



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

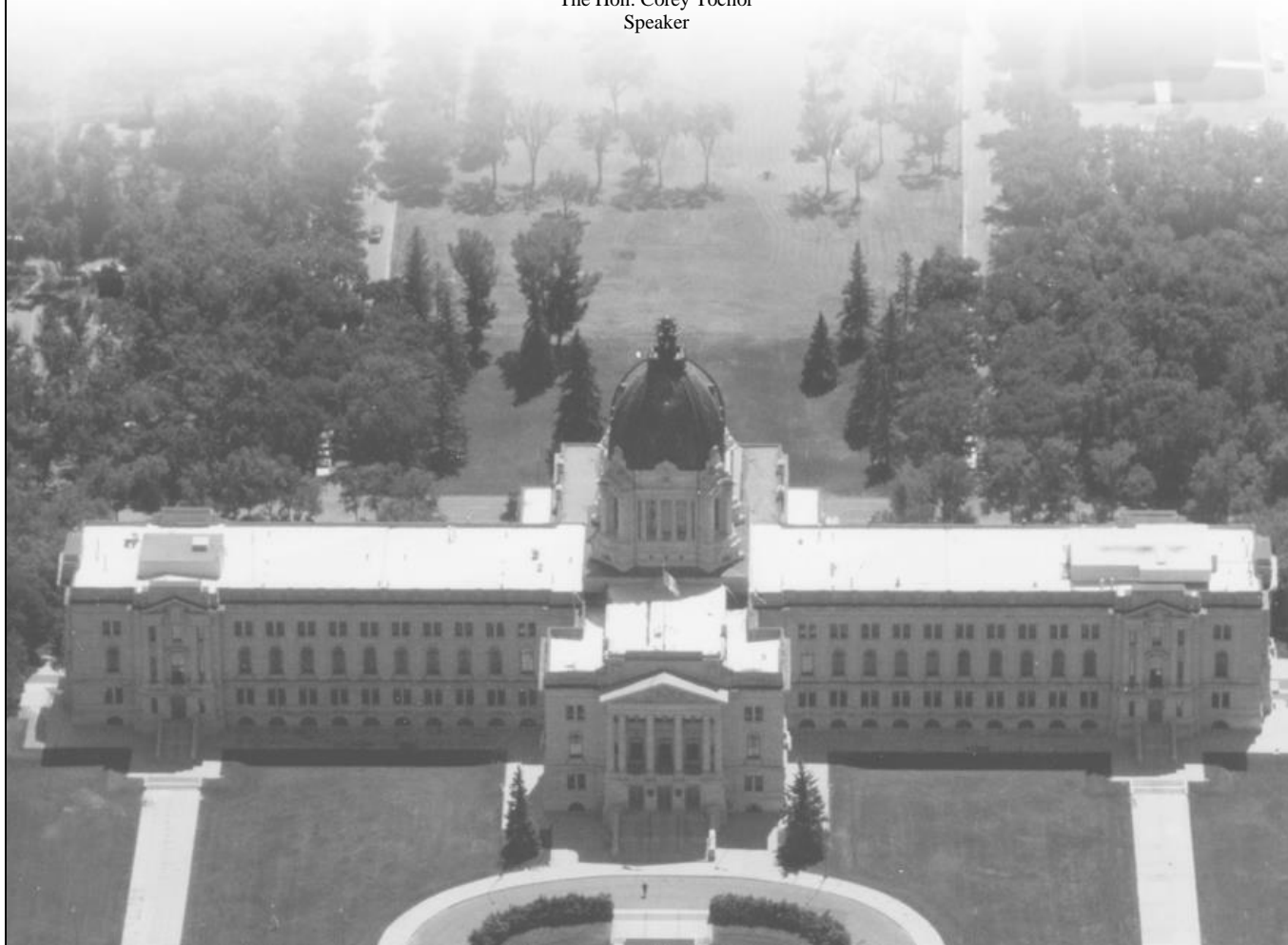
of the

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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Hart, Glen — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)

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Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

Makowsky, Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)

McCall, Warren — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)

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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Wall, Hon. Brad — Swift Current (SP)

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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

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I'd like to introduce friends of mine in the west gallery, Randy and Sandra Clark. Randy was my campaign manager and Sandra was my business manager, so it's my pleasure to introduce them. And also, Mr. Chair, if I could, as you know, this is Movember month and I am participating, and I'm participating . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, you can tell. You can tell. And I am participating, Mr. Speaker. Randy is proof of that. He's a survivor of cancer and has a clean bill of health. So I ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the rest of the House today, two special guests in the east gallery. They're friends from Moose Jaw, members of Unifor: Bill Lawson and Lorne Hill. They are here to observe the procedures and proceedings and to meet with some folks afterwards. So I would ask all members to welcome them to their legislature. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow and the Government Whip.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you. I'd like to also say hi to Bill and Lorne. It's been a while since we worked together but a couple of old co-workers from my days at SaskTel, and we'll be having a meeting with them later, so looking forward to sitting down and having a chat with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This brings me great pleasure to introduce some special guests in the House today and also on the floor of the Assembly. I have some of my friends from the château Marian, which is in my constituency. They're here for a tea and a tour — no ice cream, I don't think. They're here for a tea and a tour today. I would like to especially welcome one of them who is my mother-in-law, seated here on the floor of the gallery. Ginny, would you give a wave? So it brings me great pleasure to have them here today. Would you join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've got some special guests in the west gallery as well from the Saskatchewan House of Prayer. And some of them are from

Moose Jaw, and I thought it would be fitting to thank them for their participation and their prayers for all of us. They are sitting in the west gallery: David Murray, Dianne Green, Barbara Brown, and from my constituency, Agnes Slavin.

Agnes was very instrumental just after the '07 election that wrote us a very nice letter to me and my wife and congratulating and prayers, and I've still got a copy of that sitting on my bulletin board because it was so very touching.

Joining them is Tamara Johnson of Regina. And I'd ask all members to welcome to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition from citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on our province. 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 citizens of Regina, Saskatchewan. I'd like to present it.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise a petition again in this House to reverse the cuts to the Lighthouse program, Mr. Speaker. The petitioners point out that in April of 2014, the Minister of Social Services said the Lighthouse in Saskatoon would “. . . take pressure off existing detox facilities, hospitals and police cells, while keeping people safe, especially in our brutally cold winters.” That same day, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health said, “We want to ensure that individuals with mental health and addictions issues have a safe place to stay.”

And this government . . . The petitioners point out that this government has repeatedly indicated that the Lighthouse stabilization unit keeps individuals out of hospital emergency rooms and jail cells. In light of the pressure on the Saskatoon Health Region and our hospitals, Mr. Speaker, obviously the Lighthouse isn't the whole issue, Mr. Speaker, but the cut to the Lighthouse certainly does not help. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately reverse their recent cuts to funding that allows extremely vulnerable people to access the services of the Lighthouse stabilization unit in Saskatoon, and revisit their imposition of a strict and narrow definition of homelessness in November of 2015 which forced the Lighthouse to cut

back its hours of essential services in February of 2016, and take immediate steps to ensure the homeless people in Saskatchewan have emergency shelter, clothing, and food available to them before more lives are lost.

Mr. Speaker, this petition today is signed by citizens of Weyburn, Langham, and Saskatoon. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am also pleased to stand in my place today to present a petition around the northern teacher education program, the NORTEP program. And the prayer that reads as follows:

Respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to immediately restore funding to the northern teacher education program.

And, Mr. Speaker, we're getting these petitions signed from all throughout the province. On these number of pages that I'm presenting today, some of the people that have signed the petition are from Regina. Some are from Moose Jaw. Some are from Lumsden. Some are from Saskatoon. Some are from Yorkton; Melville, Mr. Speaker; Spruce Home; and the list goes on and on. And I so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition regarding the 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 and duck hunt. In the worst cases, such as some areas on 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 prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request 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;

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.

Mr. Speaker, it is signed today from individuals from Saskatoon, Spruce Home, Yorkton, Regina, Moose Jaw, and Lumsden. I so submit.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of Wakamow Valley Authority in Moose Jaw and that we know that as a result of the passage of *The Wakamow Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2016* on June 30, the Wakamow Valley Authority lost its statutory funding of \$127,000 from the Saskatchewan government in addition to its \$30,000 in supplementary funding. 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 of Moose Jaw.

This funding cut resulted in a layoff of one-third of the park staff, which included two summer students and two regular employees. But, Mr. Speaker, on June 21, 2016, the provincial government 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 the city of Moose Jaw. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to stand here today to present the petition condemning the Sask Party 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 people to pay for the Sask Party 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 this 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'll 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, people who signed this petition come from all over Saskatchewan. They come from the communities of Moose Jaw, Regina, Spruce Home, White City, Yorkton, Saskatoon, and Melville. I do so present.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition in support of a sexual abuse prevention curriculum in Saskatchewan. Those signing the petition wish to draw our attention to the following: Saskatchewan has the second highest rate of sexual child abuse in Canada. Statistics show that one in three girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused by the age of 18.

Sexual child abuse has lasting impacts throughout the lifespan, Mr. Speaker, with those impacts including mental health impacts, PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder], depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and low self-esteem. Other effects include reduced school attendance and achievement, decreased productivity throughout their lifespan. Victims of sexual child abuse are four times more likely to commit suicide, and currently there is no comprehensive elementary or secondary curriculum regarding prevention and reporting of child abuse in Saskatchewan. I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan Ministry of Education take immediate concrete steps to develop and implement Erin's law. Such legislation would ensure that a comprehensive health education program be developed and implemented which would require age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention education in grades pre-K through 12, along with the proper training of school staff on the prevention of child abuse.

Mr. Speaker, those signing this petition today reside in Yorkton, Hagen, Saskatoon, Spruce Home, and Regina. I do so submit.

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 the Sask Party plan to sell off SaskTel. The petitioners point out that after nearly a decade of wasting the economic boom and blowing through the savings, the government is now forcing Saskatchewan people to pay for Sask Party mismanagement. They point out that in the recent election campaign the Sask Party promised that it would not privatize SaskTel. And, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners are calling on this government to keep all of that promise and not just 51 per cent of that promise.

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 the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this particular group of petitions is signed by individuals from Prince Albert, White City, Yorkton, Regina, and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I once again rise in the House today to present a petition calling on the government to reverse the 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 those on this side of the House know that 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.

[10:15]

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.

Those signing the petition today are from Swift Current, Ituna, and Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. I do submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Rally Supports Pipelines and the Oil and Gas Industry

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Monday I had the privilege of attending a rally organized by the mayor of White City, Bruce Evans, who happens to be seated in the west gallery. It was in support of pipelines, pipeline expansion, and our oil and gas industry.

I was joined by the Minister for the Economy; MP [Member of Parliament] for Regina-Qu'Appelle, Andrew Scheer; mayor of White City, Bruce Evans; and SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] president, Ray Orb. Court Klein, on behalf of the steelworkers' union at Evraz Place, was also present and spoke about the importance of the energy industry in our province.

There are five oil pipelines owned by Enbridge and one major natural gas pipeline owned by TransGas that operate daily through White City. The pipelines safely deliver 2.2 million barrels of oil to markets in the northeastern United States and eastern Saskatchewan on a daily basis.

This rally demonstrates how vital the oil and gas industry is to our province and validates the fact that it is such an important economic driver in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing Enbridge and TransGas for successfully operating pipelines and a major natural gas pipeline through White City for over 60 years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Resident's Efforts Bring World Broomball Championship to Regina

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the 2016 World Broomball Championships are currently being held in Regina. Over 1,000 coaches and athletes with teams from around the world are here for the five-day tournament. Broomball has its roots right here in Saskatchewan with the first game ever recorded being played in Perdue on March the 5th, 1909.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge Don Black, the president of Saskatchewan Broomball Association. Don worked tirelessly in Japan during the last tournament, lobbying for Regina to host the tournament. Don has been a broomball player for the last 30 years and president of the association for the past eight. Don is an admirable individual, a long-time supporter and campaign manager. He's known as a hard worker and a strong advocate for working people. The first time I met Don, he was volunteering his time for a municipal campaign school.

