that returned from the war made such a significant difference to our country and more so to our families and really to the communities that they came back to. And we're so grateful for those that paid the ultimate sacrifice and not returned, but we're also very thankful for those that did return. And I think Norman is one of the contributors to the northern part of our province, and that's why it's important that I too get up and pay tribute to Norman for his incredible sacrifice, not only to our country but to our communities and to our people.

I would point out that one of the things that I often speak of when we talk to groups and young kids about being from

northern Saskatchewan, the challenges of being a northern MLA. And certainly if you look at the history of the Cumberland and the Athabasca constituencies, I often complain at times that it's almost undemocratic, just the way that things are set up, primarily because of the distance that we have to travel, the communities that we have to stay in contact with. And the bigger challenge is travelling a great number of hours to come to Regina to represent our people. So those are some of the challenges that me and the current member face. And I can tell you, however, our predecessors, Norman as well as my predecessor, Mr. Thompson, had tougher roads to travel on and greater distances and greater challenges in those early years. So we certainly want to recognize that in the early '70s, there was much work that needed to be done in northern Saskatchewan, and these champions of ours, Mr. Thompson and Mr. MacAuley, certainly paid a tougher price than we do today in making sure that the North does have that voice.

I can tell you that while we at times feel it's undemocratic just to cover the distances we have in terms of staying connected and to travel all the way to Regina, it does wear down a person at times but I can tell the family today, the MacAuley family, that it is his memory that drives many of us younger MLAs to continue that journey because, as I said, he had a tougher road to travel then we did. So we needn't complain, because certain sections of the province now are paved a little bit more than they were in those times. So it's certainly something that we benefit from today that of course many of our predecessors could not.

[15:00]

I can also point out that, despite many misgivings and bad stories that people may have of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, DNS, and this was their heyday when Mr. MacAuley and Mr. Thompson introduced a great era in northern Saskatchewan. And we can pay tribute to them because we saw investments into highways, investments into housing, investments into airports. And those investments to this day, 2016, still serve and benefit the people of Saskatchewan. It was an exciting generation to see those that served in the war to come home and to offer solutions to our many communities, but it was also a great time for northern Saskatchewan people. And amongst the names that history will reflect, MacAuley is one of those names that we will echo our thanks to, as Thompson is one of those names that we also want to thank.

So these are some of the things I think are really important for the families to take with them and place in their hearts. I understand his brother is here, and some of his family members ... or his nephew is here, rather. Sorry. And I think the important thing is that, as we take our place in this Assembly, the key thing, as I also point out to the schoolchildren, that it's nice, it's a great honour to represent people in this province.

And what's really great, an honourable tribute to democracy, is the fact that our seats aren't our names on these desks. The desks represent the constituency. So often in the Assembly you'll hear the words "the member from Cumberland," "the member from Athabasca." And that's a tribute to people like Mr. MacAuley, who worked very hard to give us the basic democracy that we enjoy today. And that is one of the most

important, significant positives that I share with people because I think it's a great, great tribute to those that served their country overseas.

Now the final point I would say is that we also want to thank his family. Because as the member from Cumberland indicated, there is a great challenge of being an MLA from a great distance and having to cover a great area of our province.

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

So the Cree translation is, I want to say in my own language, the language that Norman honoured in this Assembly and first spoke in this Assembly, that I want to thank him for his service and to point out that the work, the commitment, and the dedication will continue to preserve his memory and the memories of all those that served in the Assembly and those people that we're honouring overall today. So again, thank you very much. God bless, and may he rest in peace.

The Deputy Speaker: — The motion before the Assembly is a motion by the Premier, a motion of condolence with regards to former member Norman MacAuley who passed away on July 6th of this year. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I again ask leave to make a motion of condolence.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Premier has asked leave to make a motion of condolence. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Robert "Bob" Larter

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and colleagues. It's an honour to say a few words about Bob Larter, who was known to those of us who followed politics carefully in the late '70s, known to us well. He was a Progressive Conservative member of this Legislative Assembly for the Estevan constituency.

And he went on . . . Well prior to politics he did many, many commendable things of great contribution to the Estevan area as an entrepreneur involved in the farm implement business. And then after politics, he continued to contribute to the province as a whole, albeit at the office that Saskatchewan had at the time in London, England.

But during his time in politics, though it was only five years, he played a pivotal role in the history of the political life and the political history, now as we can attest here, in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, it was a time of significant political debate here in Saskatchewan around the role of government, around government-owned enterprises, around any number of issues.

This was a very important time in the political life of Saskatchewan that Bob Larter participated in from this floor and from those chairs as a member of the Progressive Conservative opposition, Mr. Speaker. Some of the issues that were being still debated from 1975 through 1980 was, well the government's role in the potash business, the government's role in salt mines and peat bogs and all manner of activities, as well as the family of Crown corporations which remains a part of the debate in the political life of Saskatchewan. And certainly there were also important health care debates that Mr. Larter participated in.

He also had to do the work of the MLA and advocate for his constituents in the Estevan area. And I think we'll hear in a moment from the current member for Estevan that there were, you know, that the constituency was his priority. I think we all recognize in this place that there's a certain amount of sacrifice to public life regardless of where we sit and regardless of our party affiliation. And then you have the example of some members who, during their time here, sacrifice even a little bit more. Because I think there was every bit of evidence that Mr. Larter enjoyed his job here in this Legislative Assembly.

I think it's also true that he was hopeful that in just a few years — and remember he retired in 1980, stepped aside in 1980 — that he was probably hopeful, as some were in his party, that there might be change coming, that the election that would be happening in 1981 or 1982 might see change and he might have the chance to sit on the government side for awhile.

And members in this House will know there are members on both sides who have had a shared experience of serving in opposition and serving in government, and there are advantages to both. There are things that commend both positions in this House on either side of the aisle and to your left and to your right, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I think it's fair to say that there is the greater opportunity to contribute to public life, to help make changes that you believe in your heart that should be made or decisions that should be made if you're sitting to the right of the dais, if you're sitting on the government benches.

And so it was in this context that Mr. Larter decided to make way — I believe the member for Thunder Creek would remember this well — to make way for a new leader of the political party at the time, Mr. Devine. And I think the thought is typically that when that happens, the calculation is that I'm going to step aside, notwithstanding the fact that it might not be my first choice, because I think it's the right thing to do and I represent a constituency where there's a pretty good shot that the new leader will win in that riding. And so that's what he decided to do in 1980. I'm sure he consulted with his executive and with his family and he made this difficult choice. And he sacrificed some of, obviously, I'm sure what were his own objectives and ambitions so that someone else, so the leader of his party could run in his constituency.

And Mr. Devine did run in that constituency and was unsuccessful as I recall, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So that would have probably been even a little bit more difficult for Mr. Larter to have realized that he stepped away from this job, and the person that replaced him was not only not the leader of his party but it was a member of the government side of the opposition party.

And yet I know that I've heard certainly that he continued to work for and toward a change that then did happen in 1982 when Mr. Devine did win in that constituency and became the Premier of Saskatchewan as a result. So notwithstanding all that he did as the local MLA and with his pre-political life and post-political life, I think it's important to recognize someone that would make that sacrifice. Obviously it was for a partisan view he believed in, but I think it's fair to say that that kind of sacrifice can be recognized by all members of the House when someone's prepared to step aside and allow for someone else to run in their stead.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, making way again for those who would want to put some more direct comments on the record, I move the following motion:

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

Robert "Bob" Larter, who passed away on December 26, 2015, was a Member of the Legislative Assembly from 1975 to 1980. He represented the constituency of Estevan for the Progressive Conservative Party.

Mr. Larter was born on January 16, 1925 in Belle Plaine. Mr. Larter was raised in Regina where he received his primary and secondary education. He later studied at the Banff School of Fine Arts and the Chicago Vocational College. In 1960 his family moved to Estevan and he became an owner of a farm implement business.

After his political career, Mr. Larter was named as the agent general for Saskatchewan in London, England. He was responsible for promoting international trade and bringing foreign investment into Saskatchewan from the United Kingdom and Europe.

Mr. Larter is survived and sadly missed by his four children, Kea, Bob Jr., Susan, Jim, and their families.

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

The Deputy Speaker: — The Premier has moved a motion of condolence for Robert "Bob" Larter. Will the Assembly take the motion as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to enter into the condolence motion to address the passing of Mr. Bob Larter here today. As has been mentioned, Mr. Larter is survived by his four children, Kea, Bob Jr., Susan, Jim, and their families, as well as two sisters, Dode and Darlyne.

As has been referenced, and as many would know, Mr. Larter

represented the constituency of Estevan for the PC [Progressive Conservative] Party from 1975 through to 1980. As was shared by the Premier here today — with, I'm sure, some understandings of that process at that time — he made the decision to allow his leader to advance in that seat. And he was raised in Regina as well. I understand he received his primary and secondary education in Regina, later attending the Banff School of Fine Arts and the Chicago Vocational College.

I understand that Mr. Larter served with the navy from 1942 and served until 1945. I'd like to offer special thanks for that service. And I understand Mr. Larter moved to Estevan in 1960 with his family and became an owner of a farm implement business, Double "R" down in Estevan, and was very active in the business life of Estevan as someone owning that business and growing that business.

Now following the service of Mr. Larter, I understand that he was appointed and served as agent general for Saskatchewan in London, England, and that through that work certainly had responsibility and focus on promoting international trade and bringing United Kingdom and European investments here to Saskatchewan.

As I mentioned before, Mr. Larter was definitely involved in the business community of Estevan. He was the president of the chamber of commerce in Estevan, and president of the Saskatchewan-Manitoba Implement Dealers Association in 1970. He served as president of the Estevan Shrine Club, and he served as well as an alderman within Estevan in 1966. So we have somebody that's served their province through their constituency on the floor of this Legislative Assembly and has served in many economic and business ways as well.

I'd like to quote just a little portion of his maiden speech, sort of characterizing on what's in the best interest of the public or doing what's in the best interests of the public, from March 16th, 1976:

I feel I should make it abundantly clear to all Members in this House that should our caucus make decisions at any time and feel at another time that our decision in caucus has been wrong and not in the public interest, then certainly under our democratic process we will always reserve the right to make a change on that decision.