In addition to his tireless community work, Don is a family man. He and his wife, Tracy, make their home in Regina Lakeview. Don has four daughters and five grandchildren, and the youngest is only weeks old.

Don is also fighting the biggest battle of his life. This past June he was diagnosed with terminal cancer. But that didn't stop his love of broomball and his determination to see the world championship brought to his hometown. His goal is now to attend the 2018 games. We sincerely hope that he achieves that goal, like so many others that he has set and achieved.

Mr. Speaker, I would invite all members to join me in celebrating Don and the Broomball World Championships.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Increasing Access to Medical Imaging Services

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Patients in Prairie North Health Region will soon have access to faster, safer medical imaging services once the aging computerized tomography, CT scanners, at Battlefords Union Hospital and Lloydminster Hospital are replaced. Our government is pleased to provide 1.2 million in infrastructure funding, half the cost for the purchase and installation of the new equipment. The Battlefords Union Hospital Foundation and Lloydminster Region Health Foundation have each committed to raising the remaining 600,000 K for their respective community scanners.

Since 2007-08, CT scan capacity in Saskatchewan's health

system has increased by 40 per cent to about 105,000 patients in 2015-16. During that same period, overall health system spending on medical imaging has increased by 70 per cent to 143 million. With the addition of the new CT unit at St. Joseph's Hospital in Estevan earlier in 2016, there are now 15 CT scanners accessible in the health system across Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to increasing access to medical imaging technology for patients by continuing to invest in technologies in the public system while also introducing *The Patient Choice Medical Imaging Act* in June of this year. The expansion of CT capacity in both the public and private sector will increase our ability to increase demand for advanced diagnostic services while reducing wait times.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Award-Winning Authors Tell the Saskatchewan Story

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to take the opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of two very distinguished authors and historians from Saskatchewan, Dr. James Daschuk and Dr. Bill Waiser. Daschuk's book, *Clearing the Plains*, is a story of disease, the politics of starvation, and the loss of indigenous life and has been awarded the Governor General's History Award for scholarly research and the Saskatchewan Book Award, as well as several other literary awards.

And just this fall, Mr. Speaker, the Literary Review of Canada has named *Clearing the Plains* as one of the 25 most influential books published in Canada in the last 25 years. Since the book's publication in 2013, over 10,000 copies have been sold, and it continues to be considered required reading for all Canadians that should be taught in every school across the country.

And, Mr. Speaker, most recently Dr. Bill Waiser has been awarded the 2016 Governor General's Literary Award for non-fiction for his book, *A World We Have Lost: Saskatchewan Before 1905*. The Governor General's awards jury praised the book for its ability to surprise the reader with a new approach to Canada's history, stating, "In a sweeping blend of narrative historical detail and compelling images, Waiser refocuses the country's story by putting indigenous peoples and environmental concerns in the foreground."

A World We Have Lost is one of over a dozen publications by Waiser that highlights Canada's western history. Bill Waiser is also the recipient of the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal, the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and a distinguished university professor.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating James Daschuk and Bill Waiser for their literary achievements and for their significant contributions in telling the Saskatchewan and the Canadian story.

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

Better Together Food Drive

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I stand in the Assembly today and inform all members that the 2016 Moose Jaw Better Together Food Drive was a resounding success. Mr. Speaker, this annual Halloween night initiative started and organized by the Hillcrest Apostolic Church is the single biggest food drive of the year for the city of Moose Jaw. While kids are out and about on Halloween evening trick-or-treating, teams of volunteers are also canvassing door to door for non-perishable foods. In most cases the packaged donation was set out ready to be picked up.

Mr. Speaker, last year brought in a record amount of donations; yet this year they were able to beat it by collecting 53,000 pounds of food. Once the food was picked up, it was brought back to the Moose Jaw Exhibition convention centre where there were more volunteers that created an assembly-type line operating to sort the food properly, package it, and crate it, and deliver it to the food bank. There is no question that the people of the province are some of the most generous in the world and this is another excellent example of that.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join in thanking the Hillcrest Church and the many volunteers, the donors, and the food bank for making this year's Better Together Food Drive another resounding success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Carrot River Wildcats Win Division

Mr. Bradshaw: — It has been quite some time since I talked about the Carrot River Wildcats in this Chamber, and I am happy to announce the Wildcats six-man football team has captured their division for 2016. This is quite an accomplishment for a team that is in a rebuilding year and is still recovering from the tragic accident that claimed three of their teammates last year. The depth of character in these players and their coaches has been demonstrated both on and off the field. Winning or losing, they are true sportsmen. But I do have to point out, they have only lost one game all season.

Mr. Speaker, we are proud to call them our team, and that is evident every Friday night on the football field. The support given them is incredible, but that is in part due to the tremendous effort given by them: early morning practice every day of the week with the exception of game day. Any spare moment, if you were to walk by the football field, you would see kids out there practising. Whether they're just tossing the ball around, kicking field goals, or running plays, their love for the game is evident.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in congratulating the Carrot River Wildcats and head coach Cory Schmaltz for winning their division. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Estevan.

Saskatchewan to Surpass Alberta in New Oil Well Drilling

Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It wasn't that long ago

that Saskatchewan had an NDP [New Democratic Party] government. And the idea of Saskatchewan surpassing Alberta in new oil well drilling was about as far-fetched as the Cubs winning the World Series.

Well yesterday, the Petroleum Services Association of Canada, or PSAC, released its 2017 drilling activity forecast. They project a total of 1,940 new wells to be drilled in Saskatchewan next year compared to 1,900 in Alberta. The president of PSAC, Mark Salkeld, had this to say, Mr. Speaker: "Saskatchewan will outperform Alberta in wells drilled for the first time in the 36 years I've been in the industry and probably the first time ever." This message from the petroleum industry couldn't be more clear: Saskatchewan is the place they want to be.

When Scotia Waterous Inc. compared 55 oil plays in the US [United States] and Canada, 6 of the top 10 oil plays ranked profit and investment ratio are right here in Saskatchewan. The Fraser Institute rated Saskatchewan as the best province in Canada for oil investment in 2015.

Now the NDP want to talk about donations rolling in from Alberta, but this is really what is coming to Saskatchewan from Alberta — it's capital and jobs. We know all about that. For years we saw jobs and investment flee the province under the NDP government. Not anymore, Mr. Speaker, and hopefully never again.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Role of the Global Transportation Hub in Land Acquisitions

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the mystery phone call to the scandal-plagued former minister at the centre of the multi-million dollar GTH [Global Transportation Hub] scandal could be cleared up by this government. The minister now responsible for the GTH told the media that he could get the phone records. Why has the Premier not done that? Why won't he finally commit to do that today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the member's question rests on the preamble where he inferred something of the Minister Responsible for GTH which is not correct.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Will he commit to get those phone records and bring them to this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan, and clear this up? If he has nothing to hide, this shouldn't be a problem.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well he's backed off of another allegation that he's made that's not based on fact. Mr. Speaker, I would just say this. The phone records, all the documents were made available to the Provincial Auditor. The auditor has made her conclusions. The conclusions included in

the press release that accompanied the report: that there was no conflict of interest; there was no fraud; there was no wrongdoing by members of the board of directors. That included the minister.

Yesterday in this House, that member, the leader of the NDP, took a drive-by smear run at the member for Kindersley, Mr. Speaker. We challenged him to repeat those words outside the House but he lacked the courage of his conviction.

This should surprise precisely no one. That's the same member that ran the name of Deveraux, a company in this city, through the mud, Mr. Speaker, with allegations of them bribing the members of this House — bribing me actually. That was his allegation. He had to stand in his place and apologize to the Assembly and to the people of the province. That's the kind of conduct we've come to expect, sadly, from the Leader of the Opposition and I would say, Mr. Speaker, that's why there's only 10 members on that side of the House.

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

[10:30]

Mr. Wotherspoon: — It's about time that the Premier deal in the truth on the floor of this Assembly. What we know, what we know is that both Highways and the GTH were both planning for Highways to acquire the land. In fact the minister was briefed as late as October in 2012 that this was the plan, for Highways to acquire the land.

Then in a strange and costly flip-flop, this scandalous deal was brought to cabinet without any due diligence by the minister of the GTH or CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan]. How did the Premier let this happen? Why didn't he stop this scandal then and there?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Mr. Speaker, we know that the members opposite are getting desperate. They're misrepresenting, misrepresenting — and I'll use the parliamentary term for what the Leader of the Opposition said in his first question — misrepresenting, very explicitly misrepresenting what I said in the rotunda.

And this member, the Leader of the Opposition, is developing a pattern of this behaviour, Mr. Speaker. We've seen that, whether it be on what he did in the House yesterday with respect to the member from Kindersley, didn't have the courage of his convictions to go and say the same thing as I challenged him to do outside of this House. We've seen him as well having to apologize to the House after being found on the verge of contempt of the Assembly for making an accusation about the Premier taking a bribe, which was entirely false. The Leader of the Opposition had to come to this Assembly on the verge of being found in contempt of the Assembly and apologize. That's his record, Mr. Speaker. Desperately, desperately reaching to try and create a scandal where none exists, where our Provincial Auditor, who has had access to thousands of documents, has gone through all of those documents and who made a conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that there was no wrongdoing, there

was no fraud, and there was no conflict of interest.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The minister can mischaracterize whatever he cares to. We'll go out into that rotunda any day of the week and we'll deal with this scandal that wasted millions of dollars. And it's about time, it's about time that that Premier would actually provide an answer to the people of the province. You'd think there'd be an ounce of contrition from a Premier who's wasted millions of dollars and won't have the backbone to provide answers to Saskatchewan people on this front.

You know, since the Premier's not answering, maybe the Minister of Justice will be forthright and answer a few questions. He is the one who flagged the first attempt to buy the land as a bad deal. He said they couldn't approve the GTH deal because they didn't know who owned the land. So did he not find it strange just a year later when the same deal was back at the cabinet table, this time with a higher price and a new name on the title?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Once again, the preamble to the Leader of the Opposition's question is wrong. We have responded to and addressed every question put to us on this matter. And more importantly, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps more authoritatively, the Provincial Auditor has addressed every question that was put to her with respect to this transaction. She fully canvassed all of these matters. She went through thousands and thousands of documents with her team of experts. They reached the conclusion, Mr. Speaker, which she indicated on her press release covering the report when she released it, and her conclusion was very, very clear that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no fraud, and there was no conflict of interest. Subsequent to that, when asked whether there were red flags, she said there were no red flags. There were no matters that warranted further follow-up. And again her conclusion: no wrongdoing, no fraud, no conflict of interest.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Of course the questions were to the Premier. No answers. Then the question was to the Justice minister. Not an answer. But he was the one that flagged this in cabinet. Of course no due diligence, and it was pushed forward by the scandal-plagued minister. But it was that Justice minister that flagged that it was very concerning that there was not an identity on this parcel of land. So did that Justice minister not find it questionable and strange that just a year later that deal was back at the cabinet table with a higher price tag and a new name on the title?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that these questions were fully canvassed, including with the support of the opposition who called for the Provincial Auditor to look into these matters.

The Provincial Auditor was given a mandate to look into these matters in whatever way that she determined to be the most effective way of doing so. She conducted, with her team of experts, a very, very thorough audit. She issued a report on the basis of that audit. She made a number of recommendations which we accept. We accept the conclusion of that audit. We accept the conclusion that she issued subsequently about there being no wrongdoing, no fraud, and no conflict of interest.

And once again, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Leader of the Opposition to show his support of the Provincial Auditor, his faith in the Provincial Auditor — an independent officer of this Assembly — and support those conclusions. The auditor did very, very good work, and just because the Leader of the Opposition doesn't like the conclusion she came to, he should still support it.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Of course we're hearing the same tired talking points from a minister. The question was to the Minister of Justice. It was also to the Premier. No answers.