And just pulling a quote as well from a story from 1979 when he sold his implement dealership that he, I understand, very proudly grew in Estevan, he was quoted as saying, "I'd like to think we've played a part in the growth of the agriculture industry in this province." Well I can say to the Larter family that I think most certainly that would be the case, that both through his ownership of that implement dealership and the growth of it that he played a very important role within the growth of the agribusiness here in Saskatchewan, as well as through his role as agent general for Saskatchewan.

[15:15]

And to the family of Bob Larter, we share our condolences and our care. We offer our thanks for supporting his service, and extend the same to Mr. Larter who has passed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Well the stories that you've heard today about Bob Larter are all so true. Now when he was sworn into this Assembly, I was six years old, so I must admit I didn't know Bob Larter in my younger years. But my dad in fact knew him very well and worked on his campaign back in those days, which I think is something I spoke about in my maiden speech, how some of my political passion has come from, you know, the way you're brought up and your family's beliefs.

So I watched my dad in those years spend time in the campaign offices and in the constituency offices of Bob Larter, and then of course further on when we moved on to Grant Devine. So as the Premier has already mentioned, you know, thank you so much for the service he's given and the way he stepped aside so humbly so that someone else could serve and go on to be the Premier of Saskatchewan.

So I actually had the pleasure of getting to know Mr. Larter the past few years through the Legion at different ceremonies and stuff that he would attend, and at times when he was receiving awards himself. I got the chance to sit and talk with him, and one of the things I told him was that this is something that I'm interested in doing. And in fact Doreen Eagles was with me that day, and she was standing right next to me. And he looked at her and he looked at me and he said, well you've got big shoes to fill. So it was . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And fancy ones, as another member would say. But he had a great respect for her and a great respect for politics as a whole.

So the city of Estevan was very lucky to have him as a member, as both a business member, and that's where he chose to raise his family. You've heard everything he's done as far as, you know, serving in the war, being on city council, being over in London — several roles that he's played throughout his history.

So I'd just like to say he will be dearly missed in the city of Estevan by both his family and the citizens. Thank you.

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

Mr. Michelson: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take just a few minutes and talk about the late Bob Larter myself. I was a constituent of his when he got elected in that first . . . And at the risk of showing my age compared to the member from Estevan, I remember that election. And in my thoughts, Mr. Larter really wasn't ready to serve at that point because of the political landscape of the day.

But you didn't have to talk to him very long and you realized that here is a man of leadership, a man of very much appreciated sincerity that really could turn the people's minds. And you could understand why he would have been chosen as the MLA for Estevan — a very likeable gentleman, very fair, and very fair in his business practices, and very helpful. He was very involved in the community and had a lot of influence in the community with the Chamber of Commerce and different business associations, and with that sincerity showed a leadership that is very hard to find in a lot of aspects.

So we got to know him through that initial campaign and really became very strong supporters of him because of his beliefs, because of his ingenuity, because of his ethics. And I'd like to just go down on record saying that he brought out the best in people. He certainly brought out the encouragement and the influence of his personality when he talked to us on that first election. And I'd like to just extend my condolences to his family and thank him for his services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask leave for a final motion of condolence.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Premier has asked leave for a final motion of condolence. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Larry Wayne Birkbeck

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's an honour again to be putting a few words on the record in regard to the memory and the service of Larry Birkbeck.

Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had a great interest in politics through the years that Mr. Birkbeck served in this Legislative Assembly. I think I would have been even a summer student working in the Legislative Building when he was serving, not only as the MLA for Moosomin, but also as the Legislative Secretary for the Minister of Health, and perhaps at the time, it was the Minister of Social Services.

And again as I pointed out with respect to Mr. Larter, this was a time of great political interest, heightened political debate in the province of Saskatchewan. And unlike Mr. Larter, Mr. Birkbeck had the advantage and had the opportunity to see government, to see his own personal service from both sides of the Assembly, first as an opposition member elected in '75, and then sitting on the government benches from 1982 to 1986 and having the chance to perhaps more directly contribute to decisions that we all have the opportunity to make, to influence decisions that are made on behalf of our constituents and the people of the province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the case of Mr. Birkbeck, his political interest most assuredly continued after his time in this legislature was complete. I can remember reading a number of letters to the editor that Mr. Birkbeck would write very, very regular. And I note the member for Cannington is nodding in agreement, and I note that you are too, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I can quite honestly tell members of the House that there was some parts of those letters and maybe even in some cases the entirety of those letters that I'd find myself in agreement with, and then there were some that perhaps I didn't agree with. And there were parts and whole letters that I would have taken issue with and had the chance to engage in some spirited discussion and debate with Mr. Birkbeck.

But his again was an example of public service, both before, during, and after his time in this Legislative Assembly. And we are, I think, we are all obligated on an occasion such as this, as we have done with those that we have honoured prior to Mr. Birkbeck, to thank him and to thank his family and his friends for sharing him into public life. And so, Mr. Speaker, I want to do that quite solemnly today.

Eleven years is a long time to serve in the Legislative Assembly, to interrupt one's life and offer up themselves in public service and to the scrutiny of this place. Mr. Birkbeck was prepared and I think even happy to do that, not just during his time here but after. Even if some disagreed with his views, he was courageous in presenting them in a public way.

And so I just want to say, on behalf of this side of the legislature, but on behalf of the province of Saskatchewan, thank you to Mr. Birkbeck's family and friends for sharing with the province and allowing him to serve and give a legacy here to this place. And so, Mr. Speaker, to make way for others who also may want to comment, I move:

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

Larry Wayne Birkbeck, who passed away on August 29, 2016, was a member of this Legislative Assembly from 1975 through to 1986. He represented the constituency of Moosomin for the Progressive Conservative Party. He served as the Legislative Secretary to the ministers of Health and Social Services.

Mr. Birkbeck was born on October the 9th, 1943 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and he was raised near Welwyn, Saskatchewan. After completing his secondary education, he operated a dairy farm.

After his political career, Mr. Birkbeck established a consulting business. He compiled many documents on the ambulance industry, seniors' care, housing, and the hotel industry. He served as the federal-provincial liaison officer for the Saskatchewan Emergency Measures Organization and Emergency Preparedness Canada, and he sat on the municipal boundary committee for the Saskatchewan Municipal Board and was a member of the Board of Revenue Commissioners.

Mr. Birkbeck is survived and sadly missed by his wife, Debra, his seven children, and their families.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy to

members of the bereaved family.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Premier has moved the motion of condolence for Larry Wayne Birkbeck. Will the members take the motion as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to enter into this condolence motion and to pay tribute and thanks and condolence with respect to Larry Birkbeck. Certainly he's survived by his wife, Debra, seven children: Daniel, Pamela, Christopher, Shawn, Jay, Brendan, Tyler; two stepchildren, Danielle and Kevin; and 11 grandchildren.

As has been referenced, Mr. Birkbeck grew up near Welwyn, Saskatchewan. He represented the constituency of Moose Jaw for the PC Party from 1975 to 1986. He served as the Legislative Secretary to the Minister of Health and Social Services. Before his service he operated a dairy farm until his political career, and following his service he established a consulting business, Venus Consulting, and served as the federal-provincial liaison officer for the Saskatchewan Emergency Measures Organization and Emergency Preparedness Canada. So certainly service on many fronts that also extended through to the Municipal Boundary Committee for the Saskatchewan Municipal Board and was a member of the Board of Revenue Commissioners.

I understand that Mr. Birkbeck also had hobbies of skiing and horseback riding. Certainly we continued to read Mr. Birkbeck's letters to the editor across Saskatchewan for many years following his service. In fact I just pulled up, I believe, his last post on Birkbeck's Blog. This was posted on Wednesday, March 30th, 2011, and it's titled "Last Letter:"

I've been writing in many papers for nearly two decades. The time has come to move on with my writing. The following is a transcript of my last letter:

March 30th, 2011

Dear Editor,

For nearly two decades I have submitted "Letters to the Editor" on various issues. Over the last few years, papers across the country received these letters with the majority going to Saskatchewan weekly papers. It has been interesting writing on issues of importance. It is important for people to have a range of views on the issues.

There is respect for papers that allow their readers to submit letters. It is a service vital to the principles of free speech. Appreciation goes to all these papers. You have earned the respect of your readers.

Writing will always be important, but it will take a different form in the future. Thank you to the papers and to their readers for respectfully accommodating these letters.

Someone once said it is better to write for your self and have no public than to write for the public and have no self. For this and other reasons, it's time to move on to . . . [others].

Yours truly,

Larry Birkbeck

And I know in pulling from the *Leader-Post* when he was relaying his reasons to choose to not seek re-election, I quote:

I determine my future. No one else ever has and ever will. Politics is a competitive business. Ten years ago, no one else was interested in running, today there is. This makes me feel good.

And a final quote: "It was my goal to be like that great Canadian from Prince Albert, John Diefenbaker, who was a true constituency man." It sort of defines how he viewed his service.

To the Birkbeck family, we send our care and, too, our condolences. We thank them for their involvement in his service, and we thank Mr. Larry Birkbeck for his service also. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion of condolence as moved by the Premier for Larry Wayne Birkbeck?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I request leave to move a motion of transmittal.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has requested leave to move a motion of transmittal. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

TRANSMITTAL MOTION

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to move the following motion:

That, notwithstanding rule 8(2) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, transmit an audio-video record of the tributes together with the verbatim record and the *Votes and Proceedings* to the bereaved families in memory of the deceased members.

I so move.

[15:30]

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved a motion:

That, notwithstanding rule 8(2) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, transmit an audio-video record of the tributes, together with the verbatim record and *Votes and Proceedings* to the bereaved families in memory of the deceased members.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 40

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 40 — *The Interpretation Amendment Act, 2016/Loi modificative de 2016 sur l'interprétation*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And as always it is my great honour to be able to enter into the debate on the bills and the legislative agenda of the government of Saskatchewan. This bill is remarkably short and yet has long arms and legs, Mr. Speaker. And it's a very important bill that I think will actually alter how we view our Crown corporations here in Saskatchewan. And I think it's one that's worthy of great debate and at great length, and certainly we need to take a very close look at what the government is attempting to do here, what they say they're attempting to do, and what the real impact of this bill will be.

We had a very brief explanation by the minister when he introduced this bill yesterday, or when he spoke to it in the second reading. And what he's basically telling us is that we need clarity, Mr. Speaker. I couldn't agree with him more. I mean clarity is something that is in short order from this government on the best of days. And so as far as that goes, yes, we would certainly appreciate to have more clarity from the government. Unfortunately, I think what this bill is doing is actually muddying the water way more than it needs to be and I think with some reasons that we can only suspect why the government is attempting to do this.

He says that there's this great need in the province of Saskatchewan to define or clarify what the definition of "privatization" is. Mr. Speaker, in the course of my comments today, I'm going to provide the Assembly with a number of definitions of "privatization". And certainly it is a word that has a very complex history, a complex meaning, particularly in the last 40 years or 30 years globally. So yes, the word

“privatization” is very complex and can mean many different things. The definition that this government has chosen speaks volumes to its political agenda.

I think that the first thing I find really offensive about this bill is the misuse of an interpretation Act to accomplish a government political agenda. Most lawyers would know that *The Interpretation Act* is a very sacrosanct piece of legislation that has a very specific purpose, and that is to identify common terms throughout legislation and give a meaning of something like “year” or “person” or “minister” — very germane words in relation to the mechanics of government, the bureaucratic side of government.

But it’s very clear to me that the attempt being undertaken by this government with our Saskatchewan interpretation Act is anything but following the intent of *The Interpretation Act*. And certainly I would expect that the Law Society of Saskatchewan is going to express concern on this, first and foremost because it really does change what the purpose of an interpretation Act is. Public policy doesn’t belong in *The Interpretation Act*. And I’ll probably come back to that over and over. That’s not a place for a government to introduce a privatization agenda, in *The Interpretation Act*.

It’s weird. It’s curious. And when he says he’s trying to clarify by using a definition that is used by the World Bank, he certainly hasn’t given us where that citation is. And it doesn’t exist on the Internet. So I don’t know where this World Bank definition comes from, and I do want the minister to provide us with his source for that particular quote that he gave in the House yesterday. He said, “Mr. Deputy Speaker, the definition is based on the World Bank definition of privatization.”

I did a search and there was no definition that I could find. Now maybe my Google skills aren’t all that good, and *mea culpa* for that. But I think it’s important for him to share with this House and with the people of Saskatchewan where that definition came from and exactly what that definition is.

I did do a search, myself. I was able to search every other interpretation Act in the Dominion of Canada and in other Commonwealth countries, Mr. Speaker. And this is what I found as I was going through it. Is there a definition of privatization in the British Columbia interpretation Act? No. Is there a definition of privatization in the Alberta interpretation Act? No there isn’t. Is there a definition of privatization in the interpretation Act for Manitoba? No there isn’t, Mr. Speaker. How about Ontario? Is there a definition of privatization in the Ontario interpretation Act? Well as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, there isn’t.

Let’s try New Brunswick. Is there a definition of privatization in the New Brunswick Act? No there isn’t, Mr. Speaker. Prince Edward Island? No, no definition of privatization in that bill. Newfoundland? Definition of privatization not there, not to be found. Prince Edward Island maybe? No, it’s not there either. I tried Nova Scotia. It was my last try in Canada, actually I didn’t . . . I did look at Nova Scotia. There’s no definition there. And I even tried Quebec, which has laws in French, but they actually have convenient translations. And guess what, Mr. Speaker? In Quebec there is no definition of privatization to be found in the interpretation Act.

So I thought, well what about England and Wales? I’ll check that out. And I looked in the interpretation Act for England and Wales and I just couldn’t find the definition of privatization in that bill. So I thought, well maybe New Zealand? We could try there. And guess what, Mr. Speaker? There was no definition of privatization in the interpretation Act from New Zealand.

An Hon. Member: — World leading.

Ms. Sproule: — World leading. Yes, once again the Sask Party is out front, setting the pace for the world in terms of how to change definitions to say something that they’re not. And if clarity is to change the definition to make it something that it isn’t, or something that only one particular aspect of the world . . . The World Bank has its own views on things, and we all know that, Mr. Speaker. That is not providing clarity. I think it’s hiding behind *The Interpretation Act* to achieve government political goals, policy goals, that have nothing to do with clarity in the least, Mr. Speaker.

And so this is something that I find really disturbing, that this government is choosing at this point in its mandate . . . And you know, we hear them say, oh well, it’s not going to happen today. It’s not going to happen tomorrow. What are you getting so excited about? Mr. Speaker, this is going to change fundamentally the way our government in Saskatchewan operates, and it has the potential to fundamentally change our relationship with our Crown corporations. That is, last time I checked, pretty important to the people of Saskatchewan. It’s something we’re proud of and is something that I think we have a proud heritage of.

So for a government to lack the courage and to be cowardly enough to enact this kind of change, without facing it full on in the Crown protection Act that they agreed to unanimously in 2004, is nothing short of cowardice, Mr. Speaker. And this is something that I think we need to speak out loudly against, and we need to point out to this government that its misleading ways, its deceptive ways, and its cowardly ways are not acceptable to the people of Saskatchewan.

I have a whole lot of pieces that I want to share with the House this afternoon and into this evening, if I have time. And so I’m just first of all going to start with something that was said by a former Premier. It’s a good story, and I want to start with a story. So this is a story from Allan Blakeney, and it’s from a book called *Public Enterprise in an Era of Change*, edited by Dr. John Allan. And there was a chapter in the book, and it’s called “The History of the Saskatchewan Crown Corporations” by Allan Blakeney. And as you will recall, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Blakeney was Premier of Saskatchewan in most of the ’70s and into the early ’80s. So this is what Mr. Blakeney had to say:

In talking about Saskatchewan Crown corporations, I do not propose to talk about the ideology of Crown corporations, either the ideology that says that Crown corporations are good and therefore we should keep the existing Crowns and have more, or alternatively, the ideology that says Crown corporations are bad, therefore we should sell SaskEnergy or SGI or whatever.

I believe that human affairs are complex. I believe that they are best dealt with by applying one’s mind to the

circumstances at hand, and arriving at what is the best course of action for the people whose interests we seek to represent. Thus, I think that, when deciding whether Saskatchewan needs more Crown corporations or fewer, one should ask for whose benefit the Crown corporations were organized; who they benefit now and in the future; and who would benefit if they were dismantled; and assess the situation case by case.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that's something that we need to do here today as well. He goes on to say:

I do not favour the thinking which starts from an ideological straightjacket, one which says that government enterprise is bad, therefore Crown corporations should be disposed of or, conversely, government enterprise is inherently good, therefore the existing Crown corporations should be retained and others should be established. I do not believe that Crown corporations are inherently good or inherently bad. They are a tool. They are a tool whereby people acting through their government seek to achieve social objectives or economic objectives or both.

I believe that this is how the great bulk of Saskatchewan Crown corporations came into being. Many Crown corporations were brought into being by Conservative governments, Liberal governments, and NDP governments. Many of them have been disposed of by Conservative governments, Liberal governments, and NDP governments. In most cases, this was done because it was thought to make sense if one was acting for the benefit of the people of Saskatchewan.

In the past, governments of all political hues have, to use a facetious phrase, "laid aside their principles and done what was right," and I hope we can continue to do this. Accordingly, I reject out of hand the ideological, broad-brush approach to Crown corporations, past, present, or future.

I want to say that I also reject the false argument that some people use when they are talking about Crown corporations. They say that the Crown corporations have served the people of Saskatchewan well in the past; but things have now changed; and, therefore, Crown corporations should be disposed of. They say this without in any way attempting to establish just why the changes, which undoubtedly have come about, in this decade as they have in every other decade, dictate the sale of Crown corporations now, when changes in past times did not. The mere fact of change is an argument for nothing. If I may use a paradoxical statement, change is a constant. It is only if a particular change dictates a particular course of action that we should take note of change.

I am in some ways one of the many Saskatchewan citizens who have received services from many public enterprises throughout our lifetimes.

I have worked in this city as a public servant and as a lawyer engaged in the private practice of law. The first house I ever owned was one that I built, along with others, on the 31 block Montague Street. When I woke up in the

morning, I noted that the house was nice and warm. I liked the natural gas provided by the then Saskatchewan Power Corporation. I got out of bed and struggled to the bathroom and used the plumbing facilities provided by the City of Regina and the water facilities provided by the City of Regina and the hot water provided by SaskPower's natural gas.

I was conscious of the fact that my house had been paid for largely by a mortgage provided through the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and the property and fire insurance on the house was provided by Saskatchewan Government Insurance and I drove a car that was insured by Saskatchewan Government Insurance. I drove out of my driveway onto a street which was provided by the City of Regina and maintained and snowplowed by the City of Regina. I was a member of Sherwood Co-op Association, obtained from the Consumers Co-op Refinery Limited. My children went off to the nearby school provided by the Regina Public School Board, and I went for some time to a job with the Government of Saskatchewan and for some time with a private law firm in downtown Regina. My children were born, or three of them were, in hospitals owned by the City of Regina and the Government of Saskatchewan. One of the children was born at our home because of circumstances created when people, following ideology almost blindly, opposed a particular government enterprise — the introduction of medical-care insurance, what they called state medicine and what we now call medicare. They were wrong. On the basis of what was best for the people, this was a proper extension of state activity, a proper use of a new Crown corporation.

I am unlikely to be convinced that only the public sector, or only the private sector, can provide goods and services. I believe there is a role for the private sector. After all, I was engaged in the private practice of law. I believe that there is a role for the public sector. I believe that there is a role for the cooperative sector. What we are talking about is the appropriate role for each of these sectors, as well as a private non-profit sector. The appropriate role will change with time and circumstances. The appropriate role will not be ascertained by large dollops of ideology. It will be ascertained by finding out what goods and services we need as individuals and as a community and how we can best provide them for ourselves.