Of course the auditor's report was nothing short of scathing; it exonerated no one. Of course we have faith in the auditor, but we have no faith in this government across the floor.

The question to the Justice minister was pretty straightforward. Why was it so important and concerning to the minister the first time he saw the deal, but not the second time? What changed?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — There was no deal.

But what I would ask the Leader of the Opposition about putting his . . . He says he has faith in the Provincial Auditor. He clearly doesn't, Mr. Speaker. The Provincial Auditor canvassed these matters, went through thousands of documents with her team of experts, and issued a report on that audit.

The conclusion of that audit, as she enunciated in the press release accompanying that report, was that there was no fraud, that there was no wrongdoing, and there was no conflict of interest. If the Leader of the Opposition truly has faith in the Provincial Auditor, despite the fact that he doesn't like the answer and the conclusion that she came to, he should support those conclusions.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — No answer again. The question was to the Justice minister.

There was another email on December 4th, 2012. The deputy minister of Justice emailed the deputy minister of the Premier. The emails say that the Minister of Justice "gave me some information yesterday morning which we've acted on," and the minister "wants to be able to update cabinet tomorrow."

Straightforward, to the Minister of Justice: what was the information they acted on? What was the update to cabinet?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Mr. Speaker, all of these matters were looked into by the Provincial Auditor. The Provincial Auditor had access to all of the documents, to all of the emails, had access to all of the individuals involved in the transaction — literally thousands of documents that she examined with her team of experts — and she came to a conclusion at the end of that process. She retrospectively looked through all of these matters at the request of this Assembly through the Public Accounts Committee, and at the request of cabinet through an order in council passed.

The conclusion of her office and her team of experts after having went through those thousands of documents, including the document being referenced by the Leader of the Opposition, was that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no fraud, and that there was no conflict of interest.

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

Elimination of Deputy Sheriff Positions

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, the Justice Minister is apparently very busy monitoring his cabinet colleagues and their shady deals. But, Mr. Speaker, recently he's had to defend some very obvious mistakes of his own. He was wrong about their bill to remove requirements for coroners' inquests. He was wrong about their definitions bill. And yesterday he was wrong about the 16 deputy sheriffs in Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, North Battleford, and Weyburn that they're throwing out of work.

When asked about these sheriffs yesterday, the minister said that they are not armed. Mr. Speaker, they are. These sheriffs keep our courtrooms and our courthouses safe. How can the minister defend firing sheriffs whose jobs he clearly does not fully understand? And how can he assure the people of Saskatchewan that he is putting public safety ahead of the Sask Party desire to cut all that they can?

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again we have to correct the record. These are not armed positions. These are the individuals that man the perimeter screening devices at our court facilities, Mr. Speaker.

We've made a decision that we want to look for efficiencies with respect to the delivery of that service, Mr. Speaker. But it's wrong to suggest and it's wrong to fearmonger with the people of Saskatchewan that the court security is going to be compromised as a result of this action. These are perimeter screening individuals, Mr. Speaker. And I can confirm to the House and I can assure the people of Saskatchewan that the level of service with respect to the security to staff or the judiciary will not change, Mr. Speaker.

We're very concerned about courthouse security, Mr. Speaker. We're very concerned about the people that access our court

facilities, whether it's the judiciary, whether it's the public, or whether it's people that are in conflict with the system. So, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the people of Saskatchewan that the level of security will not be compromised and that these are unarmed positions.

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

Role of the Global Transportation Hub in Land Acquisitions

Mr. Wotherspoon: — So it appears that the Minister of Justice has found his feet, found his voice here today. So we'll go back to the question that has been put to him without an answer here.

We know that it was the Minister of Justice that flagged the deal that was brought forth by the scandal-plagued minister and the CIC minister as a problem with the concealed identity. And he was the one that essentially stopped this deal in cabinet.

But the question is, why is it not a bit strange that just a year later this deal came back in, with this time a higher price and a new name on the title? The question to the Justice minister: what changed?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The provincial auditor examined all of these matters, Mr. Speaker. She went through, with her team of experts, the thousands of documents, of emails, all of the records which she requested including cabinet documents provided to her by the government.

She went through all of those, Mr. Speaker, and she came to a conclusion after examining all of those documents. The conclusion was that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no fraud, and there was no conflict of interest. And once again, Mr. Speaker, just because the Leader of the Opposition doesn't like the conclusion that she came to, he should accept it.

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

Privatization of Crown Corporations

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, they're making it up as they go along. Just look at all the ill-conceived legislation we're seeing. And it's not just the Ministry of Justice. Look at Finance. For two days, the Minister of Finance has laughed off genuine concerns that Saskatchewan Crown corporations could be subjected to federal corporate income tax if they ever become less than 90 per cent publicly owned. Mr. Speaker, that is a likely consequence of their too-cute-by-half definition change.

Will the Minister of Finance today admit that this is a problem he did not consider? And will he tell us what his plan is to stop the possible leak of tens of millions of dollars to Ottawa that, until now, he has been trying to cause?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Mr. Speaker, if the Finance critic, the

old grim leaper over there, has an offer she would like to put on the table with respect to one of our Crown corporations, we absolutely would do diligence on that offer, Mr. Speaker.

What she is asking are complete hypotheticals, Mr. Speaker. What we are dealing with here is *The Interpretation Act* that defines privatization. What she is trying to do is, as I said yesterday and the day before, laugh it off because it is laughable, Mr. Speaker. There has been no offer on any Crown corporation in the province of Saskatchewan. We're dealing with the definition of privatization.

Should there be an offer, Mr. Speaker, an unsolicited offer, by all means, as I said yesterday, the Ministry of Finance along with Crown Investments Corporation — I'm sure the Ministry of Justice would weigh in — we would take a look at the aspects of that offer and how it applied to any particular Crown corporation. And we'd do our due diligence, Mr. Speaker, on the cost-benefit analysis of that particular offer here in the province of Saskatchewan. It's a complete hypothetical, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Quite clearly the Minister of Finance did not do his homework. He should spend more time working to serve Saskatchewan than memorizing attack lines or coming up for excuses for their growing deficit and deepening debt. Mr. Speaker, here are his excuses: income tax, corporate tax, crops, health care, education, social services, even people in jail. And let's set aside the fact that the Minister of Corrections says that's not really true.

Mr. Speaker, if the minister won't let me help stop him from sending tens of millions of dollars in new tax dollars to Ottawa, will he at least let me help him with the excuses for their deficit? How about a \$25 million GTH scandal, a \$1.5 billion job-killing carbon capture tax, tens of millions in health care dollars to an American assembly line consultant, and millions wasted on out-of-province contractors? Mr. Speaker, would the minister like me to go on?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, given what we've seen in question period today, how are we to accept as fact the preambles or the things that members are saying, including what the Justice critic had to say about the issue with the deputy sheriffs — wrong on that issue — including what the Leader of the Opposition has said about members in this House recently and, well, a couple of years ago when he had to rise and apologize because they were wrong.

[10:45]

And now this member, this member, we're to accept her preamble to the question. Here's what she wrote just a few days ago to the *Shellbrook Chronicle*. She said this: "In 2009, the Sask. Party introduced and, with the support of the NDP, passed into law a plan to make the province's . . . [big] polluters pay . . ."

Mr. Speaker, it's on the record of this Assembly. They voted against that bill in 2009. They voice voted against the bill. They opposed the bill in committee and in adjourned debates. How in the world are we to believe a word that comes from the other side of the House?

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

Children in Provincial Care

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, last week when we raised concerns about children in care being left at hotels, the minister said there were nine. Now she agreed that this is still a problem but, Mr. Speaker, we heard that from the last minister. In fact she promised to end the practice altogether, but it's still happening.

Mr. Speaker, the previous Children's Advocate had serious concerns with children in hotel rooms, and we assume the new one will as well. Will this minister, like the last minister, commit to getting all kids in care out of hotel rooms? But unlike the last minister, will she actually do something about it and bring an end to this disturbing practice?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question because I'm very, very pleased to report that, as of the last two days, we have zero kids in hotels as a result of emphasizing that we need to move kids into emergency receiving spaces sooner, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, the fact is this issue is getting astronomically worse. The minister told us last week nine kids were in hotels. That was on one given night. And again the minister did acknowledge that even nine were too many.

But, Mr. Speaker, let's look at the fuller picture, the last six months. In May there were 30 kids in care placed in hotels; June, 11; July, 51; August, 44; September, 38; and in the first 25 days of October, it was 22. Mr. Speaker, in the first four months of 2016 there were five occurrences of kids staying in hotel rooms. Then in the subsequent six months, we see this number jump to 196 kids.

Mr. Speaker, I'm happy that the minister has indicated that they're working on this problem. But I want to see what the long-term plan is from this government to ensure that no more vulnerable kids are placed in hotel rooms.

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Mr. Speaker, as I said before, the issue of children in care is one that we take very, very seriously. It is very sad to report that we cannot control the number of children in care. That is, I think, very unfortunate. However we have taken and we continue to take serious action to address this issue.

For example, we have 105 spaces in Regina, 46 in Saskatoon, 27 in P.A. [Prince Albert], and 229 province wide. We are opening four new spaces here in Regina at the end of this month and 10 more in Yorkton. I'm pleased to report that since we launched the foster families awareness program, which we've talked about in this House before, 17 new families have come forward. To say that we are doing nothing on this issue, Mr. Speaker, is frankly wrong. It is a serious, very serious matter, and we are taking it very, very seriously.

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

Donations to Saskatchewan Party

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday we pushed the Premier to commit to getting big money out of Saskatchewan politics, to bring Saskatchewan in line with other provinces, to ban corporate, union and out-of-province donations to make our democracy more democratic. But, Mr. Speaker, the Premier said our system is just fine — just fine for him and his friends.

But Mr. Speaker, the Premier relies on some of those corporations to pay into a fund his party collects to give him a nice, big bonus, just for being the leader. Must be nice. But the Premier says these big corporations should have a say in our political system. He told the media, "How do you deny them the chance to participate in democracy?" Participate? Sounds like pay-to-play to me. Saskatchewan democracy is for Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker. So will the Sask Party work with us to get big money out of Saskatchewan politics?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, it's an interesting conclusion coming from my honourable friend. Because if what he says he believes, then he would accept the fact that unions were paying to play the NDP. That is exactly what he's saying, because up until now, of course, they've been able to accept and have corporate donations and union donations. If the rationale is that that's all about paying to play, then he should maybe disclose to the House what unions got paid back for the money they gave to the NDP in terms of influence in their caucus.

Mr. Speaker, it's true that 10 per cent of donations to the Saskatchewan Party come from companies headquartered outside the province, Mr. Speaker. We're actually taking that money from other provinces and repatriating it back to Saskatchewan, putting it to work in Saskatchewan.

That's an interesting contrast from the NDP, who in the last election, with all of the money they raised from unions and individuals, spent 70 per cent of all their campaign expenses outside the province of Saskatchewan. They had to hire an outside-the-province firm to do their staging and lighting, even though we've got a lot of companies that do that good work right here. They had to, Mr. Speaker, hire a company to help them co-ordinate their tour of Saskatchewan from outside Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, when the next election comes along in about four years, we want to help them lower their expenses on out-of-province companies. We've got a map of Saskatchewan we can send across the way, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Yes, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Central Services has requested leave. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the minister.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through and to all the members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce, for those of you who don't know him, Mayor Bruce Evans of White City. He has held the post in White City for 10 years and has presided over unprecedented growth in the White City and area. I want to thank him very much for his stewardship in White City and continued success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the minister across and welcome Mayor Bruce Evans also, from White City. I look forward to working with you in the future and helping grow Saskatchewan. So thanks for coming to your Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — Why is the Government House Leader on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I believe the House Leader . . . minister has asked leave to raise a point of order. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I actually have multiple point of orders to bring forward. The first point of order, the member from Nutana used the phrase "making stuff up" which, on March 25th, 2013 in *Hansard*, was deemed out of order. So I'm wondering if we could address that one first, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, I'm sure if you'll review the record, that it goes to, you know, certainly it's well accepted that there's no list or unallowed list of words or phrases that are not able to be said. But certainly there's also a question around what motive is imputed with the phrase itself. So I'd ask the Speaker to review the record because certainly these questions were put in earnest and in accordance with the rules of the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I was listening closely during debate today and I will review *Hansard* and reserve judgment for a later date. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In regards to the questions that were brought up in question period about the Saskatchewan Party's political donations, I believe those were out of order according to rule 20(2) where the scope of questions . . . Questions can be asked in question period:

. . . relating to any matter within the administrative competence of the government or on matters related to individual . . . [ministry's] responsibility may be asked of a Minister of the Crown. Questions on issues not officially connected with the government, of a private nature, related to Board of Internal Economy, caucus, party or political responsibilities are prohibited [Mr. Speaker].