[15:45]

And I'll stop quoting this particular chapter, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Blakeney goes on to talk about a lot of the main Crown corporations but I will speak to some of them later. And I certainly recommend this read for anyone who is interested in having a look at that.

So maybe we could talk now a little bit about different definitions of privatization. There are many, many, many, many in the world, and so we could look at some of those if I can get to those definitions. Just take me a moment here.

Maybe I'll start with an article about . . . Well I'll get to those later because I'm having trouble putting my finger on . . . oh

here we are, “The Meaning of Privatization.” This is an article from . . . by a gentleman named Paul Starr from the Yale Law & Policy Review, and he has a pretty good description of privatization. Now it isn’t one paragraph that you could stick in *The Interpretation Act* because it’s a little more complicated than that, but I will share with the Assembly this particular gentleman’s thoughts about the meaning of privatization. And it is an extensive quote, so I’d certainly be happy to provide Hansard with hard copies if they so desire.

So I’m going to read this section called “Privatization as an Idea.” And this is what Paul Starr has to say:

In the ideological world we inhabit, contesting interests and parties use “public” and “private” not only to describe but also to celebrate and condemn. Any serious inquiry into the meaning of privatization must begin, therefore, by unloading the complex freight that the public-private distinction carries. In this section I analyze, first, the general uses of the public-private distinction and, second, the recent political application of the concept of privatization.

And just an interjection there, Mr. Speaker. You will remember that in the ’80s, that’s when global privatization really took off and got wheels, the concept of privatization of government-owned entities. So I’ll go back to the article now:

A. The Public-Private Distinction and the Concept of Privatization

The terms public and private are fundamental to the language of our law, politics, and social life, but they are the source of continual frustration. Many things seem to be public and private at the same time in varying degrees or in different ways. As a result, we quarrel endlessly about whether some act or institution is really one or the other. We qualify the categories: This group is quasi-public, that one is semi-private. In desperation some theorists announce that the distinction is outdated or so ideologically loaded that it ought to be discarded [not the Sask Party], or that it is a distinction without a difference. Yet the terms can hardly be banished nor ought they. To speak intelligently about modern societies and politics without using the words public and private would be as great an achievement as writing a novel without the word “the.” However, neither is necessarily the sort of achievement that other theorists or novelists would care to imitate.

The frustration with these ubiquitous categories partly arises because public and private are paired to describe a number of related oppositions in our thought. At the core of many uses are the two ideas that public is to private as *open* is to *closed* and that public is to private as the *whole* is to the *part*. In the first sense, we speak of a public place, a public conference, public behavior, making something public, or publishing an article. The private counterparts, from homes to diaries, are private in that access is restricted and visibility reduced. The concepts of publicity and privacy stand in opposition to each other along this dimension of accessibility. Public is to private as the transparent is to the opaque, as the announced is to the concealed. Similarly, a person’s public life is to his or her

private life as the outer is to the inner realm.

On the other hand, when we speak of public opinion, public health, or the public interest, we mean the opinion, health, or interest of the whole of the people as opposed to that of a part, whether a class or an individual. Public in this sense often means “common,” not necessarily governmental. The public-spirited or public-minded citizen is one concerned about the community as a whole. But in the modern world the concepts of governmental and public have become so closely linked that in some contexts they are interchangeable. The state acts for the whole of the society in international relations and makes rules binding on the whole internally. Public thus often means official. In this sense “a public act” is one that carries official status, even if it is secret and therefore not public in the sense of being openly visible. Indeed, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, private originally signified “not holding public office or official position.” As Albert Hirschman points out, this is a meaning that survives in the army “private,” that is, the “ordinary soldier without any rank or position.” Now, of course, private is contrasted with public to characterize that which lies beyond the state’s boundaries, such as the market or the family.

These different contrasts between public and private lead to some apparent conflicts in defining what lies on each side of the boundary. One such conflict concerns the location of the market.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, this is relevant to this conversation:

To an economist, the marketplace is quintessentially private. But to a sociologist or anthropologist concerned with culture, the marketplace is quintessentially public — a sphere open to utter strangers who nonetheless are able to understand the same rules and gestures in what may be a highly ritualized process of exchange. While economists use the public-private distinction to signify the contrast between state and market, analysts of culture — particularly those concerned with the roles and relations of men and women — take the public sphere to include the market as well as politics and contrast them both with the private domain of the family. In this sense, the public-private distinction is sometimes taken to mark out the contested boundaries of the male and female worlds — a usage that takes us back to the notion of the private as being more closed, more shielded from contact and view, than the open encounters of public life . . .

The general meanings of privatization, then, correspond to withdrawals from any of these variously conceived public spheres. Historians and sociologists write about the withdrawal of affective interest and involvement from the sphere of public sociability. For example, in their work on the development of the modern family, Peter Willmott and Michael Young argue that as the modern household became equipped with larger homes, private cars, televisions, and other resources, more time and capital came to be invested in the private interior of the family and less in public taverns, squares, and streets. Similarly, Richard Sennett suggests that since the eighteenth century modern society has seen a decline of public culture and

sociability, a . . . [broadening] of public life and public space, a privatization of emotion. Such arguments shade into a second meaning of privatization: a shift of individual involvements from the whole to the part — that is, from public action to private concerns — the kind of privatization that Hirschman describes as one swing in a public-private cycle of individual action. In this sort of public-to-private transition, the swing is not from sociability to intimacy but from civic concern to the pursuit of self-interest.

Privatization can also signify another kind of withdrawal from the whole to the part: an appropriation by an individual or a particular group of some good formerly available to the entire public or community. Like the withdrawal of involvement, privatization in the sense of private appropriation has obvious implications for the distribution of welfare.

From these meanings it is but a short step to the sense of privatization as a withdrawal from the state, not of individual involvements, but of assets, functions, indeed entire institutions. Public policy is concerned with privatization at this level. But the two forms, the privatization of individual involvements and the privatization of social functions and assets, are certainly related, at least by ideological kinship. A confidence that pursuit of private gain serves the larger social order leads to approval for both self-interested behaviour and private enterprise.

Thus far I have been . . . [speaking] about privatization as if both spheres, public and private, were already constituted. But in a longer perspective, their constitution and separation represent complementary processes.

I'm going to move on a little bit to the second part of this discussion, where he talks about the political meaning of privatization. So I'll pick it up there:

B. The Political Meaning of Privatization

The term privatization did not gain wide circulation in politics until the late 1970s and early 1980s. With the rise of conservative governments in Great Britain, the United States, and France, privatization has come primarily to mean two things: . . . any shift of activities or functions from the state to the private sector; and, more specifically, . . . any shift of the *production* of goods and services from public to private.

So there's a definition right there, Mr. Speaker, of privatization that has not been used by this government for its bill. I'll go on to quote:

Besides directly producing services, governments establish the legal framework of societies and regulate social and economic life, and they finance services that are privately produced and consumed. The first, broader definition of privatization includes all reductions in the regulatory and spending activity of the state. The second, more specific definition of privatization . . . [includes] deregulation and spending cuts except when they result in a shift from

public to private in the production of goods and services. This more focused definition is the one that I shall use here. It leaves open the possibility that privatization may not actually result in less government spending and regulation — indeed, may even unexpectedly increase them.

Several further points about my definition need clarification. First, the public sector here includes agencies administered as part of the state and organizations owned by it, such as state enterprises and independent public authorities like the British Broadcasting Corporation or the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. In the private sector I include not only commercial firms but also informal and domestic activities, voluntary associations, cooperatives, and private nonprofit corporations.

Secondly, in the definition I am using, privatization refers to shifts from the public to the private sector, not shifts within sectors.

And I think that's part of the confusion, that this clarity that the minister's advocating is actually creating more confusion. So I am going to say that again:

Secondly, in the definition I am using, [and this is the author, Paul Starr] privatization refers to shifts from the public to the private sector, not shifts within sectors.

So in the sense of saying that privatization means anything in a controlling share in a corporation, that doesn't fit at all within this particular definition of privatization at all because what we see here is a shift within the sector itself. There will be a shift within a Crown corporations of ownership from a 100 per cent share to a 51 per cent share, and that has all kinds of legal implications that I'll get into later. So I'll continue on with the quote:

Thus the conversion of the state agency into an autonomous public authority or state-owned enterprise is not privatization, though it may well put the enterprise on a commercial footing.

And I think we see that with a lot of our Crowns here, Mr. Speaker. Carrying on with the quote:

This was the objective, for example, of the conversion of the United States Post Office into a public corporation, the United States Postal Service, in 1971. Similarly, the conversion of a private nonprofit organization into a profit-making firm also is not privatization, though it, too, may orient the firm toward the market. Both of these intrasectoral changes might be described as commercialization; in the case of public agencies, commercialization is sometimes a preliminary stage to privatization.

And we certainly saw that, Mr. Speaker, with the commercialization of our land titles registry not too long ago. Carrying on with the quote:

Third, shifts from publicly to privately produced services may result not only from a deliberate government action,

such as a sale of assets, but also from the choices of individuals or firms that a government is unwilling or unable to satisfy or control. In many countries . . .

And this is something that we need to watch out for, Mr. Speaker.

In many countries, private demand for education, health care or . . . income has outstripped public provision. As a result, private schooling, medical care, and pensions have grown to relatively larger proportions. This is *demand-driven privatization*. When privatization is a demand-driven process, it does not require an absolute reduction in publicly produced services. Stagnation or slow growth in the public sector may be the cause. In some socialist societies, the growth of an “underground” economy represents a form of privatization that is not a planned development (though it may well result from development planning). In other words, as a process, privatization encompasses more institutional changes than those brought about by self-conscious privatization policies. It seems useful, then, to distinguish instances of privatization according to whether they are prominently *policy-* or *demand-driven*.