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Certainly the electoral finance law of this province and the expenditure that is involved on the part of the, in the province of Saskatchewan, when it comes to overseeing the electoral finance law of this province, surely to goodness that is a matter of responsibility and competence for the Government of Saskatchewan. And of course that would then lead to the fact, Mr. Speaker, that those questions that were . . . the question that was put by the member from Saskatoon Centre were indeed well in order.

The Speaker: — I will review *Hansard* and reserve judgment for a later date. Why is the Opposition House Leader on his feet?

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On a point of order.

The Speaker: — What is the nature of your point of order?

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. During the first exchange at the start of question period, the Minister of the Economy, while the Premier was speaking, shouted over that, quote: "That's an absolute lie." That is of course unparliamentary language, Mr. Speaker, against the rules of this place, and I'd urge the Speaker to call on that member to withdraw and apologize for that comment.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I don't think it was on record. I'd ask you to review *Hansard* and check exactly what *Hansard* captured, because I didn't hear that myself, Mr. Speaker. So I'd ask you to review it.

The Speaker: — Now that we're half hour out of question period, I'd like to once again reserve judgment on this until I have a chance to review *Hansard*. Any other point of orders? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to move a motion please.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked leave to introduce a motion. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

MOTIONS

Leaves of Absence

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move the following motion:

That leaves of absence be granted to the members of Saskatoon Willowgrove and Regina Elphinstone-Centre for Monday, November 7th to Thursday, November 10th, 2016 inclusive to attend the Global Elections Organization Conference in Washington, DC with the Chief Electoral Officer.

I so move.

The Speaker: — Government House Leader has moved the motion:

That leaves of absence be granted to the members of Saskatoon Willowgrove and Regina Elphinstone-Centre for Monday, November 7th to Thursday, November 10th, 2016 inclusive to attend the Global Elections Organization Conference in Washington, DC with the Chief Electoral Officer.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order the answers to questions 138 and 139.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has ordered responses to questions 138 to 139.

[11:00]

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Review of Land Acquisition for Global Transportation Hub

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And

indeed, it's a great honour to be able to rise to speak to a motion today that I think is very important for the people of Saskatchewan, and I will move the motion at the end of my comments, Mr. Speaker. But as you know and as was published in the order paper, we're calling on this Assembly to do the right thing and to continue to work with the Provincial Auditor.

She did great work back in the spring and she did a lot of research and she provided us with a very thorough report. And now we are calling upon the government to take it further, the next steps that are required. First of all, we think . . . And we've called for this since February, Mr. Speaker, is a judicial inquiry into the goings-on at the GTH land scandal. And then we're also looking for a forensic audit because, Mr. Speaker, a lot of the numbers are still in question and we need to get the transparency and accountability for the people of Saskatchewan that they deserve when millions and millions of our taxpayers' dollars are being wasted and improperly spent. And I mean, that's certainly something that the auditor did agree upon, was the mismanagement, the gross mismanagement of taxpayers' dollars.

I think what would really bring this issue to rest too is that this government fully co-operate with the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] in the investigation, any current investigation that's going on, and any investigation in the future.

So time is very limited, Mr. Speaker. And I've had an opportunity to look at the Provincial Auditor's comments which were delivered on the last day of session in June, if you recall. She has a very thorough review of the processes. And indeed in her preamble to the report itself she made it very clear that she thought that her job in this — and her job is not exhaustive — but her role in this is to examine the processes and the procedures. And that's certainly what she's done.

In fact she said, in her first description of what she decided the scope of the audit would be, she decided to do two audits concurrently — one on the processes of the GTH and the other on processes of the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure during the periods in question. So we are looking at procedures and values, and that's what this report . . . This is the beginning of where we need to look into the Global Transportation Hub scandal.

What the auditor didn't do — and this is what we're attempting to do here in the Assembly, what the media's attempting to do, and the people of Saskatchewan are asking — is we're trying to find out why. The auditor looked at how, and the auditor looked at what, but it wasn't her job to determine why. And those are the questions that we have been putting to this government, to these cabinet ministers day in and day out in this Assembly since we reconvened in October.

And unfortunately, as we saw today again, a complete muzzling of cabinet ministers who are not being allowed to answer the questions that are being put to them. And we see bluster and desperation on the part of the current Minister of the Economy, Mr. Speaker. And this is what's completely unacceptable as far as what's going on with the GTH land scandal.

So I've identified a number of the whys in her report that I think need to be answered. And that's what a judicial inquiry would

do, and that's what a forensic audit would do. And I know I won't have time in the 15 minutes that I have to raise all of the whys that come out of the auditor's report.

I don't know why this government is treating the auditor's report as final when it's clearly raised more questions. And obviously if they don't want to answer the questions, you're only led to one conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So the main question I guess is found on page 4 of her report where she identifies that, other than the 245 acres in question, the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure bought all of the land for the GTH.

So that's always been a really burning question for me is, why didn't Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure buy all of it? And if you look at all the back and forth between the minister of Highways, the member for Indian Head-Milestone — he was the minister at the time — he knew what his ministry was up to in terms of the bypass. And why didn't he make those recommendations to the then minister of the Economy? Why was the deviation from the normal practice undertaken? And there's nothing in this audit that tells us the answer to those questions, Mr. Speaker. And these members are not providing those answers to the public today.

So you have to question . . . Another question, why? Why aren't they sharing that information? What was it that the former minister of Highways knew? And what was he telling the former minister of the Economy? So why, why aren't we getting the answers to those questions?

Interestingly enough even though GTH is now apparently grown up and ready to take on its own affairs, much of the land out of the GTH is still in the name of the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure. So there obviously is a very close relationship between those two agencies. Highways is doing all the work for GTH right from the get-go. And yet for some reason — and we don't know why — GTH management, despite the fact that GTH management recommended that the GTH not go ahead with the purchase, there was this rush to purchase the land and knowing full well that Highways could have expropriated it for a much, much, much, much lower price, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

On page 9 of her report, the auditor pointed out the following. She said:

Effective land acquisition processes, including planning processes, involve identifying what and when land is needed, and acquiring necessary land in a financially-responsible manner. Ineffective processes to acquire land can present risks. These include:

Not acquiring land in a timely or systematic manner resulting in increased cost to the taxpayer.

Now as we know, the final contract for the bypass was in place in 2014. The planning had been undergoing for many, many years prior to that, Mr. Speaker, when this government chose a P3 [public-private partnership] to create the bypass. So the question is, what happened? Why did this government and this cabinet not do the work they were supposed to do to represent

the people of Saskatchewan? And why did they rely on the GTH minister at the time, despite the fact the GTH management had recommended that they not purchase the land?

We know that in 2008, as early as 2008, the Ministry of Highways told the landowners in question that their land was about to expropriated. Well you know, Mr. Speaker, if you tell me that my land's about to be expropriated, I will know that it is probably going to go up in value if I sold it. Now if it's expropriated, of course then there's a different process, and fair market value is a moving target in terms of what appraisers will value that land at. But knowing it's expropriated, right away that's a red flag going up for anybody who's interested in flipping real estate, Mr. Speaker.

So in 2008, Ministry of Highways notified all these landowners of its plan to acquire their lands for the connection route. Now of course Highways has expropriation authority. So that's a hammer that they have. For some reason this government decided not to give GTH expropriation authority, so they were stuck. Why didn't they go to Highways? They knew they could've got the land for much cheaper. So again we have the question, why? Why did GTH decide to proceed with acquiring this land when it was very clear that Highways could have done it for much, much cheaper? And I think even the average citizen would know that, Mr. Speaker, that if you have expropriation rights, you're not dealing with rampant land speculation.

So that's a huge question that the report of the auditor was not even required to do. She was identifying problems with processes and indeed identified a number of very serious, serious problems with the processes that were followed. But again the questions of why aren't being answered.

Another question. In June of 2012, the GTH was then looking for appraisals for the south and the east parcels. And we know the south parcel was appraised at a value of about \$15,000 per acre, and the east parcel, at that time, was appraised at \$17,000 per acre. I believe we paid \$103,000 per acre for that land.

Now at this time, the GTH CEO [chief executive officer] was suddenly let go, and we have a new CEO, Mr. Dekker, placed on an interim basis. So Mr. Dekker was a good friend of the Sask Party, and we know that he was put in very quickly to deal with the management of the GTH. The question is, why? Why was the former CEO, Mr. Law, replaced in 2012? Why was he asked to leave? And we don't have any answers to that question, Mr. Speaker, but we do know that Highways was very actively involved at the time.

In fact just a month before, in May of 2012, the GTH CEO told the board in writing that the Ministry of Government Services and the Ministry of Highways was supposed to manage the acquisition of the south and east parcels. So here we have May 2012, the CEO is saying Highways is going to manage the purchase of this land, and in June 2012, that CEO is fired or let go. We don't know what the circumstances were or why. But we do know from the auditor's report the fact is that he told the board in writing in May that Highways was to manage the acquisition of that land. And then the next month, he's gone. So now what happens?

In 2012, September, GTH received an update on Highways's

revised concept design for the west Regina bypass. And guess what, Mr. Speaker? The GTH board was told at the time that the interchange was expected to consume much of those east parcels. So we have a CEO from GTH saying, Highways should look after this in May. In September of 2012, the board was told that Highways was expected to consume much of the east parcels, and the GTH management then recommended that Highways be instructed to acquire the east parcels.

So here we are in June and September of 2012, where the board and management of the GTH are recommending that Highways do the work. They knew Highways had the processes. They knew Highways had the skills. They knew Highways had the personnel. GTH was in no position to be able to do that. So this is September.

And in October of 2012, one month later, the management told the Chair and the minister, the former minister of the Economy, that the GTH should not proceed with the purchase of the east parcels. September of 2012, the board recommended to the minister that they not do that purchase and that Highways be directed to do that work. So we're talking September of 2012.

And then we have what happened in October-November, or sorry, that was in October. So a month before, the management said, let Highways do it. GTH management told the minister to let Highways manage it. In 2012, this new CEO then entered into a contract with a commercial realtor to immediately pursue assembly of the south and east parcels. So this for me, Mr. Speaker, is the biggest question why. And the question here is, why in October did the management say, let Highways buy it, and why in November did they start, the GTH themselves start purchasing the land? That is one of the biggest questions that is . . . Obviously, this government has no interest in providing answers.

And then we get the cabinet involvement. And, Mr. Speaker, the cabinet's involvement was there all along obviously, all these ministers reporting to cabinet about what's going on. But then we get this rushed package submitted to cabinet in November of 2012. They're moving that the minister ask the government to proceed with the purchase in December of 2012. The cabinet received the joint submission, and God knows how the CIC got involved in all this at this point, although I think GTH had no money because they were having trouble getting Kal Tire to come forward. And they thought they had Kal Tire in the bag, but something happened and Kal Tire decided to step away from the deal. So the minister was left empty-handed. He had no money to bring to the table, and so CIC was dragged into the issue at this point.

So we have all these cabinet ministers who are directly involved: the former minister of Highways and Infrastructure, the Minister of the Economy, and now the Minister for Crown Investments Corporation. And what happens in December? The Minister of Justice says, wait a minute; there's no due diligence here. So this scuppered the whole deal for yet another year.

And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there isn't enough time in this debate to continue to ask the questions of why. But I know my colleagues are going to have a number of questions as well to ask about the why. What was going on in cabinet? What was going on with the Minister of Highways? What was going on

with the Minister of the Economy, the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation? Why were they in such a hurry to buy this land when a month before the management was saying, let Highways buy it, let Highways buy it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to move the following motion and ask the Assembly to support it. I will read the motion for the record:

That this Assembly supports the work of the Provincial Auditor; and

That this Assembly calls upon the government to launch a judicial inquiry and a forensic audit into the GTH land scandal so that Saskatchewan people can finally get the transparency and accountability they deserve; and further

That this Assembly calls upon the government to fully co-operate with any RCMP investigation into the GTH land scandal that is currently ongoing or may be launched in the future.

And, Mr. Speaker, I so move.

[11:15]

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has forwarded the following motion:

That this Assembly supports the work of the Provincial Auditor; and

That this Assembly calls upon the government to launch a judicial inquiry and a forensic audit into the GTH land scandal so that the Saskatchewan people can finally get the transparency and accountability they deserve; and further

That this Assembly calls upon the government to fully co-operate with any RCMP investigation into the GTH land scandal that is currently ongoing or may launch in the future.

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

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy to rise and have the opportunity to participate in this debate. Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if the members opposite have been listening to the answers the Premier and the Minister Responsible for the GTH have been giving in the question period, but they are very clear on this topic, especially when it comes to the Provincial Auditor's report.

I'm happy to go through it all again for them. Hopefully this time they'll be listening.

On February 9th of this year, an order in council was signed that requested the Provincial Auditor to perform a special audit to examine whether or not the Government of Saskatchewan followed appropriate procedures and received appropriate value with respect to the land acquisition at the Global Transportation Hub. Mr. Speaker, this included the examination of any transaction leading up to the said acquisition. Section 25 of *The*

Provincial Auditor Act states:

The provincial auditor may examine any person on any matter relating to any account that is subject to an examination or audit by him, and, for the purposes of that examination . . .

Under that authority the Provincial Auditor released her report on June 30th of this year. The auditor did find a number of instances where the proper processes were not followed. She identified those instances and made recommendations on how to address them: two recommendations specifically for the Global Transportation Hub Authority, and eight recommendations for the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, our government appreciates the Provincial Auditor's quick and thorough work on this and we are implementing all 10 recommendations. The Provincial Auditor also stated in her news release that "The audit did not find evidence of conflicts of interest, or indications of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or board of directors," which included the minister.

In a subsequent media interview on July 4th of 2016, the Provincial Auditor is quoted as saying:

In any audit, as auditors we're always looking for red flags. And because this is a land transaction, we did look for conflicts of interest. We didn't find [any] evidence of conflict of interest or indications of fraud or wrongdoing in the course of our work, so there were no red flags there.

This side of the House will listen to the Provincial Auditor and her team of experts and follow her recommendations. I find it interesting that the members opposite asked the Provincial Auditor to look to the GTH but as soon as her findings didn't fit their agenda, they refused to accept her report.

Mr. Speaker, it would be nice if the members opposite would acknowledge the success that the Global Transportation Hub has had this far at growing our economy, because let's not forget the great investment and job creation that have come from this project. Private sector investment in the GTH has now surpassed \$485 million. Over 860 jobs currently exist at employers that call GTH home. Employment during construction has created over 1,800 jobs. Every week there are over 4,800 truck movements in and out of the GTH.

The GTH plays a central role for our producers in the province to allow efficient movement of their goods by both rail and truck. The GTH, now in its sixth year of operation, is admired by industry peers who understand that logistics hubs like the GTH take 20 to 25 years to reach full maturation. Apparently, investment and job creation mean nothing to the members opposite because we have not heard one ounce of support from them on this project.

Mr. Speaker, in my role as Legislative Secretary to the Ministry of Economy for export development, I recently attended a forum in Regina where I met and listened to Tiffany Melvin, president of NASCO. NASCO, for those of you who don't know, is the North American Strategy for Competitiveness, a

tri-national coalition focusing on freight logistics, energy in the environment, and skilled workforce certification programs.

Ms. Melvin is an expert in her field, and this is what she had to say about the GTH:

Inland ports are huge economic engines and huge drivers for job creation, growing local companies, and provide opportunities to capitalize on cargo shipping through the province — having trade stop here rather than drive on through.

We've worked with inland ports across North America for 18 years. We've been really amazed at how thoughtful and together the GTH are and the progress they've made in such a short time.

Trade and freight movement is the backbone of this nation's economy and directly impacts the costs and goods in the marketplace. The GTH has the opportunity to be a major player in the continental freight movement network and to put Saskatchewan on the map.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to focus on the last quote from Ms. Melvin: "The GTH has the opportunity to be a major player in the continental freight movement network . . ." Like so many times in the past, the NDP are willing to pass up on an opportunity that would make Saskatchewan a major player. Our government is committed to growing our province and our economy, and it's clear that the members opposite would like Saskatchewan to go backwards, just like their party.

Mr. Speaker, speaking of growing the economy, the GTH has made recent inroads into trade with China. The GTH was invited to sign a co-operation agreement with one of China's largest economic development groups, the China Overseas Development Association, or CODA. During a signing ceremony on September 4th of this year in Beijing, CODA Secretary-General Zhenwei He said:

The strategic location, high-efficient facilities and services, and supporting governmental policies make the GTH an attraction for Chinese government organizations and enterprises."

Since that event, 38 companies have requested more information on the GTH, and three new companies have flown in from China to visit the GTH.

The GTH will be hosting a CODA delegation in Regina in early 2017. The GTH has recently signed a co-operation agreement with the port of Qingdao in Shandong province which is the seventh largest port in the world. An agreement of collaboration which includes "connecting importers and exporters to respective port services, promoting . . . efficient distribution and delivery . . . promoting increased trade volumes through Qingdao and the GTH, as well as sharing best practices." The GTH has also signed a similar agreement with Henan Imported Materials Public Bonded Centre which is a critical inland port in China's Henan province.

On September 24th of 2016, the GTH signed a strategic co-operation agreement with China's Linyi comprehensive

foreign trade zone. The Linyi warehouse city is ranked third in its category in all of China with an annual trade volume of approximately \$5 billion. The strategic co-operation agreement includes best practice and operations knowledge sharing, exchanging market resources, and positioning the GTH as Linyi's foreign trade zone's preferred location in North America.

Mr. Speaker, expanding trade markets for our producers and manufacturers is crucial for Saskatchewan's growth. We export about 70 per cent of what we produce. Nearly one in five jobs in this province are reliant on international exporters. In the past decade we have nearly doubled to the \$32.5 billion worth of goods that were exported last year.

The GTH is playing a significant role in ensuring Saskatchewan exports continue to grow. The GTH has allowed for trade opportunities and economic growth, but apparently that doesn't interest the members opposite because we haven't heard them talk about the benefits of the GTH. And I think I know why. They don't want the people of Saskatchewan to know these facts about the GTH because it doesn't fit with their rhetoric. They won't believe the Provincial Auditor's report because it doesn't fit with their rhetoric. Mr. Speaker, this is about them trying to gain political points.

I'm happy that I've had the opportunity to participate in this debate because I am happy to tell the people of Saskatchewan about the great investment, trade, and job opportunities that the GTH has created for the people of Saskatchewan. I would ask all members opposite to support the work that the GTH is doing to expand export capability and support long-term economic growth for our province. I would also ask once again that members opposite accept the findings of the auditor's report that was released on June 30th of 2016.

I will not be supporting this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to stand in my place today to certainly give our perspective and our viewpoints on the motion that had been passed. And of course I stand in support of the motion by my learned colleague and as it relates to having a forensic audit done to really expose the challenges behind the Global Transportation Hub. And most of the people . . . which we use the acronym GTH, Mr. Speaker. Most of the people basically want to understand what exactly happened here. What is the GTH? What occurred? And, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what the opposition is trying to find out, but once again we continue getting no answers from the government.

And I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, from our perspective, what we know happened is that typically what would happen when you build a road is that there's some people want to not sell to you, and on occasion you've had that challenge in Saskatchewan. Then the Department of Highways had the ability to expropriate land. And as a former minister of Highways, Mr. Speaker, when we were doing the road near Saskatoon, in fact when we were building the road towards Whitecap, Mr. Speaker, we had the challenge of some of the landowners not wanting to sell land to the Department of

Highways. And what happened which is something that often is not encouraged by government, we had to expropriate land. And how you do it, Mr. Speaker, is basically assess the land value and offer the party what the assessed value of that land is worth, and by law, you can actually force them to sell that land to you.

And on that particular highway, Mr. Speaker, we had a great lobby by then chief, Darcy Bear, to try and get that road fixed to Whitecap. Obviously more people would know the same road that runs to the casino, Mr. Speaker. We had landowners along that particular highway that were not interested in selling, and obviously Highways had to use their legislative authority to do that because obviously the road was quite important to build.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that much occurred here in the same instance where, typically, what would happen on the Regina bypass . . . And for those that may not know the history of it, the NDP began the bypass just to make sure that there was the safe flow of traffic and goods and services as we know that GTH concept is really good for the economy. We began that work a number of years ago. And what happens, Mr. Speaker, is typically we would come in from the northern part of the city, we would go around the northwest first, then of course we make a complete circle around the city. That was the plan and the work began under the NDP.

And at that time, the costs were pegged at 400 million, Mr. Speaker, and now we see that costs have ballooned to well over 2 billion. And not only has that \$2 billion price tag been rising over the last number of years, Mr. Speaker, but the route has been altered.

And certainly, as you can see, the out-of-country companies are now getting that work as if we didn't have companies here in Saskatchewan that could do that work, Mr. Speaker. But obviously, the Sask Party made it very easy for a large multinational company out of, I think it's out of France if not Great Britain that is now doing the work of building a highway around our great city.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have to be very, very cognizant of the history of how typically what had happened. And as any case, Mr. Speaker, as you know, when the route was designed, there were certain people that did not want to sell to Highways. They didn't want to sell their land. In fact there's court proceedings now, as we speak, arguing against that particular value of that land.

So what I'm trying to do is draw, as simple as I can, a picture of what happened around the Global Transportation Hub, the GTH. So what would happen is that traffic enter the city of Regina. We can divert some of the traffic around the city as opposed to having it all congested within the city, and you would make a complete loop around the city and connect to Highway No. 1. And of course near the Highway No. 1 the interchange would have what they call the Global Transportation Hub where goods and services could collect and be distributed throughout the region.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's a very simple process, and somehow the Saskatchewan Party really messed this one up. And I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that one of the things that . . . Obviously

the biggest foul-up is the land deal that we're talking about, where they're paying, were paid for land over twice as much as what the land was worth. And we know that there was a party insider that really was part of the benefactors of that particular deal. And this is where the people of Saskatchewan . . . I know a lot of people in Saskatchewan just don't like this kind of activity at all, and they're quite, quite angry. They're very angry.

[11:30]

So what the NDP are doing today, what we are doing today through this motion is we're keeping it very simple, and we're keeping it very serious. What we're asking today is to have the Provincial Auditor come in and do a forensic audit. That's all we're asking.

Now people out . . . The government right now keeps . . . Every response they have, they talk about the Provincial Auditor. And I want to be very, very clear that the auditor done a process audit; it was on the process of this land. The auditor did not do a forensic audit, Mr. Speaker.

And according to the Government of Canada, a forensic audit are, and I quote:

. . . designed to identify and gather evidence to support or deny an assessment of possible irregularities, including the misappropriation of funds or assets, reported fraud or specific allegations on the part of a recipient or an individual.

Mr. Speaker, we need a forensic audit.

So we're looking at some of the situation that we find ourselves in. The opposition knows that the Provincial Auditor done a process audit. We know that as a fact, Mr. Speaker. And one of the headlines here, Mr. Speaker, or one of the . . . On her actual news release document, the quote I want to use is, "Auditor: government is not doing enough to mitigate taxpayers' exposure to increases in land value." So that does not exonerate anyone. The auditor was very straightforward and clear. I think she understood that this was a process audit and that she made her recommendations based on that process audit.