[16:00]

And in this case, Mr. Speaker, it may be a little bit of both. We know that this is definitely a policy-driven move by this government, that they are looking to access some sources of funds. And the Premier himself has said, you know, the Auto Fund might want to invest in the Crown corporations, a very interesting concept when you think that a Crown is investing in a Crown. And how that will affect the other minority shareholders is kind of mind-boggling.

But also there's a demand-driven aspect to this because we know that there's slow growth in the public sector. We know there's stagnation in the revenues that this government has been ripping through for the last 10 years. And so they're kind of in a pickle, Mr. Speaker. They've put themselves in that position and now they're stuck. So this is, as I said before, is a bit of a backdoor entry into dealing with a problem that they've created for themselves, but it will have significant long-term effects on the entire province and in future generations here in Saskatchewan.

So moving on to the fourth item when we're talking about the political meaning of privatization, I'll quote again:

Fourth, if one shifts attention from the sphere of production to the sphere of consumption, one may alternatively define privatization as the substitution of private goods for public goods. A public good, in the economist's sense, has two distinguishing properties: One person's consumption does not preclude another's; and excluding anyone from consumption is costly, if not impossible. The prototypical example is fresh air. A public good need not be produced by government. A broadcast television program is a public good even if it is provided by a commercially owned station; but videotape is not, nor is programming on subscription cable services. Any shift toward these forms of nonbroadcast television represents a privatization of

consumption, even if the local cable service is municipally owned.

Depending on whether one is talking about the locus of production or the forms of consumption, privatization can mean rather different things. In regard to production, “privatization of health care” might mean a transfer of medical facilities from public to private ownership; regarding consumption, it might refer to a shift in expenditures from public health (environmental protection, vaccinations, etc.) to individual medical care. Similarly, “privatization of transportation” might refer to the conversion of an urban bus system from public to commercial ownership; or it might mean a shift in ridership from buses to private automobiles, regardless of whether the bus company is municipal or commercial. Strictly speaking, public transportation is not a public good, since exclusion is possible and only one person at a time can sit in a seat; however, because buses and trains are open to the public at large, common carriers are a distinctly public form of consumption compared to private cars. More generally, the historical process described by Willmott and Young — the concentration of consumption activities in the home — represented a shift toward more privatized forms of consumption. This shift has been the source of much criticism of contemporary society, as in John Kenneth Galbraith's famous contrast of private opulence and public squalor in *The Affluent Society*. In this discussion, whenever referring specifically to a shift from public goods to private goods, or from common carriers to private carriers, I use the phrase “privatization of consumption.” Otherwise, I take privatization to mean a shift in the locus of the production of services from public to private.

Four types of government policies can bring about such a shift. First, the cessation of public programs and disengagement of government from specific kinds of responsibilities represent an *implicit* form of privatization. At a less drastic level, the restriction of publicly produced services in volume, availability, or quality may lead to a shift by consumers toward privately produced and purchased substitutes (called “privatization by attrition” when a government lets public services run down).

And that's certainly something I think we've seen with something like STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company], Mr. Speaker.

Second, privatization may take the *explicit* form of transfers of public assets to private ownership, through sale or lease of public land, infrastructure, and enterprises. Third, instead of directly producing some service, the government may finance private services, for example, through contracting-out or vouchers.

And that's certainly a method that we've seen this government attempt with its efforts to privatize imaging services for our health care system, our public health care system. So that's a type of privatization right there.

Finally, privatization may result from the deregulation of entry into activities previously treated as public

monopolies.

And I think in the case of SaskTel, you know, for many, many, many years it did have a monopoly here in Saskatchewan, but deregulation has caused it to enter into the commercial sphere and to act in competition with other companies. And I think it has performed admirably well. And I'll get into some of the benefits of having these Crowns on an economic level and from a taxpayers' level in a few minutes.

So I think that's as far as I want to go in terms of this particular article and the meaning of privatization. This discussion of the definition of privatization is actually, you know, 20 pages long. So it certainly wouldn't work for insertion into an interpretation Act which, as I pointed out earlier, is an extraordinary, extraordinary deviation from what every other interpretation Act has in its definitions clause. So I think that's something that we really need to pay attention to and ask, what exactly is the government getting at here when they're going to do something so drastically different from what every other jurisdiction does?

Now I was thinking about the process. Once the government inserts its pseudo-clarified definition of privatization, which I take exception to, and they start selling off shares in individual Crown corporations — let's say SGI for example — how is that going to work? How is that going to look? And how are the shareholders going to be treated?

One of the things I think that comes up right away from a legal perspective is, what happens to the rights of minority shareholders? The first question is, does *The Business Corporations Act* even apply now to this corporation, the Crown corporation? Because we have individual private shareholders which are normally governed under the provisions of *The Business Corporations Act*. So that's my first question is, does *The Business Corporations Act* extend now to this new privatization, or will the government have to introduce new bills each time they privatize any one of these Crowns or don't privatize it when they sell off 49 per cent of the shares? What's the legal treatment of these shareholders? Because as you know, Mr. Speaker, there is a large body of law and legal interpretation in jurisprudence that deals with securities, that deals with shareholders' rights, majority shareholders' rights, interpreting unanimous shareholder agreements, and the like. And this is a very complex area of legal practice and not one that I have a lot of experience with. But what I do know is that it's complicated. And when you now are having this . . . Is it quasi-private or semi-public? I don't know which one it is, Mr. Speaker.

I'm just going to talk a little bit about what minority shareholder rights might be. And I'm taking this from an article that came off the Internet from a law company called Nelligan O'Brien Payne, and this was published on August 16th, 2011. And in this case, corporations . . . It talks a little bit about minority shareholder rights. So what is the rights of minority shareholders?

Corporations operate on a system of majority rule [and I'm quoting here] and this necessitates the codification of minority shareholder rights to ensure that the interests of the minority are protected and not overlooked by the majority. A shareholder . . . [owning] a substantial amount

of shares within a corporation has tremendous power to orchestrate corporate activity, potentially at the expense of minority shareholders.

So right away we know we're going to have a majority shareholder here. This is the Government of Saskatchewan or the Crown in right of Saskatchewan is going to be the majority shareholder. So already it will have a tremendous power to orchestrate the activity of that corporation, potentially at the expense of the minority shareholders.

So first of all, who wants to invest in that kind of company if you don't have protections? You need to know if those protections are going to be afforded to these minority shareholders. Now there are laws in place. And this particular article comes from Ontario, and so they talk about what kind of rights the minority shareholders have. In particular, the main right that minority shareholders have is about when a special resolution is required for the company.

So what is a special resolution? Well normally in almost all legislation across Canada, it requires a two-thirds vote. So in this case the minorities will have the right to cast a vote or at least some of them will have a say because it needs two-thirds of the vote. So if the Crown owns 51 per cent, then the minority shareholders can control these special resolutions because 66 per cent is required. Two-thirds is required. So that makes me wonder, are we willing as Crowns to give away that power to change fundamental aspects of the corporation to the minority shareholders?

And as ratepayers in SaskPower, I'm not sure that's something I would be prepared to do. Or as, you know, a person who's a SaskTel subscriber or get my automobile insurance plates from SGI or maybe SOCO [Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation] and crop insurance, all of these Crowns, I'm not sure as citizens whether we're prepared to give up some of our rights as the Crown in right of Saskatchewan to minority shareholders whose purpose for investing is completely unrelated to the establishment of why that Crown was established in the first place.

So this article goes on to say, and I'll quote:

A special resolution is defined under the *CBCA* [which is the *Canada Business Corporations Act*] as a resolution passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the votes cast by the shareholders who voted in respect of that resolution or signed by all the shareholders entitled to vote. It is an effective way for minority shareholders to have a profound impact on corporate decision-making.

So, Mr. Speaker, are we suggesting now that we are going to hand over to minority shareholders in our Crowns "... a profound impact on corporate decision-making?" This is something I think we need to think through very carefully before this bill gets passed, before this government proceeds with muddying the waters on the definition of privatization. They're opening the door to this, and I'm not sure that they've thought through the consequences. And I'm concerned about that.

Now here's examples, and I'll read again from the article:

A common example of when a special resolution is required is when a corporation wishes to make certain amendments to its articles of incorporation, which are the primary rules governing the management of the corporation.

And in our case, there would obviously be the founding legislation for each one of these particular Crowns. So again we're not sure whether the law applies or not and that again is part of the uncertainty that the minister is creating by this unprecedented move.

So examples — I'll continue — of the quote:

Such amendments which require special resolution include, but are not limited to:

- Changing the name of the corporation;
- Changing the province in which the registered office is located;
- Changing the maximum and minimum numbers of shares the corporation may issue;
- Changing the designation of all or any of its shares; and
- Increasing or decreasing the number of directors.

So we have a situation here where the government may decide to privatize 49 per cent of the shares of SaskPower, and then they decide we're going to change the designation of those shares from a dividend-paying share to a non-voting share, for example. I don't know if that would ever happen but that's an example.

In this case the minority shareholders are now going to have a say in how the articles of the SaskPower Corporation, the founding principles of SaskPower Corporation, are going to be followed. So we need some clarity from the minister on that and whether or not the laws of corporations are going to even apply because if they do, we're handing a lot of control over to the minority shareholders.

And he talks about control as being the defining element of his definition. He's not talking about control in all its senses. And I think that is also shortchanging the people of Saskatchewan.

So I'll go on, Mr. Speaker:

The rights of minority shareholders are also protected under the *CBCA* and *OBCA* [and that would be the *Ontario Business Corporations Act*] . . . where a corporation intends to sell, lease or exchange all or substantially all of its property outside the ordinary course of business. In this type of situation a special resolution must be obtained in order to carry out such a sale, lease or exchange.

[16:15]

So in this case we may see — I'm trying to think — the Sask Gaming Corporation decide to sell or lease or exchange all of its property. Now again we have a 51 per cent share or majority share, but these minority shareholders, under the special resolution votes, have actually a say in whether or not the Gaming Corporation would be able to carry out those activities.

So fundamental decisions relating to the activities of our

Crowns will be controlled by the minority shareholders in the event that they form part of the two-thirds majority that are required for these special resolution votes. Very, very concerning, Mr. Speaker.

One other remedy, and I'm going to speak about this at length later on, is the oppression remedy. This is another valuable right that minority shareholders have whenever they are dealing with a majority shareholder.

And there's a very good paper written by one of the Saskatchewan's lawyers that I'll get to in a bit where he goes into this in quite a bit of detail. But here's what this article has to say:

The oppression remedy is available under the *CBCA* and the *OBCA* and it is one of the most powerful tools that minority shareholders have to protect their rights. The remedy allows a shareholder to commence a claim against the corporation in cases where the actions or omissions of the corporation or its management are oppressive, unfairly prejudicial or unfairly disregard the interests of the shareholder.

The oppression remedy, which is broad in scope, has gained traction in the past decade. Corporations therefore need to consider carefully the impact of its decisions and activities with respect to the rights of minority shareholders.

When faced with an oppression remedy claim the court has wide discretion in choosing appropriate remedies, some of which include:

- An order restraining the conduct complained of;
- An order directing the corporation to purchase the shares of a shareholder;
- An order compensating an aggrieved person; [and]
- An order liquidating and dissolving the corporation.

These orders can have a significant impact on a corporation and are an incentive for corporate owners and directors to act appropriately when making decisions which materially affect the corporation and its shareholders.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a powerful, powerful remedy for minority shareholders and could actually end up in an order liquidating or dissolving the corporation itself if it's not used properly. So this is what we're handing over. When we have Crown corporations that are currently controlled by the government and they hand over 49 per cent or even less, to the tune of 39 per cent even, that we will be giving these minority shareholders certain rights that quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, I think should be alarming to the people of Saskatchewan.

So I'm going to get into the changes or the impacts for corporate shareholders in a little bit. But right now I just want to talk a little bit about SGI as one of our Crown corporations and sort of its role and some of the impacts that this bill will have on some Crown corporations like SGI.

This is an article by Malcolm Bird, Malcolm G. Bird. It's called "The Insuring Crowns: Canada's Public Auto Insurers," and

this was written in the spring of 2013 from the University of British Columbia, *BC Studies*.

So he talks about three Western provinces and the public auto insurers. So in this case, he's talking about ICBC [Insurance Corporation of British Columbia] from British Columbia, SGI from Saskatchewan, and Manitoba Public Insurance or MPI in Manitoba. These are three Crown corporations that continue to provide automobile insurance to the public.

So I'll share some of the thoughts from Mr. Bird as I go forward here.

In this article I examine three Crown corporations — ICBC, SGI, and MPI. I outline both their historical origins and their current condition(s). My central premise is that these three Crowns help to meet a number of specific policy needs of their political masters and that these policy functions have significant political value.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when you're talking about privatizing Crowns in the hybrid way, the new creature that this minister is creating, you have some fundamental conflict in terms of the rights of the minority shareholders and the rights of the public in terms of the majority share. So the clash between minority shareholder rights and our rights as the public is going to be monumental. And I'm not sure how, when you look at something like SGI, how on earth is this going to be reconciled as the minister moves forward with this crazy and I think uncourageous plan, as I mentioned earlier.

So he goes on to say in regards to these three Crowns for auto insurance, he says:

This, in conjunction with the dynamics of decision making in Canadian provincial governments, has insulated them from elimination. Their central value is their capacity to provide consistent prices for automobile insurance over divergent components of the population as well as over a long period of time. I argue that such consistency is more valuable to a government than are any possible gains to be derived from their replacement by private insurance providers operating in a competitive market.

And, Mr. Speaker that raises another question. When you have a monopoly on, for example licence plates for cars, there is no competitive market. So if we're going to privatize up to 49 per cent of SGI, what we are doing is allowing people to be shareholders in monopolies, and we have a monopoly law that doesn't allow that.

So these kinds of things are very, sort of troubling, and I think we need to see how the government has thought this through and how they will deal with some of these monumental problems that will be created by this hybrid, which as far as I can tell doesn't exist anywhere else that I can find. I've looked; I haven't found it. It doesn't mean it doesn't exist, but certainly you would think if the minister's taking inspiration here, that he found inspiration somewhere. Or again is this just a backdoor way of trying to get around the Crown protection Act?

It's hard to say what's going on, but I know there isn't a lot of evidence out there that suggests that this kind of hybrid

corporation can easily deal with all the minority shareholder rights issues that are raised, and certainly with private ownership of monopolies which, as you know, there is a considerable body of law protecting consumers against.

So again, you know, how are these private owners wanting the government to perform? Obviously they're going to want to make money, so does that mean our rates are going to go up? Or how will the rate review panels work for SaskPower and SaskEnergy and for SGI when they could actually be sued by the minority shareholders for not protecting their interests by keeping rates low?

So these are the kinds of concerns that I think, as we go through this process and as the government begins to engage in this behaviour, their ability to deal with them may have to be through amendments to the Crown protection Act — not sure — or through very special pieces of legislation that take them out of the realm of *The Business Corporations Act*, take them out of the realm of *The Income Tax Act*, and take them out of the realm of the monopolies Act. So, I'm struggling with this, Mr. Speaker and I'm not sure that I've heard anything that would give us any kind of answers for that.

So I'll go on and talk a little bit more in terms of this article regarding the public auto insuring Crowns in Western Canada. He talks a little bit about the description and origins of the insuring Crowns, and this is what he says about SGI:

The oldest of the insuring Crowns is Saskatchewan's SGI, created in 1945 by Tommy Douglas's Co-operative Commonwealth Federation government. Public auto insurance started in the first CCF term as a sixty-dollar-per-driver yearly premium to cover uninsured motorists. This social welfare measure was intended to reduce accident-related poverty since, at the time of its inception, fewer than 10 percent of drivers carried auto insurance, and the province had to cope with the growing number of citizens injured from auto-related accidents who did not have access to insurance payouts.

That's hard for us to imagine, Mr. Speaker, is a world where if you couldn't afford auto insurance, you just didn't have it. And if somebody was hurt, you couldn't pay. So we've come a long ways from that. He goes on to describe the corporation:

From its modest beginning, SGI evolved quickly into a full-fledged public insurance firm. Among the other reasons for state intervention in this sector were the relatively high cost for policies for Saskatchewan's residents [So the private sector was too expensive], unfair and unjust selection criteria for potential customers [People were being favoured over other people for insurance], and the fact that 90 percent of insurance policies were then written by eastern-based insurance firms, which meant that significant sums of money were leaving the province. SGI was a product of the Government of Saskatchewan's efforts to diversify the provincial economy through the use of public Crowns and through non-private enterprises such as cooperatives. Its creation met with remarkably little resistance from either the industry or individual citizens within Saskatchewan. On the ideological front, SGI's creation was congruent with the social democratic

philosophy that dominated the CCF . . .

So that's a little bit of the history on SGI. Now he goes into the next . . . A further part of his paper is entitled "Why do the insuring Crowns continue to exist?" And this is what he has to say:

While the creation of these Crowns was a reasonable response to the problems that three governments faced in the insurance sector, and was roughly congruent with the general policy ethos of the time, these factors do not explain their continued existence. To understand their longevity, I now examine governmental decision making within the provincial sphere, the Crowns' contextual and operational functions, and their value to their political masters. I argue that the central reason for their continued public ownership is the interaction between the mechanics of Canadian provincial governments' decision-making processes and the institutional characteristics of this particular sector.

He goes on to say:

It's noteworthy that in two provinces, Manitoba and British Columbia, right-of-centre governments have privatized other public enterprises, most notably Manitoba Telecom Services in 1996 and BC Rail in 2004; and, while British Columbia's Gordon Campbell government discussed introducing "full competition" to the auto insurance market, this promise was never fulfilled.

The next heading is:

Low consistent costs for drivers

The insuring Crowns operate on a non-profit basis. The Crowns' revenues equal the payments made to motorists in order to resolve accident claims, minus administrative costs. This structure allows them to provide low-cost insurance to their clients when compared to the rates charged by private-sector firms in competitive markets.

And again, Mr. Speaker, we run into this beast that's being created here, where 49 per cent of SGI shares, if sold, would have a direct conflict with this desire to keep prices low because, as you know, shareholders' sole purpose is to make money. And that's the actual legal creation that we have when we create shareholders. And the obligation of the corporation to the shareholders is to look out for their best interests, which is to make money.

So in terms of selling off 49 per cent of SGI, what is the minority rights when it comes to profitability, if in fact the policy reason for the existence of SGI is to allow them to provide low-cost insurance to their clients? So who's the client here now, Mr. Speaker? I think this raises a lot of questions that we don't have any answers for.

He goes on to say:

The ability to provide price consistency, based on demographic and geographic factors over a long period of time, translates into real and concrete political value for

their governing masters. The primary concern for any of these governments is for the Crowns to keep insurance prices as low and as consistent as possible for the entire population.

And certainly, Mr. Speaker, I think this bears out when in 2006 there was an analysis done of the cost of our public utilities across Canada, and perhaps I'll just refer to that right now. This was a study done by Meyers Norris and Penny in 2006, ordered by the Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan, and it's entitled the *2006 Basic Utility Bundle Review*. And if you look on page 16 of that report, appendix 1, this is the CIC 2006 bundle rankings. And what they did is they bundled together the costs of all these public utilities — telephone, electricity, home heating, auto insurance — and consistently on all the categories, Saskatchewan ranked as the lowest in all of these areas. We were number one in terms of major centres. We were number one in terms of rural communities, and we were number one in terms of northern communities.

And I know the previous minister at the time, the Hon. Pat Atkinson, worked very hard on ensuring that Saskatchewan people continued to be afforded the lowest bundle rates in Canada. And that was a promise that was made and kept by that government of the day.

You look at some of the major centres that we were compared to. Regina, we were compared . . . Winnipeg, interestingly, and Manitoba was actually second in every one of these rankings as well. Third, we have Vancouver or British Columbia. Fourth was Alberta. Fifth was Montreal, Quebec. Sixth was St. John, New Brunswick. Seventh, Prince Edward Island, Charlottetown. Eighth we have Halifax. Ninth was St. John's, Newfoundland. And tenth, Mr. Speaker, was Toronto, Ontario. So that was just in the major centres category.