But because it's a serious issue, Mr. Speaker, because it is a very, very serious issue . . . And the GTH and the bypass are needed for the economies of the province and certainly of this region, and the NDP support that, Mr. Speaker. What we don't support is these kind of backdoor deals in which we're paying almost twice the value of land to party insiders, Mr. Speaker. So I want to point out that one of the things that's really crystal clear is that the auditor did not do a full forensic audit, and my learned colleague, the member from Saskatoon Nutana, has indicated that she wants a motion that would identify that.

So the members across the way, the members from across the way, if they really want to have the clear conscience necessary then they would support this motion. They would ask the auditor . . . Because certainly if I was the auditor, I would be frustrated right now, Mr. Speaker. I would be frustrated in the sense that she knows that there's a significant difference between a forensic audit and a process audit. A lot of people in

Saskatchewan don't know that difference, as I don't, Mr. Speaker.

So I think to get to the bottom of this, all the NDP are asking — to keep it very straightforward, Mr. Speaker — all the NDP are asking is, okay, let us do a forensic audit. Let's have a full picture of what went on; give the Provincial Auditor the full authority to hold a forensic audit. That's what the motion is about, Mr. Speaker. We're asking the Provincial Auditor to come here and actually do that.

So the members across the way, in every single one of their answers they mention the Provincial Auditor. I think, Mr. Speaker, that they should do her justice. They should do her justice in her answers instead of using her professionalism and her dedication to the people of Saskatchewan as an independent officer of this Assembly. They should not use her as a crutch to justify the things that went wrong on that end from the GTH.

So if I were the Provincial Auditor, I would say they should be very specific. It was a process audit; it was not a forensic audit. And if you want answers then I think the support that we should give the Provincial Auditor right now is to do a forensic audit on what occurred under this GTH land scandal, Mr. Speaker.

What is so hard to accept that? What is so difficult, from our perspective as an opposition, because this is a serious matter. It is not a political matter; it is a serious matter, Mr. Speaker. Why? Because quite frankly, if you look at the impact of other landowners, as I mentioned in the past, I think there's court proceedings going on. As you build this bypass, there's going to be people that won't want to sell their land. Other people are going to argue that their land is worth more. And we understand those arguments. But the government, through Highways, could have easily expropriated these lands and build through these particular areas. As much as that's not a preferred option, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Highways had that opportunity. They had the ability to expropriate land, but Highways was not used, Mr. Speaker.

Instead they went to the Global Transportation Hub, of who the current minister or the past minister, was the Chair of. And then instead of having the GTH buy this land from their own sources, Mr. Speaker, they then turned around and got SaskPower to give GTH the money. So the Minister for SaskPower is the same Minister for the GTH who was the same Minister for the Economy. So look at all these connections, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Time has been expired. I recognize the member from Martensville-Warman.

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to enter into the debate today. I listened with great interest . . . I must admit, I missed about the first minute and a half of the member from Nutana's speech, so maybe I missed the point that she made in that first minute and a half. But, Mr. Speaker, she's a lawyer. I would expect that considering the amount of time that has been taken up in this Assembly talking about this particular issue in question period — not good questions, but time — and the time that we're taking today, that she would've actually made a very compelling case as to why this was actually necessary.

Mr. Speaker, she spent her entire time rehashing a timeline which we can all read in the auditor's report — it's public information — but no compelling case as to why we have to have yet another, or have an inquiry into this and a forensic audit. So I'm waiting to hear that. The member from Athabasca didn't get into the details of that either. It was his usual rant, but not a lot of meaning behind any of that.

But, Mr. Speaker, I do want to point out, on the issue of supporting the auditor, when this went to Public Accounts in February 10th of this year, the Leader of the Opposition was in attendance at that meeting. And I just want to say some of the things that, or repeat some of the things that he had said there about their support for the auditor. And that's really key to our discussion today, Mr. Speaker. He said, and I quote:

Certainly I think [that] that's why it's incredibly important for us as a committee and for us as individual MLAs, irrespective of parties that we may also belong to, to come to this table to support the very important work of the auditor in this very important examination . . .

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition went on to say, and I quote:

And certainly we need to respect the independence of the auditor and the professionalism and integrity of the examination which, in the end, absolutely none of us should be intervening with.

And he went on to say, Mr. Speaker, because he was apparently, in February, very supportive of the auditor. He went on to say, and I quote, “. . . we as members, and that we as the committee, certainly don't dictate the work of the Provincial Auditor.”

And, Mr. Speaker, why did he say that? Because he supports the professionalism and the integrity of the auditor and of her office and of those that she employs, Mr. Speaker. So it's a little bit more than passing strange that for weeks, how much time has been spent for the opposition to basically be questioning the auditor's report.

Because that is exactly what they are doing. By asking questions that have been answered by the auditor, they're questioning her . . . the results in the report, Mr. Speaker. And it's not that she didn't have latitude. It's not like she didn't have an opportunity to look at whatever she wanted to look at. As the Leader of the Opposition had said at that Public Accounts Committee meeting, it wasn't up for the committee to dictate her work. She could find her own path through this and determine what she wanted to look at.

Mr. Speaker, when asked by . . . One of our members at that very meeting asked the Provincial Auditor, and I quote, “. . . do you feel that you have the necessary latitude and authority to do a thorough and complete review of this matter?” That's what the auditor was asked. And her answer was yes. So she made a determination as to how she was going to proceed, who she was going to employ, what method she was going to use, what documentation she needed to look at, which people she needed to interview, and she did all of those things, Mr. Speaker.

We handed over cabinet documents, which is not something that is regularly done in this province. She had free and open authority to look at all aspects of this. And she did, and she came back with recommendations. And, Mr. Speaker, as I said, and now the NDP are questioning the auditor's report by asking questions in this Chamber. She's answered all of those questions. They're looking for some grand conspiracy theory, Mr. Speaker, one that just simply does not exist.

And I've said this before in this Chamber, hyperbole does not increase the credibility of the NDP. But we see it on the floor of this House every day. They're looking for conspiracy theories. They're trying to ramp things up. They're looking for a scandal that doesn't exist. And I think one of my favourite questions came last week when the Leader of the Opposition, in his very conspiratorial tone, said, who is Blackstone? Well, Mr. Speaker, it reminds me of the Jason Bourne movies — what is Treadstone? All we need is some mysterious background music in this Chamber to make their case for them.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have accepted the auditor's recommendations. There are 10 of them. And we admitted, as soon as the report came out, that there were mistakes that were made. There were communications problems between ministries. We've accepted every single one of those recommendations, and we are working towards implementing them, Mr. Speaker, because the auditor did do a very good job. And we appreciate the work that she did, and of course we're going to accept her recommendations. But, Mr. Speaker, like I said, the NDP just keep looking for scandals.

I have a copy of the actual press release that the auditor sent out following the release of her report June 30th of this year, and I'm happy to table this in the Chamber, Mr. Speaker. Maybe the NDP haven't read it. It's online, is where I found it, so it's easily accessible. It's not hidden anywhere. But if they haven't read it, they probably should because it says, Mr. Speaker, and I quote — this isn't us making this up — this is the auditor's press release:

The audit did not find evidence of conflicts of interest, or indications of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or Board of Directors. Rather, the Provincial Auditor found a series of situations and events contributed to delays in buying the land that the GTH viewed as key to its commercial success during a time of rapidly escalating land prices.

That's what she found, a series of situations and events contributed to delays in buying land that the GTH required. You know what she didn't find? She didn't find a scandal. She didn't find conspiracy theories. And, Mr. Speaker, she then recommended 10 recommendations to us and, as I said, we are going to be implementing those.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the NDP motion today is nothing more than a complete lack of confidence in the auditor and her report and her recommendations. And again today, Mr. Speaker, we saw the Leader of the Opposition asking questions about some mysterious phone call, like this is their smoking gun to all of this.

Well, Mr. Speaker, again the auditor looked at all of these

things. They had all the information. They interviewed people. They had documentation. That phone call was no secret to the auditor. She was well aware of that and her conclusion was what, Mr. Speaker? It wasn't germane to her investigation, which means there was nothing there.

And again, Mr. Speaker, the very fact that the NDP stand here day after day after day asking about this mysterious phone call is a clear indication that they do not believe the auditor. And they should come out and say that, Mr. Speaker, because that is the inference behind all of their questioning. It's questioning the auditor, questioning her findings. They keep asking about a phone call, a phone call that the auditor says was not germane to any of her investigation.

It's apparently germane to the NDP and their conspiracy theory, but nothing more, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not sure what they're going to be coming up with next. I'm sure that they have some other angles that they think they're going to have. But, Mr. Speaker, there's . . . When I was growing up, my sister is three years younger than I am, and she had a pretty active imagination growing up. And she would come to my mom and tell her stories. And my mom would always ask her, she was like, where did you hear that? Where did you come up with that? And my little sister's answer always was, in my pretended mind.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know. I don't think that the members opposite have ever met my sister, but apparently they're kind of channelling her because they're making this up in their pretended mind as well. So good luck on that. I think the people of this province know better.

And, Mr. Speaker, I know that there's others who are going to be speaking so I'll be wrapping up my remarks. But I think, Mr. Speaker, we all understand why the Leader of the Opposition is going down this path because, you know, scandals might be interesting to the people out there. He thinks he might be able to get his name into the paper, his face on the news, that somebody would think he's, I don't know, relevant, Mr. Speaker. Because we all know that that's not the fact. We all know that his popularity is worse than both Dwain Lingenfelter and Cam Broten. That is an accomplishment, Mr. Speaker.

So I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, if he wants to be relevant, he says he wants to stand up for the people of this province; well, wasting our time today talking about judicial inquiries into something that's already been resolved by the auditor is not a good use of our time. It is not standing up for the people of this province. If he truly wants to stand up for the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, sign a letter. Support us defending Saskatchewan to the federal government and a job-killing carbon tax.

But instead they don't do that. He's had ample opportunities, Mr. Speaker, to stand up for our province, to side with us. This is not about politics. To save jobs and sectors in our province is not a political issue. It's a Saskatchewan issue. It's an issue about people who are working and paying mortgages and raising their kids, Mr. Speaker, and they have failed every single time they've had the opportunity.

[11:45]

I will not be supporting the motion, Mr. Speaker. You know what I will be supporting? I will be supporting my friend and colleague from Kindersley. I will be supporting our government as we implement the recommendations of the auditor. And I will be supporting the auditor, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure and honour to rise today to speak to this motion moved by my colleague, which of course I support. Time and time again, every single day in this House since the beginning of this sitting, we've been asking nothing but very, very simple, very, very direct questions and getting nothing but tired talking points — no answers. So you know, the next step is for us to try and get some more answers in this 75-minute debate.

It sounds like, from what I've heard so far from the other side, we're not going to get the answers that the people of Saskatchewan deserve and that the people of Saskatchewan have been asking. So you know, Mr. Speaker, we're just going to keep asking them until we get some appropriate answers. Like I said, time and time again, simple, simple questions — no answers. So you know, I'm going to start asking these questions now. And hopefully some of the members opposite, once we have the opportunity to ask them questions, will be able to answer them, and if not, we'll just continue to ask them.

So the first . . . There are so many areas of concern with respect to this transaction and the transactions that have happened with GTH that it's almost hard to know where to start. And I'm not sure if 10 minutes even . . . I know 10 minutes won't be able to do it justice. But I will start with, the first main point of concern for me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is who made this call?

Now it's been interesting watching this story unfold because we've been getting different answers. Different answers have been given to different people. And it's interesting to watch this selective amnesia progress throughout the weeks.

So first what happened, the ex-minister for GTH when asked this question, stated that he could not remember who the call was from, which is very, very interesting because later on he then said that he couldn't remember who the call was from. But then he was sure that the call was not from the Alberta land baron that donates to the Sask Party.