In terms of the total provincial rankings, again Saskatchewan was first, and our total bundle was \$3,418 for a year for residential services. And then next was Manitoba, followed by B.C., Quebec, Alberta, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and again Ontario being dead last in terms of the cost of public utilities.

[16:30]

So I think that's clearly the point that's being made by the author, Mr. Bird, in this article about public auto insurers. So some of the other advantages he points out for what he calls natural monopolies . . . In this case, our auto insurer is a natural monopoly. And he goes on to say this:

The insuring Crowns derive much of their political, policy, and economic value from the fact that they are the solitary providers of a particular good in a specific market. Since providing basic insurance coverage is their exclusive right, they enjoy a monopoly position in the compulsory component of the auto insurance sector and have a near monopoly in the optional coverage segment as well. This type of unitary arrangement brings significant efficiencies associated with uniform insurance claim policies and procedures as well as standardized repair payment and administration processes . . . The benefits of these lower transactional costs associated with a uniform provider,

then, are distributed among different segments of the insurance sector: drivers, stakeholders, the Crowns' unionized employees, and the government. But given the public nature of this bureau, such an arrangement holds the possibility for undue rent seeking by these entrenched interest groups as well as for undue political interference in these Crowns' . . . [corporations].

So that is certainly something we see as a criticism, Mr. Speaker, of the Crowns, is the fact that there are some entrenched interest groups that often try to skew things to their advantage within the Crown sector. And that's of course to say that nothing's perfect, and there are always things that we need to work on.

He goes on to say:

A monopoly's value limits potential changes to the market's structure. In political terms, a Crown insurer's value is tied to its unitary or monopoly position, and allowing private firms to sell the compulsory auto insurance, for instance, could threaten a Crown's financial position since private firms would be inclined to only insure the lowest-risk drivers. Such actions could jeopardize a Crown's financial well-being as well as its capacity to meet the government's other policy and political objectives. The considerable sunk cost of a Crown's physical assets, likewise, further constrains governments from changing the sector's structure. Once a Crown has been established, it assumes an "all or nothing" condition because a hybrid market, in which private insurance firms play a prominent role, would be difficult to establish and to maintain.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think given the hybrid that's being created here by this bill, those problems would continue to apply because again we have minority shareholders who are able to purchase shares in a monopoly. And there are laws against that, so that's something the government would have to sort out.

And then secondly, the notion of keeping the rates as low as possible, the public policy reasons for having auto insurance providers would be defeated if the minority shareholders were able to exercise their rights for profitability. So these are serious concerns that I think we need to look at very carefully as we go through this initiative by this government.

Now this article goes on to talk about some other benefits. And the heading is:

Ancillary Value: Government Services, Jobs, and Cash

The insuring Crowns have other politically valuable policy functions.

And I'll just stop there. Again for a minority shareholder, they don't care about policy functions. That's not the role of a minority shareholder. So I'll carry on:

Any changes to their position in the market could potentially threaten their ability to provide their services to the citizens and their political masters. [Here's an example.] For instance [he says], all the Crowns handle

driver's licence and vehicle registration for their respective governments and collect driving and parking infraction fines.

And we've been talking about that in the House here, Mr. Speaker, where, you know, the radar tickets that are being given through photo radar, all the different things that SGI provides. In fact SGI is even paying for policing services. Now if I'm a minority shareholder, I'm not sure that's an expense that I would want my investment to look into.

So again, where is the connect between policy reasons for these Crowns and the profitability of these Crowns? And I think to muddy the waters, as this bill does, really creates some very significant issues for these Crowns. I'm afraid we're going to end up in court more often than not. And these are expensive procedures that unless we get some very clear answers from this government, we're going to have to see how those issues are going to be dealt with.

He goes on to say . . . I'll just pick up where I left off here. In a recent year in British Columbia, for example, ICBC — this was in 2010 — spent \$82 million providing these two non-insurance functions to the provincial government, which is the drivers' licence and registration, and the collection of the fines. Eighty-two million dollars is what ICBC spent in 2010 on that. I'll go on:

The provision of these ancillary services was not initially part of their mandates . . . originated later in their life cycles in an effort to help their respective governments in their efforts to reform the provision of public services and to reduce overall costs. MPI and SGI also recently worked with Canadian and American border services to offer enhanced provincial drivers' licences that meet increased American security restrictions. This change allows citizens with special enhanced licences to cross the border using their provincial drivers' licences instead of a passport. All three provincial Crowns sponsor various road safety and driver education campaigns to reduce accidents and the associated societal and private costs.

And again, Mr. Speaker, if we are selling off 49 per cent of this Crown to private shareholders, I don't know if the Auto Fund would buy into SGI or not. That would be a bit weird. But in the event that private investors come ahead, they're not going to want to see their profits being diverted to road safety and driver education campaigns, for example.

And when you think of all the public policy and the role that SGI has taken in a greater-public-good context, the idea of privatizing 49 per cent of it really throws into question, I think, what that corporation will look like and whether it can carry on with its mandate.

And again, if the mandate gets changed, then we're again back in the situation where the minority shareholders through the special provisions clauses can challenge the changing of a mandate even. So the questions just keep piling up, Mr. Speaker.

The next quote I'll start off here . . . I'll continue I guess from where I left off:

In some cases, the insuring Crowns have funded specific road improvements in an effort to improve safety at particular locations, but this can attract some sharp criticism.

This was from the *Winnipeg Free Press* in 2012. The author says:

These functions all have a significant amount of political value since, in the absence of these Crowns, a government would still be obligated to provide such services in addition to having to regulate a privatized marketplace.

These Crowns provide well-paying jobs to their citizens. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, MPI and SGI employ two thousand and nineteen hundred people, respectively, and these jobs are valued, especially given these provinces' peripheral positions in Canada's political economy and the limited number of large private-sector firms that are headquartered in each province. ICBC's fifty-two hundred employees, many of whom work at its head office in North Vancouver, are also politically significant given that the Lower Mainland has lost many head offices over the last ten years along with the economic activity and employment they spur. Since many private insurance firms are based outside of these three provinces, often in central Canada, any changes to their respective insurance regimes could result in a net loss of jobs from each province.

And we've seen that here, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan with respect to insurers like Great-West Life. And we know the impact that can have on a community when a head office moves locations.

He goes on to talk about capital, Mr. Speaker:

These Crowns control large pools of capital. MPI, for instance, has approximately \$1.7 billion in assets that are entirely invested within Manitoba in the form of provincial, municipal, hospital, and school bonds. These assets are important to the Manitoba government and the province as a whole. The focus on indigenous capital differentiates MPI from its two cousins . . . [since] both have significant corporate equities and bond holdings. In 2010, the British Columbia government announced it would take \$778 million from ICBC over three years, and BC's 2012 budget called for the government to withdraw \$497 million over two years from ICBC's capital reserves and to place it in the general revenue fund. (Ostensibly, these revenues come from ICBC's reserves comprised from the optional portion of its insurance products, but making such distinctions is difficult given the unitary nature of ICBC and its operations.) What could be more valuable to a government than a pool of money that can be used to meet the ever-increasing demands for public services?

And that's already inherently within the Auto Fund here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That can be invested in all kinds of public services, Mr. Speaker, and we certainly don't need to change the definition of privatization in the curious, hybrid way that this minister is now doing in order to have the Auto Fund benefit the people of Saskatchewan. It just doesn't

make sense. The government can do that through legislation. They certainly don't have to do it through the back door through this weird change to *The Interpretation Act*.

He goes on to say:

SGI, too, has significant capital reserves, but there is no political interference in how or where it is invested, over and above concerns regarding risk and return . . ."

So we already have the best of both worlds here, Mr. Speaker, with respect to SGI. And now this Premier's desire to somehow give the Auto Fund more flexibility? I mean it lacks common sense, Mr. Speaker, and I think it really speaks to the misguided and somewhat desperate nature of this government's fiscal management.

The last piece I want to share with the House regarding this particular article is in relation to insurance rates and socializing the risk. And I'll start here:

Automobile insurance rates are a politically significant household cost. All provincial governments are acutely aware of the potential for significant political problems stemming from increases to auto insurance rates.

And I'll interject there. Again, if we have minority shareholders whose expectation is to derive maximum benefit from their investment, is that something that can jive? Or is it an actual conflict, Mr. Speaker? I'll carry on.

Since all three insuring Crowns are public agencies, there is a heightened political sensitivity to this issue in these provinces, but such sensitivity is not limited to the governments of the insuring Crowns. Bernard Lord, New Brunswick's premier in 2003, almost lost an election over the significant rise in auto insurance prices that occurred in his province. Despite the fact that New Brunswick's insurance market was regulated and competitive, voters still held the provincial government responsible for significant premium increases. Similarly, Howard Pawley, Manitoba's premier for much of the 1980s, noted in his autobiography how a steep rise in auto insurance rates sparked a considerable political issue. Canada is a large country with a small population; automobiles are by far the most important means of transportation, and any increase in the cost of operating a car is met with strong resistance.

He goes on to say:

The insuring Crowns use their own risk assessment methods to evaluate clients. Private-sector firms, for the most part, use a number of demographic and geographic factors to assess the risks associated with insuring a specific individual and to set premiums to reflect those potential risks. Risk assessments are based upon aggregated statistical data and are applied to individuals according to a set number of characteristics. Not surprisingly, such a methodology often invokes stern criticism, given the potential for discriminatory and/or arbitrary premium assessments resulting, for example, from using home postal codes to set rates. The private-sector insurance industry, however, views this type

of assessment as a legitimate business practice. An executive with IBC echoes this view when responding to these specific concerns: “The use of territory is a good predictor of risk, which is what insurance is based on.” In practice, this means that individuals who live in specific geographic areas and who are young and male pay substantially higher premiums than do other cohorts.

The insuring Crowns assess individuals based on their driving history. SGI states this explicitly: “Our philosophy is that all drivers should be treated equally unless their driving records show that they are at a greater risk for causing a collision.”

And as you can see, Mr. Speaker, that alone is a remarkable difference in terms of how our Crown auto insurer treats individuals much differently than the private world. And again, if I was a minority shareholder investing in SGI, which is a very profitable business, I would wonder why I couldn’t get more profit, and why we’re using that sort of assessment of drivers’ records as opposed to using what every other private insurance company uses.

So these are questions that again we’re going to be looking to this government and to this minister to provide us some answers.

The final thing I’ll share, and this is near the end of this article, is this:

One must also keep in mind the ancillary services that these Crowns provide. [I’ve talked about that a little already, Mr. Speaker.] Such programs as driver licence and vehicle registration, road safety programs, and fine collection all have value to their political masters [it wouldn’t to the minority shareholders, though] and any changes to the insurance regime could threaten their capacity to provide these services. Also in the equation are those vested interests, such as unionized workers, insurance brokers, and auto body shops, that would fight long and hard against any governmental actions that might threaten their privileged positions. The loss of the large pools of financial capital that these Crowns control, and a reduction of the well-paying jobs that they provide, are two additional problems that any government contemplating altering the insurance regime in each province would have to manage.

And that’s the end of the quote, and that’s the limit of what I’m going to take out of that particular article, Mr. Speaker.

[16:45]

Now I just want to talk a little bit about some of the benefits we have derived from the Crowns in the past. And of course I’m going to focus on the economic benefits. And I’m just going to find the dividends page here.

I don’t know if people would have a sense of how much we’ve received from dividends over the past few years. From 2006 until 2015-16, we’ve received significant dividends from many of these Crowns. And I would like to ask members to take a guess in terms of how much we’ve actually earned but I won’t

make anybody guess . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Actually billions. My colleague says millions and millions. It’s actually billions. Since 2006, this government has put \$3.117 billion into the General Revenue Fund from these Crowns, so SaskPower, SaskTel, SaskEnergy, SaskWater.

ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan] was contributing around 15 to \$20 million a year until it was privatized in 2014, so that’s money forgone already.

SGI has consistently provided . . . last year it was \$47 million into our General Revenue Fund to help with the costs for the programs that we want in Saskatchewan and that we want to continue.

Also SOCO has provided some dividends as well.

One thing I don’t see on here I guess — well it’s not a CIC dividend — but is whether or not . . . We don’t know if the GTH is actually turning a profit yet or not.

But these revenues, Mr. Speaker, when you look at them, will . . . They are sustaining this particular government in terms of its ability to manage, or inability to manage, I think.

And the other thing I wanted to mention at this point in time was the record of this government in relation to the Growth and Financial Security Fund because we know that in 2008 the balance in the Growth and Financial Security Fund was supposed to be 1.3 billion. But they actually drew out more than they anticipated so it was 1.2 billion. That’s in 2008. And guess what, Mr. Speaker? At the end of last fiscal year, it was zero.

So we’ve seen a withdrawal, a depletion of the rainy day fund from \$1.3 billion in 2008 to actually zero. And these are during times when the government was drawing down large dividends from its Crown corporations through the CIC and obviously in receipt of considerable, considerable record-breaking revenues from our natural resources sector. So that’s something I think that we have to be very cognizant of and concerned about.

I’m going to talk a little bit now just about some of the things that happened when Mike Harris was Premier of Ontario, and this is in relation to the LCBO [Liquor Control Board of Ontario] — or LCBO as they call it in Ontario — the Liquor Control Board of Ontario. And this is an article again by Malcolm Bird. In this case it was in *The Canadian Political Science Review*, and the date of this article is September 2010. The title of the article is “Radical Institutional Change at a Crown Corporation: the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, 1985-2010.” And he starts off by saying this:

Of Canada’s 400 largest corporations, forty are state-owned Crown corporations. Terence Corcoran, editor of the *Financial Post Magazine’s* annual report on Corporate Canada, laments their continued existence. He, and many like him, continue to view state-owned Crowns as inefficient providers of goods and services, as well as . . . both poorly managed and governed corporate entities. But his views on them appear to go deeper than this. It is as if their public ownership somehow disqualifies them as legitimate firms when compared to their private sector counterparts. Such strong normative views are unfortunate,

not merely because they fail to take into account the significant role Crowns have played in the development of Canada throughout its history, but because they prevent such critics from understanding or appreciating the incredible organizational reforms that the many Crowns have undergone. These are not the same stodgy Crowns of yesteryear. One example of a Crown corporation that has experienced this type of significant institutional change is the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO), which has gone through major changes to both its internal organization and its external governance procedures and structures over the last twenty-five years. The LCBO has gone from a poorly run, patronage-ridden, inefficient retailer to an award winning, dynamic retailer that is widely regarded as the leader in liquor retailing and marketing.

So this is a very thorough examination of how LCBO managed to change from its stodgy former self to an actually modernized Crown that's actually the envy of many in the private sector.

So in the conclusion of this paper — I won't go through a lot of the paper, but I do want to share with the Assembly some of the words from the conclusion — this is what Mr. Bird has to say:

The above case study of the LCBO study illustrates some important points regarding institutional change within a publicly owned and operated Crown corporation. The key event in the evolution of the LCBO was the . . . [internally] imposed shock, coming from the Peterson Liberal government, which gave the directive to modernize the archaic LCBO. This directive from the executive, in conjunction with the real powers given to the early reformers, were the key "critical junctures" that redirected the LCBO, sending it down a new path, on its way to becoming an effective and efficient retailer, better able to meet the needs of its political superiors regardless of their partisan stripes. Such an event was important, since it meant that by the time the Harris Conservatives came to power in the mid 1990s, the LCBO was already well positioned, in its existing form, to help meet some of the Harris government's needs. Effective operational and political leadership at the LCBO also helped solidify its new positive organizational trajectory.

But, the decisions of all Ontario governments, including the Harris Tories, were very much influenced by the political and historical context within which this institution exists. The decision to retain ownership of the LCBO in public hands and the manner in which the LCBO developed its marketing strategies reflect the political and historical factors at play. In particular, they reflect an understanding on the part of the Harris Tories, that any attempt to privatize would be met with strong resistance from suppliers and other retailers in the alcohol market, and that Ontario has traditionally had, and to a certain extent, continues to have a conservative social and political culture, one that remains apprehensive about making alcohol more freely available to the public. These factors, when combined with the organizational reforms to the LCBO already underway, helped to scupper any radical plans to privatize this institution. The proactive, policy-making potential of any government is severely

limited by historical imposed institutional factors. No policy field is a "blank slate" but rather, is inhabited by significant actors that are used to certain consistencies; these factors limit government actions and decisions. The liquor distribution system in Ontario and the changes made to both the LCBO's internal operations and its governance structure were made within a context whereby history and institutional configurations played a paramount role.

Now one can only imagine, Mr. Speaker, what would have happened in Saskatchewan had this government positioned SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] in the same frame. I'm just going to go on with a couple more quotes from this article, Mr. Speaker. He's talking about changes, government organizational changes, and he said:

To this list, we can add three other critical factors necessary for the successful reorganization of public Crowns: a formal ending of political interference into day-to-day business decisions [I don't think that's happening here]; increased allotments of capital, which are needed to improve the physical and human infrastructure [again, I'm not sure that's happening]; thirdly, and the slow and careful, incremental manner that changes are brought about, which reflect governmental sensitivity toward negative, public responses to such changes. These external governance and internal reforms are necessary to make any changes possible within a public organization.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that demonstrates, in terms of the LCBO in Ontario, what is possible if a government turns its mind to making these radical changes from within rather than simply selling off 49 per cent and hoping that the market forces will provide the coffers with that much-needed cash that seems to have gone missing through radical spending sprees and other political factors, Mr. Speaker. So that's another article by Mr. Bird.

There's another paper that I'd like to refer to now and it just talks a little bit about . . . The title is this: "Crown Corporations and Co-Operatives as Coping Mechanisms in Regional Economic Development." This is written by Murray Rice and Darren Lavoie and it's found in *The Canadian Geographer*, winter 2005. And this is from the introduction of that paper, Mr. Speaker. He says:

This paper focuses attention on two specific types of businesses that have long-term associations with regional economic development efforts in Canada.

And we know that's something this government has been very interested in.

Crown, or state-owned, corporations have been used by various levels of governments as instruments to implement a variety of government policies, as well as specific tools meant to assist directly in regional development, whether as sources of employment or as means of providing services and infrastructure seen by government as important in encouraging further development.

Now again I'll pause, Mr. Speaker. Think about this for a minute: if we have minority shareholders in these corporations,

the public policy reasons for their existence are going to be continually challenged. And I think that is the main concern that keeps coming to me as we think through the implications of this hybrid form of privatization that this government is proposing in *The Interpretation Act*.

It says here that . . . He goes on to say: “Co-operatives . . .” Well he speaks about co-operatives as well. I won’t mention that right now, but I’ll go on in the next part of the paragraph:

While co-operatives and Crown corporations differ as to their ownership, organisation and legal basis, the two business forms share a common purpose in acting as an alternative to Canada’s dominant, market-based economy, enabling a cross-section of the community to participate in and influence local, regional and even national economic development. Crown corporations and co-operatives have been used by local communities and broader regions to effect economic change and promote economic stability. While recognising the unique characteristics and roles of both the business forms, this study focuses on the shared use of Crown corporations and co-operatives to influence and promote . . . economic development.

He goes on to say:

The operation of Crown corporations in particular has been an especially visible means . . .

I’m going to keep going. Oh.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — Excuse the interruption. I do have an introduction to do quickly, if you would. Aaron Yohnke is in our west gallery. Give a wave there, Aaron. He’s a good friend of mine and he’s with PCL, and he’s literally building the country and the province with the important work that they do at work, and I just would like everyone to please welcome him to his Assembly.

It being close to 5 p.m., this Assembly stands recessed until 7 p.m. tonight.

[The Assembly recessed from 17:00 until 19:00.]

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President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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Minister of Social Services
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport
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