Now I'm not sure how that's supposed to work in somebody's mind. How somebody can completely forget everything, but I'm positive that it wasn't this person. That doesn't make any sense to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It doesn't make any sense to the people of Saskatchewan.

Then later on . . . So this story seems to keep progressing, and the answers we get seem to keep changing. And that's why the people of Saskatchewan have so many concerns about this transaction, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's not some sort of conspiracy that the NDP is trying to make up. The members opposite are even making it worse by continually hiding facts and then later on providing information piecemeal and at a time that they deem is, I guess, appropriate to be providing it.

So what happened most recently in this saga is that an email record was essentially leaked out by a government spokesperson. I have a hard time saying that it was leaked when I know for sure that the government had decided that this was the email that they were going to send out, that it wasn't something that was . . . It wasn't some government spokesperson who was breaching some sort of confidentiality with his or her caucus.

So anyways, the government spokesperson shared this email record that said that the call came from an Edmonton lawyer representing a client named Blackstone. So again that's the third completely different answer that we've received with respect to the question of who made this call. So it's difficult essentially, Mr. Deputy Speaker, believing anything that we hear from the members opposite when they seem to so clearly have no problem giving us three completely different answers on one very, very simple question. This is not a hard question, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Apparently they did have . . . they had knowledge all along who this call came from but didn't seem it appropriate or didn't for some reason seem it appropriate to share that answer with the people of Saskatchewan which is very, very concerning. And even more strange thing about this is it seems that the ex-minister for the GTH failed to write down any contact information for both the lawyer or Blackstone.

Now I haven't sold a lot of parcels of land in my day. I'm, you know, not a wealthy land baron, but I think if I was dealing with . . . if I was on the government side, and I was dealing with multiples of millions of dollars and billions of dollars of taxpayer money, I would be making sure that I was taking very good notes of all of the . . . and close records of all of the conversations I was having with respect to any type of purchase or sale that was occurring on taxpayers' dollars, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And as a lawyer I know that it's very important to be keeping these kinds of records.

So, you know, whether or not the records exist or don't exist, if they don't exist it's extremely alarming that we have a government that doesn't see it appropriate to be or necessary to be keeping good records, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As the people of Saskatchewan and taxpayers, we're entrusting the government with our money, with our tax dollars and hoping and assuming that they're going to expend that money in a way that's best for the people of Saskatchewan and that they're doing so in a way that's financially sound and fiscally responsible. If the government has a practice of not keeping records and not writing these things down, I'm somewhat alarmed as to how financially prudent this government is, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And then as a taxpayer trying to get answers as to what happened to my tax dollars, I get . . . and it's simple questions and the answers change now three times. That's incredibly alarming, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

One of the very interesting things about this phone call is that it was the exact pieces of land that the GTH wants to buy. And cabinet approved it, which is very interesting. You'd think that the minister, once receiving that call, would be very interested in learning more about this mysterious caller. How did this mysterious caller know to call the ex-minister? How did the mysterious caller know to attempt to purchase this specific

parcel of land, Mr. Deputy Speaker? If I was the ex-minister, I would have taken some fairly diligent notes and followed up with that call to figure out exactly what was going on.

It seems apparently . . . And this is the story that we're getting right now and I want to caveat all of my comments because it seems like this story is constantly changing and the sands are constantly shifting in the GTH land scandal. So who knows next week what kind of response we're going to get about this question. And that's why we're going to continue asking these questions because, first of all, it's very important that there's financial accountability in our government. It's very important that our government answer the questions from the Saskatchewan people about what's going on with their finances and with their purchasing decisions. And it's very important that we have answers to these specific questions. And it's very alarming if there's a practice that ministers aren't following up on this very, very concerning information.

I wanted to . . . There are so many other things I wanted to talk about. I wanted to talk about the concerns about what's been going on with the Minister of Justice and what he was privy to at the cabinet table, the discrepancy that has very recently been uncovered between the Minister's of Justice story about the discussion about this at the cabinet table as well, and what was provided to the auditor. Unfortunately, we're already out of time.

Like I said, this is a scandal that needs more time than a 75-minute debate unfortunately. This 75 minutes is all we have, but we'll continue asking questions in question period. We'll continue pushing this issue to the government, and we'll continue going until we get some clear answers, which is why it's so important for us to have a judicial inquiry, frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

If the government feels that they have nothing to hide, there's no reason why they shouldn't be supporting the notion or the motion that my friend has tabled today. With that, I'll conclude my remarks.

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

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is an honour to join in on this discussion today around the motion brought forward by the member from Saskatoon Nutana. But before I get to some of my notes, I just want to hit on a few of the points that the member from Regina Douglas Park made a couple of seconds ago.

First of all, she said that we keep on quoting the auditor's tired talking points. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't think the auditor's tired talking points are something to debate on this floor. I think we should all respect the auditor's opinion. The auditor went through every email, had access to all documents, had access to everything she needed to do a full and thorough audit. And I don't think they're talking points. It's a matter of . . . They use talking points when they talk about the GTH, and we use the truth. So I think that's something that they should learn to bring to this Assembly.

We saw in question period today a lot of their questions brought

forward to our ministers, there are some misconstrued facts in a lot of those questions. And I think that harkens back to the credibility those 10 members have to the people of Saskatchewan, that they keep on bringing forward these. As some people say, they keep jumping the shark, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They keep going too far, too fast on saying there's a scandal here; there's a scandal there, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I remember that they did the same thing with IPAC [International Performance Assessment Centre] a couple, about four years ago. The member, well the former leader who's not here anymore, and the member from Rosemont thought they had a scandal with IPAC and they brought that forward, saying there's going to be RCMP carrying out boxes at IPAC and, Mr. Speaker, nothing — nothing.

The member from Arm River Watrous was the Chair of the committee and they thought they had another gotcha moment. But the member from Rosemont has learned that gotcha politics, quite honestly, he learned it from the member . . . from his first leader, Dwain Lingenfelter. He learned gotcha politics is the way you operate so he's got his 1978 politics going. And Mr. Broten had that same form of politics, he had that politics as well. He thinks that in some point in time they're just going to catch the government in a scandal, and everything's going to be better. And the people of Saskatchewan are going to see, finally they caught them red-handed doing something scandalous. But that's not the way it works, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

What you have to do is work hard to earn the trust of the people of Saskatchewan. You bring policy forward. You bring truthful statements forward in this Assembly, and ask answers about . . . and ask to have truthful questions answered, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think that's something important the members have not quite figured out yet.

I also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to talk about the member from Saskatoon Nutana's motion. And in the first sentence, she asked that this Assembly support the work of the Provincial Auditor. If the members opposite support the work of the Provincial Auditor, I haven't heard it yet. And I've asked that the members opposite accept that work then if they put that in their motion.

In the Provincial Auditor's report that she released on June 30th, 2016, she did find a number of instances where proper practices were not followed. And we've said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We've said there were some mistakes, Mr. Deputy Speaker. She identified those instances and made recommendations on how to address them. There was two recommendations specifically for the Global Transportation Hub Authority, and eight recommendations for the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

The government is implementing all 10 of these recommendations. We take their, the auditor's recommendations seriously and we take the auditor's report seriously, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I wish those 10 members would as well.

The Provincial Auditor also stated in her news release that the audit did not find evidence of conflicts of interest or indications

of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or board of directors, which includes the minister responsible. That's in the auditor's report and in the news release, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

In a subsequent media interview on July 4th, 2016, the Provincial Auditor is quoted as saying:

In any audit, as auditors we're always looking for red flags. And because this is a land transaction, we did look for conflicts of interest. [And] We didn't find evidence of conflict of interest or indications of fraud or wrongdoing in the course of our work so there were no red flags there.

[12:00]

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know they have heard these tired talking points, as the member from Douglas Park said a few times, but they're words directly from the auditor, and the auditor had a wide berth to investigate everything she needed to in these transactions. The order in council that was signed that requested the Provincial Auditor to perform a special audit to examine was OC 85/2016. It allowed the auditor to look at thousands of documents including cabinet documents on whether or not the Government of Saskatchewan followed proper procedures and received appropriate value with respect to land acquisition of the GTH. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's a pretty open-ended . . .

An Hon. Member: — Mandate.

Mr. Steinley: — Scope. Mandate, thank you. That's a pretty open-ended mandate that the auditor had from the government and that's the government that brought that forward and gave the Provincial Auditor that mandate.

So under section 25 of *The Provincial Auditor Act*, she had the authority to “. . . examine any person on any matter relating to any account that is subject to an examination or audit by . . . [her], and, for the purposes of that examination . . .”

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this side of the House will listen to the Provincial Auditor and her teams of experts and follow her recommendations and respect her recommendations. The member opposite should accept her findings as well.

The Global Transportation Hub has had an immense impact on our economy in our province, and particularly right here in Regina. That's why I'm proud to stand and talk about the GTH, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because it's had a huge impact on our economy in Regina. Private sector investment in the GTH has now surpassed \$485 million. Over 860 full-time jobs currently exist at employers of the GTH. That's 860 families that are cared for, 860 community members that have the opportunity to support their family and raise their kids here in Regina because of the GTH.

Those employers include: Canadian Pacific Railway, Consolidated Fastfrate, Emterra Group, Loblaw's, Morguard Investments, SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority], Slinkemo Enterprises, Sterling Truck and Trailer. Those are 860 full-time jobs that are supporting Regina's economy at a time when we need jobs right here in Regina, especially when they won't support us on a carbon tax, and

fighting a carbon tax that might affect all employees at Evraz. So I don't know why those people can't stand up and support a GTH that are bringing jobs here. You see, there's 860 jobs at the GTH, 900 jobs at Evraz, and they really are just throwing mud at 1,800 jobs here in our Queen City, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

John Lee, president and CEO of Economic Development Regina, had this to say about the GTH:

Saskatchewan is a corridor for transportation. The GTH is a critical asset that connects the Regina region to that international corridor. We see that the GTH is an important economic engine that plays a key role in how this province and region achieve growth in the next 20 years and beyond.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the GT has only been in operation for six years and is already succeeding and admired by industry peers who understand that logistics hubs usually take 20 to 25 years to reach maturation. Steve McLellan, CEO of Sask Chamber of Commerce, had this to say about the GTH:

The GTH was never intended to be an overnight thing, but an investment in the future success of the province. The GTH is something that will keep us in the export world for a long, long time.

It is so crucial for exporters to have efficient and effective access to our export markets, and that's what the GTH affords our exporting businesses. Companies choose to build at the GTH because of the direct access to CP [Canadian Pacific] mainline, connecting Saskatchewan to the ports Vancouver and Montreal.

GTH has also been designated a foreign trade zone. It is granted to the GTH by the previous government in 2015. A foreign trade zone, which many people may not know about, is a federally authorized zone where imported goods may be stored, processed or assembled without being subject to import duties.

The GTH is one of only six foreign trade regions in all of Canada. Foreign trade zone status allows the GTH to compete with other sites worldwide, opening the door to additional marketing opportunities and additional foreign investment.

Speaking of global opportunities, the GTH has been very diligent to promote itself as a potential investor. Peter Wallis, president and CEO of the Van Horne Institute, which is known within Canada and internationally as one of North America's leading research institutes focused on transportation, supply chain, and logistics, said this about the GTH: "The development of the GTH opens up Saskatchewan companies to benefits of an efficient connection to world trade, particularly with the Asia-Pacific region."

In September, the GTH was invited to sign a co-operation agreement with one of China's largest economic development groups, the China Overseas Development Association.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one thing I want to say before my time winds up, is the GTH is a large employer for people in Regina. And I think it's come a long way in six years. And I for one will be supporting the GTH, supporting the member from

Kindersley, and supporting this government in expanding trade in exporting business, and not supporting the ridiculous motion before by the member . . . [inaudible].

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

Mr. Olason: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, on July 4th, 2016, the Provincial Auditor said, and I quote:

In any audit, as auditors we're always looking for red flags. And because this is a land transaction, we did look for conflicts of interest. We didn't find evidence of conflict of interest or indications of fraud or wrongdoing in the course of our work, so there were no red flags there.

Mr. Speaker, to the member from Athabasca: the Provincial Auditor has said that there are no red flags and no conflicts of interest. Do you trust that her team has done a thorough job? Yes or no?

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

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor is a professional, independent officer of this Legislative Assembly. And that member knows very well that the auditor done a process audit. This motion is calling for a forensic audit of what happened around the GTH. So if you want to hide behind the Provincial Auditor, at least have the courage to say, come on back in. Do a forensic audit. Let's get to the truth. The people of Saskatchewan need it. Yes or no, do you support that?

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I find it passing strange that the member from Walsh Acres won't support this motion. It says the Assembly supports the work of the Provincial Auditor. So this means he doesn't support the work of the Provincial Auditor if he can't support this motion.

Now we know the junior minister from Meadow Lake has said he needs to check the policies to see if they can go through the phone records. This is funny because they didn't seem to have any issues following policy when it came to the sketchy land deal. He was talking about policies earlier. Can the member from Regina Walsh Acres please commit to helping the member from Meadow Lake check the policies? Or better yet, tell him that the right policy option here is to tell the people of Saskatchewan the truth and to get those phone records out.

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

Mr. Steinley: — Thanks, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There's a few things about that question that are passing strange, as she says. One is, I have more respect for the members of this House to never refer to someone as a junior minister. She's been here long enough to know that that's not proper, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Minister from the Economy has done great work on this file. They made a lot of . . . They were laughing when he announced that former Deputy Premier Doug Moen would take

over the Chair of the GTH — great work by the Minister of the Economy and the member from Meadow Lake.

Also I do support the auditor's findings. I also support that the auditor said the audit did not find any evidence of conflict of interest or indication of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or board of directors. I find it funny that we on this side have been supporting the auditor the whole time. We've been supporting the fact that she did a thorough audit of this operation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But they have never once said they support the auditor's finding, and I'd ask the member to do that right now.

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

Mr. Buckingham: — On September 24th, the Global Transportation Hub signed a co-operation agreement with one of China's largest economic development groups, the China Overseas Development Association. Since then, 38 companies have requested more information about the GTH, and three companies have already flown in from China to visit the GTH. Despite this, the NDP caucus put on a news release on September 28th mocking our government's efforts to expand trade opportunities in China, calling it a Mickey Mouse trade plan.

My question to the member from Regina Douglas Park: will you acknowledge the fact that Saskatchewan's exports to China have doubled in the last five years? And will you recognize that the GTH is making essential contributions to the continued growth of Saskatchewan's export sector?

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, the members on this side of the House will continue supporting the economy. That question had nothing to do with the motion that we put forward today. The people of Saskatchewan deserve answers about how their tax dollars are being spent. That's what we're asking, and those are the answers that we deserve.

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

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We have a lot of questions of the government and a ton of questions around the appraisal. But I'm going to ask the member from Martensville, since the member from Saskatoon University won't answer my question, I want to ask the member from Martensville, a simple answer, yes or no? If you want to support our position that there's an independent officer of this Assembly, a professional named . . . She's a Provincial Auditor. Do you support her doing a forensic audit? No excuses. Yes or no? A simple answer.

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

Ms. Heppner: — Warman. Thank you, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the member opposite's feigned outrage.

I could quote again his own leader's statements from committee meeting, Mr. Speaker, where he said it is nobody's job to tell the auditor what to do or how to do her job, Mr. Speaker, which is exactly why she had full and free latitude and mandate to do the examination that she thought was necessary into this matter when it went before committee in February, Mr. Speaker. If he doesn't like what the auditor did, he should just say that.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We keep hearing that the minister and his right-hand man weren't aware that Highways was looking at the land. Time and time again, GTH management said Highways should acquire this land. And the GTH and the Highways minister talked about this at a cabinet meeting in June 2013. To the member from Regina Walsh Acres: how is it remotely believable that they weren't aware of this?

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

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to say once again the auditor found a number of instances where proper processes were not followed. We agree there are some mistakes made, and we had to . . . There's 10 recommendations that we're going to follow, and we're going to do it to make sure the processes are better next time, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But I also say that the Provincial Auditor said, and I quote, "The audit did not find evidence of conflicts of interest, or indications of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or Board of Directors."

The point I'd like to make, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that if they're so concerned about standing up for Saskatchewan citizens as they say they are, why aren't they going to stand up with us against the carbon tax that's going to cost the people of Saskatchewan money out of their hard-earned pockets? It's going to cost them jobs. It's going to make sure that they can't put food on the table for their families, and we're going to have low . . . more unemployment in the province.

Why wouldn't she tell the member from Rosemont to sign what our Premier sent to Ralph Goodale and make sure that we go to Ottawa with a strong, united voice?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cypress Hills.

Mr. Steele: — Saskatchewan has a trade export-driven economy. One in every five jobs in the province depends on international exports. The GTH, Mr. Speaker, serves as an instrument of trade, providing world-class infrastructure to allow efficient, effective movement of goods in rail and truck, and assist Saskatchewan producers in accessing supply chains for their products.

My question is to the member from Athabasca. Do you not agree that the GTH is a vitally important part of the efforts to ensure continued growth in Saskatchewan and export

industries?

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

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As we've indicated time and time again, the economy is really important to the province overall. It's very important to the NDP. Anything that we can do for efficient movement of goods and services, the NDP will support.

But I go back to the point, Mr. Speaker, that the Sask Party shouldn't be waving shiny little objects. The question we asked today, do you support the professional independence of the Provincial Auditor by giving her great justice to have a forensic audit on this GTH land deal, on the GTH land deal, to make sure that taxpayers' interests, and thus lower taxes, is a net result of efficient use of taxpayers' dollars? We think that's part of the economy. It's a great idea. So do you support it? Yes or no?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Canora . . . or Kelvington-Wadena. Sorry.

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. The member from Athabasca did ask a question to . . . Oh, sorry. Okay, my mistake. I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

[12:15]

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Not only has the GTH created jobs and spurred investment in Saskatchewan, it has increased global market access for Saskatchewan businesses. Mr. Deputy Speaker, my constituents in east central Saskatchewan recognize that efficient movement of goods is critical to our local economies across all of the province.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague the member from Moosomin spoke further on the significant value of an inland port and our relationship with the world through our exports. To the member from Athabasca: do you agree that the GTH has helped make international markets more accessible to northern and central Saskatchewan businesses?

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

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, not wasting millions and millions of dollars on land scandals like this will help the North.

The Deputy Speaker: — Time has expired for the 75-minute debate. I would simply make this observation, members.

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I would simply make this observation, members. First of all, I should apologize for making a mistake and taking up some of your time. But what I would like to point out is that questions and answers should be put through the Chair. So if we could remember that for the

next 75-minute debate.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 1 — Provision of Medical Imaging Services

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Olauson.]

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

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you for recognizing me, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Today I'd like to talk about the private-pay MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] services that were brought into force in February of 2016 and the private-pay CT scans that were introduced in June of 2016.

The MRI Facilities Licensing Act was brought in to provide a free scan for someone from the public wait-list for every one that was paid for. Mr. Speaker, it's hard to believe that only last week and this week the NDP were complaining about wait times and that they need money for health, and this will only help. Mr. Speaker, as of September 30th, 2016, 943 private MRIs were provided, including both patients and organizations like WCB [Workers' Compensation Board], SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], and others. This means 943 patients from the public system will receive an MRI at no additional cost to the health system.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is equivalent to adding an entire MRI machine to the system, operating five hours a day, seven days a week, at no cost to the public system. And it has brought to date a cost savings of over \$835,000 to the public wait-list.

Mr. Speaker, in 2015-16, expenditures on medical imaging was 143 million, up 70 per cent from 2007 of 84 million. Our government continues to invest in the public system. With recent expansion to the Moose Jaw . . . and the implementation of the private MRIs, there has been a reduction of wait times.

In 2007 under the NDP, we had the worst wait times in Canada. Mr. Speaker, since 2007, public MRI capacity has more than doubled from 15,700 to 33,500 patients a year. Now with the recent addition of the MRI to Dr. F.H. Wigmore hospital in Moose Jaw in 2016, there are now 10 public MRIs in Saskatchewan. And the NDP are saying we're doing nothing. We are serving more people, shortening the wait times, and keeping our people from going out of the province, and saving \$835,000 to date.

Mr. Speaker, it bothers me to hear the members opposite complain about us working with the private system. Erin Weir and Don Davies, federal NDP, tweeted that they would like to put a stop to the use of privately provided CT scans and MRI in Saskatchewan. Yet it was okay for the NDP to allow private MRIs for the Roughriders and the workmen's compensation board. At the end of the day, do we not want the best for all our citizens in Saskatchewan — shorter wait times while saving

money and putting it towards the front line of health care?

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan health care system is focusing on improving patients' access needed to diagnostic and treatment services and increasing patients' choices. Expanding private-pay services will extend benefits and increase the capacity and reduce the CT wait times and services while helping the public system. The government spending has increased over 150 per cent since 2007. CT spending has increased 54 per cent since 2007.

Mr. Speaker, the private-pay process is simple. A physician referral is required to obtain a CT or MRI scan. A person wishing to pay for the CT or MRI takes the referral to a private facility to book an appointment. After that scan, within 14 days, a second scan will be provided to the public waiting list at no charge to the patient. I think it's a great deal.

Mr. Speaker, our government, since 2007, has committed to improving health care in Saskatchewan. We've hired 650 doctors, an increase of 37 per cent, since we took government. We've hired 3,200 more nurses, all designated for this province. We have more than doubled their investments in the hospital and health care infrastructures compared to the NDP when the NDP were in government. We've opened 13 long-care homes, more care for the seniors. And under the NDP, they closed 52 hospitals, and the Fyke report called for 50 more closures to hospitals. And they closed 1,200 long-term beds.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe a two-for-one CT-MRI system will only help our health system shorten the wait times and no cost to our taxpayers. This private-pay CT was a campaign promise during the election, and looking at our side of the room, I think the people of Saskatchewan have decided on their choice.

When I think about the fight to move the private CTs and MRIs to our province, it's not like we're alone. There are four other provinces in Canada that already are allowing this: BC [British Columbia], Alberta, Nova Scotia, and Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to tell a story, a little story about my . . . Three years ago I was coaching hockey, midget hockey, and one of my players went into the boards and he buggered up his knee and he had to go to Calgary . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, I know. He was the opposition coach.

Anyways, the family had to take the day off. They drove in to Calgary. They paid over \$800 for that, and he got quick care. And I just, you know, I look at it today and I think it's just a great benefit to have this in our province so our people don't have to go out of the province, spend a bunch of money. And they can spend it in our province and we get a free one onto our waiting list. And I, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am fully in support of this. Thank you.

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

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and thank you to the member from Canora-Pelly for his comments on this motion. There's more I'd like to say about this motion, and in the coming weeks when the motion comes back I'd like to be

able to speak on it. But right now I'd like to move to the adjourned debates.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Batoche has moved to adjourn debate on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I move that this House be now adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved that this House adjourns. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — This House stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:24.]

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GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Brad Wall
Premier

President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Tina Beaudry-Mellor
Minister of Social Services
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission

Hon. Kevin Doherty
Minister of Finance

Hon. Dustin Duncan
Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Telecommunications

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre
Minister of Advanced Education

Hon. Joe Hargrave
Minister of Crown Investments
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Transportation Company

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Minister of Government Relations
Minister Responsible for First Nations,
Métis and Northern Affairs

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of the Economy
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Liquor and Gaming Authority
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan
Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. David Marit
Minister of Highways and Infrastructure

Hon. Scott Moe
Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Water
Security Agency
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation

Hon. Don Morgan
Deputy Premier
Minister of Education
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan
Workers' Compensation Board

Hon. Greg Ottenbreit
Minister Responsible for Rural and Remote Health

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Health

Hon. Lyle Stewart
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Crop
Insurance Corporation

Hon. Christine Tell
Minister of Central Services
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
Capital Commission
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Gaming Corporation

Hon. Gordon Wyant
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation