



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

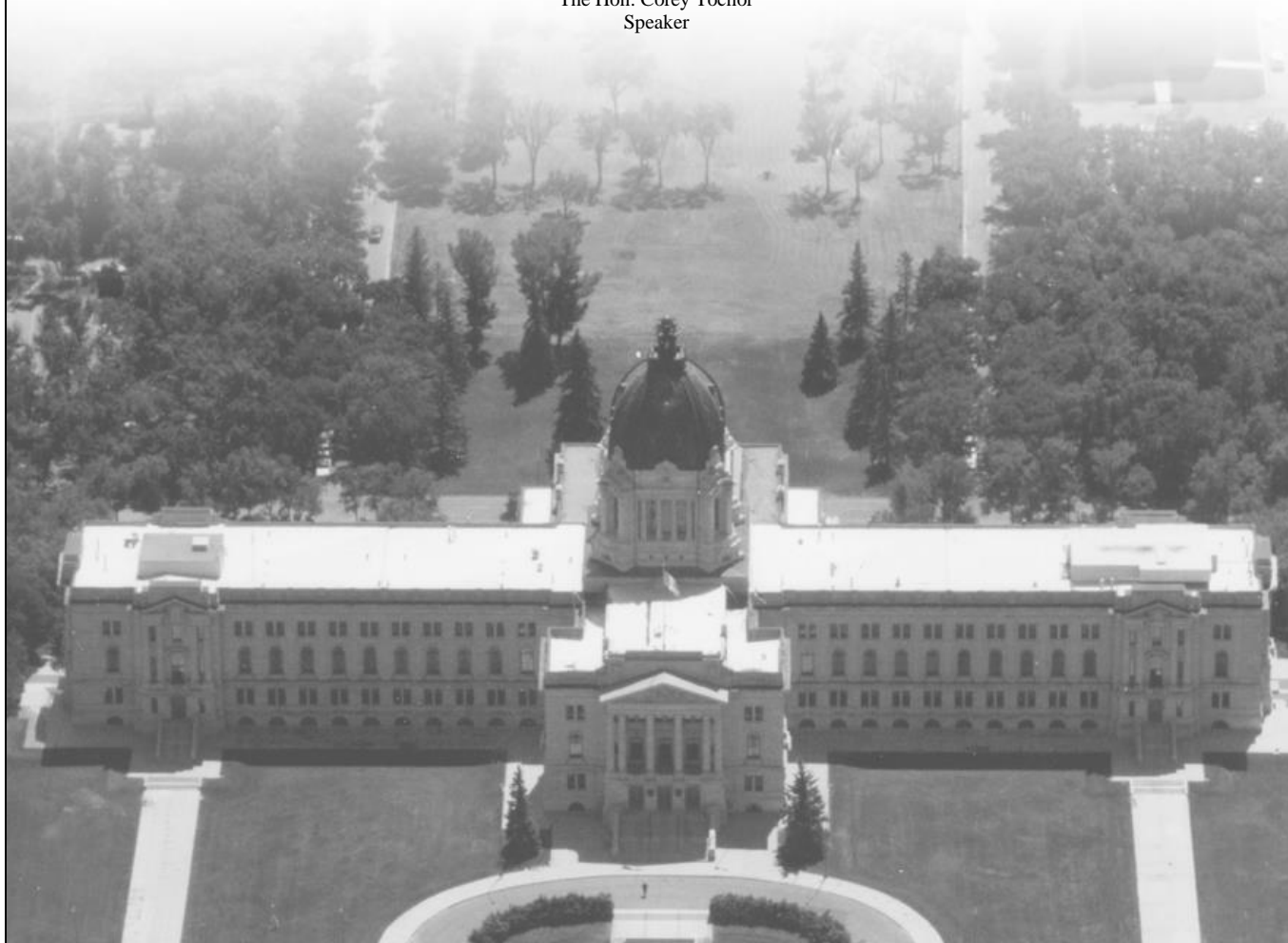
of the

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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Belanger, Buckley — Athabasca (NDP)

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Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

Makowsky, Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

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

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

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Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (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

Clerks-at-the-Table

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Principal Clerk — Iris Lang

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. Michelson: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the west gallery you will notice it is full of students. They're all from Moose Jaw, I'm proud to say, from St. Michael's School, grade 7 and 8. Mr. Speaker, we did considerable work on the school for upgrades a couple of years ago, and it was certainly needed. And they've blessed us with their presence to come here and visit us today.

Mr. Speaker, just to notice this, there's 68 students there. Now there's 49 members on the government side, so we have to be on our best behaviour or they in fact could overtake the government. In fact, Mr. Speaker, in four to five years they will be voting people of the province, and we welcome them here to see the proceedings and encourage them to learn about the democratic process.

And with them, Mr. Speaker, are the teachers, Kelsey Warren, Jason Fisher, and Marnie Moiriuk that are accompanying them along with a chaperone, Shane Warren. So I'd ask members to welcome the St. Michael's class from Moose Jaw and make them welcome in our Assembly. Thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again today to present a petition to reverse the cuts to the Lighthouse program. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners point out that in April of 2014, the then minister of Social Services said that the Lighthouse in Saskatoon would "... take pressure off of existing detox facilities, hospitals, and police cells, while keeping people safe, especially in our brutally cold winters."

The petitioners also point out, Mr. Speaker, that on that same day the Minister of Health said, "We want to ensure that individuals with mental health and addictions issues have a safe place to stay." Mr. Speaker, they also point out that this government since that time has repeatedly indicated that the Lighthouse stabilization unit keeps individuals out of hospital emergency rooms and jail cells.

We on this side of the House could not agree more. We only need to look to the Saskatoon Health Region, Mr. Speaker, that has experienced record over capacity in our hospitals and bursting emergency rooms in recent days. And obviously the Lighthouse is not the whole problem, the cuts to the Lighthouse, but it is certainly a contributing factor, Mr. Speaker, and the government needs to address that. 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 that homeless people in Saskatoon and in Saskatchewan have emergency shelter, clothing, and food available to them before more lives are lost.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Saskatoon. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition from the citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer read 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 Whitewood, Wawota, Moosomin, Rocanville, Wapella, Maryfield, Fleming, Regina, Spy Hill, Welwyn, Langenburg, and Tantallon. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand in my place today to present a petition as it relates to the NORTEP [northern teacher education program] program. The NORTEP-NORPAC [northern teacher education program-Northern Professional Access College] has been a program of higher learning and change to the educational landscape in the North for over the past 40 years. It is a very successful program where, in a most recent report of the last five years of graduates, it has been shown that 94 per cent of its graduates have successfully found employment in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

So the prayer reads as follows:

Respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to immediately restore their five-year agreement to fund the northern teacher education program and to continue to support NORTEP-NORPAC programs in La Ronge and in northern Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed the many pages of petitions, especially the two that I'm presenting today, are

from La Ronge, Buffalo Narrows, and Ile-a-la-Crosse. And I so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition in support of the Wakamow Valley Authority. The people who have signed this petition wish to bring our attention to the following: that as a result of the passage of *The Wakamow Valley Authority Amendment Act* on June 30th, the Wakamow Valley Authority lost their statutory funding of \$127,000 from the Saskatchewan government in addition to \$30,000 supplemental funding. This loss of annual funding negatively affects the ability of Wakamow to maintain and repair the park and provide services to our community.

This funding cut resulted in the layoff of one-third of park staff, which included two summer students and two regular employees. It's a well-known fact that this will negatively impact the Moose Jaw economy through job loss and negatively impacts Moose Jaw tourism and businesses. On June 21st, 2016 the provincial government voted in favour of this bill, resulting in cuts to Wakamow and subsequent job losses. So 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:

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.

This is signed by some folks from Moose Jaw and Regina, Mr. Speaker. I so submit.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present a petition today in support of funding heritage languages here in Saskatchewan. And we know that after 25 years, the Government of Saskatchewan has discontinued all support for heritage language learning in Saskatchewan. Since 1991, heritage language schools have depended on this modest funding from the Ministry of Education to help sustain their programs, and as a result of the announcement by the Ministry of Education, many of these non-profit heritage language schools will be faced with the difficult decision of whether or not they can continue to operate.

But it's also increasingly important to work towards improving access to indigenous languages, many of which are endangered. Heritage language programs provide support not only for immigrants, refugees, and their descendants, but also for Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians who recognize the benefits of learning additional languages. 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 reconsider this decision and restore funding for heritage language education in Saskatchewan heritage language schools.

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

And, Mr. Speaker the people signing this petition come from Saskatoon and Regina. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present to you a petition for a second bridge for Prince Albert. The Diefenbaker bridge in Prince Albert is the primary link that connects the southern part of the province to the North. With no other crossings, heavy truck traffic must be rerouted, adding a significant amount of cost for the businesses in and around Prince Albert in terms of losses or added expenses. The current residents, businesses, and tourists in Prince Albert and northern communities require safe and efficient transportation infrastructure that includes adequate bridges.

That the Saskatchewan Party government refuses to stand up for Prince Albert and this crucial infrastructure issue. That local municipal governments have limited resources and require a second bridge to be funded through federal and provincial governments and not a P3 [public-private partnership] model. That the support of the people and the municipal governments of Prince Albert and neighbouring communities for a second bridge is overwhelming and has been joined by support from industry groups, the Saskatchewan association of regional municipalities and many others across the province, and that the need for a second bridge for Prince Albert has never been clearer than it is today. Prince Albert, communities north of Prince Albert, and businesses that send people and products through Prince Albert require a solution. I'll read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, there's lots of individuals signing these petitions across Saskatchewan, but this particular petition has been signed by individuals from Prince Albert in Saskatchewan. I do so present.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of sexual abuse prevention curriculum in Saskatchewan. Those signing this petition wish to draw our

attention to the following: Saskatchewan has the second highest rate of sexual child abuse in Canada. StatsCan shows that 55 per cent of all victims of sexual offences were children under the age of 18.

Child sexual abuse has lasting impacts throughout a child's lifetime, including mental health concerns, PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder], depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and low self-esteem; in addition, decreased school attendance and achievement and decreased productivity throughout the lifespan. Victims of childhood sexual abuse are four times more likely to commit suicide. Currently there is no comprehensive elementary or secondary curriculum regarding the prevention and reporting of child sexual abuse in Saskatchewan. I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan take immediate and concrete action to develop and implement Erin's law. Such legislation would ensure that a comprehensive health education program would be developed and implemented through grades pre-K through grade 12 along with training staff on the prevention of child abuse.

Mr. Speaker, those signing this petition reside around the province. The particular papers that I'm submitting today are from Regina, Warman, and Wood Mountain. 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 in the recent election campaign, the Sask Party promised they would not privatize SaskTel. The petitioners also point out that instead of looking at their own waste, scandal, and mismanagement, the Sask Party has now talked about breaking their promise and has looked at selling off SaskTel to make a quick dollar.

Mr. Speaker, the petitioners also state that once SaskTel is gone, there is no getting it back and no telling what else the Sask Party will sell.

In the prayer that reads as follows, Mr. Speaker, 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 petition is signed by good citizens from Prince Albert, Hagen, Melfort, and Marcelin. I so present.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise yet again today to present another 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, resulting in layoffs of Aboriginal court workers throughout the province, and in stark contravention of the recommendations

made in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Aboriginal court workers play an important role helping Aboriginal people in criminal and child apprehension cases. Aboriginal peoples are disproportionately represented in Saskatchewan's correctional centres, and Aboriginal court workers successfully help to make our communities safer through reduced recidivism rates. I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, those signing the petition today come from Regina, Melville, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, and Weyburn. I do so submit.

[10:15]

The Speaker: — Why is the member from Regina Lakeview on her feet?

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave for introduction.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to all members for allowing me to rise and to introduce two special guests, Mr. Speaker, to you, to your gallery. I'd like to welcome my mom and dad, Ray and Judy Beck. My mom and dad I think are in today to take in Agribition as they do every year. They made the trip in from Lang this morning. I hope the highways were okay.

Mr. Speaker, like many of us, the reason I stand here today is because of the love and care of these two people. Although they didn't dictate our political affiliations, they certainly did instill values that see me here today — a love of family, a love of education and community, of looking out for the vulnerable in society, and always being willing to roll up your sleeves and do a little bit more than what you're asked. So I just want to say thank you. I'm going to make my mom cry, and I'm going to try not to cry.

But like any member here will know, the value and support of your family allows us to be here and do the work that we do. So I want to warmly welcome you to your Legislative Assembly, and I would invite all members to do the same.

The Speaker: — Why is the member from Indian Head-Milestone on his feet?

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With leave to join the member with an introduction.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great privilege to introduce the member opposite's mom and dad as well, Ray and Judy Beck from Lang. I don't really know Ray as Ray; it's Gus from Lang. And you know, I was sitting here thinking . . . I knew this introduction would be coming as I saw him walk in the gallery. And I know we have to adjourn at 1, but I think I could carry the day until 1 o'clock telling different stories because we go back an awful long ways, playing hockey and against Ray a lot in baseball.

But what I would say is that, you know, every community, every small-town community, if you've been around a small-town community, it takes a family that really steps up on so many different fronts. And if you know the Lang community, you know the Beck family, or if you know the Beck family, you know the Lang community.

Ray and Judy have been instrumental . . . Ray's dad, Russ, was instrumental in so many of the sports. Gus was a tough guy to get out, especially with a low fastball inside, went over the fence every time because I remember catching against him an awful lot. But I enjoyed the winter sports so much more because I got to play with Gus as opposed to against Gus. He was a great hockey player and a strong winger. We played an awful lot of games together and had a lot of championships into a small town of Lang, Saskatchewan.

But it's instrumental, that community and the Beck family. I just want everybody to know a little bit of the history. The member opposite, of course, is going to introduce them as her mom and dad, but I'm going to introduce them as Mr. and Mrs. Lang. Anyway, welcome Ray and Judy to their Legislative Assembly.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood.

First Nations National Land Governance and Economic Development Conference

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the honour to represent the government at the First Nations national land management and economic development conference last month at TCU Place in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, it was a great honour to be able to host this prestigious and important event in my city and on Treaty 6 territory. Dignitaries, guests, and delegates from 125 First Nations from across the country gathered to learn about the process and progress of land management under the Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management.

Mr. Speaker, this gathering provided significant opportunity for networking, the sharing of best practices, and providing an opportunity to connect with bankers, investors, realtors, and other business professionals who are interested in the economic

and business development of First Nations. Over the last 20 years significant progress and accomplishments have been made because of the framework agreement.

Mr. Speaker, there are numerous success stories and examples of where First Nations here in Saskatchewan have demonstrated significant leadership in economic and business development across all sectors. This leadership is creating a better quality of life for First Nations people.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in thanking the organizers and participants of this event and to acknowledge the hard work that was accomplished. Thank you.

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

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, November 25th, is recognized as International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Approximately one-third of women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence at some point in their lives and often this violence goes unchallenged and unquestioned.

And violence against women isn't some faraway concern, Mr. Speaker. It's an immediate problem here, here in our own backyards. The hate speech that Alberta MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] Sandra Jansen has experienced both before and as a result of crossing the floor to join the Alberta NDP [New Democratic Party] is a prime example of this sad reality. The horrendous threats and verbal abuse she has endured both from the public and her own colleagues has become so severe she has even been assigned a temporary protection unit.

It's simply unacceptable, Mr. Speaker, that Canadian women in positions of leadership are still facing these challenges today. Violence against women in any form is reprehensible and prevention must start here with us.

Mr. Speaker, that's why in 1991 former federal NDP leader Jack Layton co-founded the White Ribbon campaign, a campaign which promotes healthy relationships, gender equality, and most importantly, men working to end men's violence against women. This week-long campaign begins tomorrow, and I encourage every man to wear a white ribbon as a symbol of their opposition to violence against women.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me today in working to eradicate violence against women globally, nationally, and within our own political institutions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Truth and Reconciliation Flag Raising Ceremony

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the honour of representing the Government of Saskatchewan last

month at the Truth and Reconciliation flag raising ceremony hosted at St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon.

In partnership with First Nations and Métis leaders and communities and the Saskatoon Health Region, our government is working together to better assist our indigenous patients in navigating the health care system. Mr. Speaker, we know how important it is to build and strengthen these partnerships to ensure First Nations and Métis patients and clients receive quality patient- and family-centred care.

Our province has undertaken initiatives to respond to recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. These initiatives respond to challenging areas including cultural responsiveness, representative workforce, mental health and addictions, public health and primary care, and information technology. We all have the same priority to provide culturally appropriate, accessible health care and services for First Nations and Métis residents.

Mr. Speaker, this event was a meaningful gathering of different voices in the community, and our government will continue to support efforts in truth and reconciliation. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in thanking the Saskatoon Health Region's First Nations and Métis health services unit, the Saskatoon Tribal Council, the Central Urban Métis Federation Inc., and the St. Paul's Hospital board of directors for putting together this meaningful event and bringing awareness to truth and reconciliation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Regina Citizen Named Red Cross Humanitarian of the Year

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, if you live in Regina you'd be hard pressed to not have some connection to the Ryan family. Whether it's in sport, business, or volunteerism, the Ryans are well known for their community spirit and compassion for others. This is of course no surprise when we see the incredible example set by Barb Ryan, Mr. Speaker.

Barb has a long list of accomplishments including volunteering for Relay for Life, Special Olympics, Dress for Success, and more. But the cause most dear to her heart is her work with refugee families. For the past seven years, Barb has worked with refugees and recent immigrants through the Regina Open Door Society.

On October 21st Barb Ryan received the Red Cross Humanitarian of the Year award. In her usual humble way, when Barb was asked about this incredible honour she compared it to getting an award for breathing. Mr. Speaker, this is just who she is. She's a remarkable person. Barb Ryan's volunteer work extends to the Bob Ryan Foundation, in honour of her late husband and spearheaded by her sons Jon and Steve.

The foundation supports the Canadian Cancer Society, Regina Minor Football, and university football scholarships. I know that Barb would want me to mention the annual fundraisers and encourage participation as well as offering a hearty "Go Hawks." And as she knows, as she needs to know, we're all pulling for Lincoln.

Mr. Speaker, I had the honour of working with Bob Ryan. He was committed to making lives better for youth all across Saskatchewan and so proud of his family. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in honouring a selfless, compassionate, loving community leader, Barb Ryan, the 2016 Red Cross Humanitarian of the Year of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Team Canada Wins Silver at World Para Reining International Championships

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to recognize the recent success of several Saskatchewan para reiners at the World Para Reining International Championships in Oklahoma held mid-November.

World Para Reining is a global, non-profit organization which focuses on the development of equestrian reining programs designed for riders with physical disabilities. Janice Boucher, my friend, hails from my constituency of Saskatchewan Rivers, along with Lauren Barwick from British Columbia and Courtney Braun from Beechy, Saskatchewan, formed this year's Team Canada.

Mr. Speaker, this team earned a silver medal in the team competition this year. The members of Team Canada garnered other wins, as Courtney Braun earned first prize in the high point standings, while Janice Boucher placed sixth. This team, accompanied by loving and caring family members, drove all the way to Oklahoma to represent the nation. Mr. Speaker, countries from around the world participated in this world-class show, and the first international event that World Para Reining organized was a great success.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Team Canada on their success as well as the support they received from Janice's wonderful and caring family, the Cartiers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Rose Valley Roadrunners Win Provincial Championship

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to stand in this House today and acknowledge the Rose Valley Roadrunners senior girls' volleyball team as the 2016 1A provincial champions, a title they won this past weekend. The tournament included the top ten 1A teams from across the province. They had a strong showing throughout the tournament, but it was in the finals that they really showed their strength.

The final featured two very good teams fighting for the provincial title. It was the Roadrunners versus the Dinsmore Wildcats. The first set was a battle back and forth, but with a packed gym and loud fans, Rose Valley took control late and won the set 25-18. The second set started with Rose Valley jumping out to a 12-1 lead. Dinsmore tried to battle back but,

with the crowd backing the home team, Rose Valley finished it with a 25-15 win. With that win, Rose Valley takes its first provincial volleyball title in school history and the title of a 1A girls' volleyball provincial champions for 2016. The Rose Valley girls displayed amazing sportsmanship and were great ambassadors for the school and community.

Of some importance, Mr. Speaker, once again the bragging rights go the Minister of Finance over the Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, I ask members to join me in congratulating Rose Valley School, the community, and of course the team, on an amazing season, the successful tournament, and a big win. Thank you.

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

New Affordable Supported Living Units in Prince Albert

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last Friday I was invited to celebrate the opening of eight new affordable homes in Prince Albert. These homes are earmarked for individuals with complex needs and include support services for the residents as they work towards independence and a better quality of life.

Thanks to the visionary leadership of the Prince Albert branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association, these homes will serve Prince Albert for years to come. The people who live in these homes will grow and develop in so many ways in safe, stable, and a caring environment.

Mr. Speaker, our government believes in partnering with others to address our housing challenges. I'm delighted that our government, along with the Government of Canada, jointly contributed up to \$900,000 to make these eight homes a reality.

Our work doesn't stop there, Mr. Speaker. Since November of 2007, our government has contributed to the development of a total of 158 affordable rental units in Prince Albert. This project also supports our mental health and addictions action plan and the poverty reduction strategy by ensuring Saskatchewan people have access to affordable, safe, secure, and stable housing.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank everyone involved in the creation of these safe, quality homes and for working to meet the housing needs of our most vulnerable citizens. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[10:30]

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Auditor's Report and Details of Land Transactions

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, day after day we ask questions about the Sask Party's GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land scandal, questions that are being asked by Saskatchewan people. But day after day, the Premier refuses to answer. And it's not just in question period and the media.

At the latest Public Accounts meeting, of course coordinated by the Premier's office, the Sask Party committee members voted against hearing from key witnesses who know details about that government's land scandal. The Sask Party voted against hearing from the DM [deputy minister], if you can imagine, for the Ministry of the Economy. And they voted against the two people who held the position as CEO [chief executive officer] of the GTH while the scandal was going down.

Mr. Speaker, it's past time this Premier come clean to Saskatchewan people. Will he finally start answering simple questions? Will he stop blocking others from doing the same? And will he allow Sask Party members of the Public Accounts to finally do their job on Monday and invite these key players in the GTH scandal at the time of the scandal to testify?

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, there's no scandal. Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor was asked to review the entire matter. The Provincial Auditor completed her work, made several important recommendations about a lack of coordination and communication between two different government entities. But, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor went on to say in the press release that the audit showed no evidence of conflict of interest or fraud or wrongdoing on the part of the board of directors.

And of course, Mr. Speaker, although that wasn't referenced specifically, one of the board of directors was the minister involved. And so that doesn't fit with the NDP narrative. I get that. They're going to still repeat the same sort of allegations and attempt to smear members where there isn't evidence for it.

Mr. Speaker, in that testimony before the Public Accounts Committee, let's reflect on what she actually said. She said that the reason she had noted the April 2012 phone call that's often referenced by members is that there was obviously knowledge in the general community about the government trying to acquire this land. And by sharing the phone call with officials, it showed the minister was concerned. She said the negotiations in December 2013 that the NDP called a cabinet leak was not, Mr. Speaker, in fact a cabinet leak. She said when cabinet makes decisions, it shares those decisions with affected individuals.

Moreover, the four people that he is saying should be interviewed by a committee of politicians were talked to by the Provincial Auditor. And I think the Provincial Auditor is more qualified to interview parties to this matter than any group of politicians, regardless of what side of the aisle they sit.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, outrageous. Simple questions to this Premier that he won't answer, day after day. Taxpayers and the nuns were ripped off in this deal, Mr. Speaker. Millions of dollars were wasted. For that Premier to pretend this isn't a scandal is desperate and arrogant, Mr. Speaker.

We of course look forward to speaking with the current CEO of the GTH, but the two other CEOs were there when this deal was being put together, when it was being formulated. There was a long-serving public servant, the CEO who was fired just before the minister's bid to have the Sask Party buy this land, paying

way too much money, from his landlord. There was the Sask Party operative that ushered this forward along with the minister to cabinet on the . . . right up until the second pitch.

It's time for the Premier to cut the political games, cut the obfuscation. Will he commit today to ensure access to these key witnesses?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor had the opportunity to interview the individuals referenced opposite. And I quote . . . I'd actually quote from the Provincial Auditor's appearance at the committee meeting referenced by the Leader of the Opposition, November 8th, 2016. Quote. No, there weren't really any obstacles. Like I said, some of the information took a little longer to compile and put together than we hoped for, but I think, given the volume of information, it wasn't unreasonable in that regard.

That was the Provincial Auditor. Here's another quote from the Provincial Auditor: ". . . we did find that people were [very] co-operative."

Another quote from the same meeting referencing precisely what the member opposite was asking:

We were very pleased when we reached out to the former CEOs that they were willing to meet with our office . . . We thought that was very important and [we] appreciated . . . their involvement.

The Provincial Auditor and her team of experts, including a forensic auditor, had the opportunity to interview these individuals. We take that to be very important. And we also would reiterate the conclusion after those interviews, and I quote the words of the Provincial Auditor: "The audit did not find evidence of conflicts of interest or indications of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or its board of directors."

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the auditor's report was scathing. She did her job. It's past time that members opposite did theirs to get to the bottom of this. That arrogance and desperate responses and a pathetic display from a Premier who won't answer a simple question, and then puts a minister up to have tired talking points that don't answer a thing. And this is the people's legislature, and it's becoming more clear day after day that the Premier has forgotten this.

The deputy minister of the Economy, as identified through the auditor's report, is a key player at the centre of the scandal along with the ministers. Not only that, he still has the same job. He works for the new Minister of the Economy and, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan pay his salary.

Everyone watching PAC [Public Accounts Committee] earlier this month clearly saw the refusal to invite this deputy minister, this key individual in the scandal, as direct actions of the Premier's office. Will the Premier stand up today? Will he stop blocking access to these witnesses at the Public Accounts

Committee? If not, what's he hiding?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well as the member opposite very well knows, or should very well know as a former chairperson of Public Accounts, the individuals who are speaking to recommendations made by the auditor are the permanent heads of the organizations involved. So the permanent head of the GTH and the permanent head of the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure will be appearing and speaking to the 10 recommendations made by the auditor, recommendations that we fully accept and are working on implementing.

And with respect to the assertion, the statement the member opposite made — the Leader of the Opposition — that the auditor did her job, we fully concur. And that's why we had asked her to do a full audit into the matter, which she did. And at the conclusion of that full audit, the Provincial Auditor, in her June 30th, 2016 news release concluded: "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 Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The call was to the Premier. No answer. No commitment. Weak, tired talking points from a minister. This is a Premier who just announced a billion dollar deficit, after another billion dollar deficit, and after he hid the facts and reality from Saskatchewan people. And because of his mismanagement, scandal and waste, they're now adding \$3.5 billion of new debt in just two years. How can he be so arrogant to block a committee of the people's legislature from doing its work in holding an open and transparent debate?

The deputy minister of the Ministry of the Economy is identified throughout this report, the auditor's report, as a key player in this scandal, right along with the ministers and that cabinet, Mr. Speaker. He is supposedly still responsible for the Ministry of the Economy.

So will the Premier finally stand up here today and approve the invitation to the deputy minister of the Economy to do . . . and do all he can to ensure that he appears before that committee to testify as soon as possible? It's past time that Premier comes clean.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well as I had just responded, Mr. Speaker, and as the Leader of the Opposition should know very well as a former chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, the process for having a hearing on recommendations from the auditor is that the permanent heads of the organizations responsible appear to speak to recommendations, whether those recommendations are accepted, not accepted, and the implementation progress of those recommendations. That's how it works, Mr. Speaker, and the Leader of the Opposition I think very well knows that, but for political reasons is choosing to ignore that.

As far as answering the questions, the Provincial Auditor answered these questions, Mr. Speaker, as have we responded to questions in this Assembly. At the conclusion of her audit into this matter, which was very thorough, at the conclusion of that very thorough audit, this is her words, Mr. Speaker: "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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

State of the Provincial Economy

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, they are hiding. They're denying reality. They're running from accountability and somehow being arrogant about it. And it seems the Finance minister is trying the same strategy, ignoring the facts and spinning a fairy tale.

But, Mr. Speaker, there's no fairy godmother to save the day here, and no amount of witchcraft reasoning will change the facts. The facts are that the Sask Party blew through the rainy day fund. They blew through the surplus. They blew through record revenues and they didn't save a penny. Sask Party mismanagement, scandal, and waste have left Saskatchewan people suffering. Nearly every day we're seeing job losses, countless broken promises, and millions in deep and devastating cuts to our hospitals, our kids' classrooms, and to Saskatchewan's most in need.

Mr. Speaker, it's not witchcraft that led up to the \$3.5 billion of debt that the Sask Party has racked up in just two years. Mr. Speaker, it's the consequence of Sask Party mismanagement, scandal, and waste. So is that minister willing to take responsibility and admit that his projections were fantasy?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Mr. Speaker, the facts are thus: in the last two years we've lost resource revenues in this province to the tune of \$1.2 billion because of the downturn in the oil and gas sector, because of the downturn in the mining sector here, and, Mr. Speaker, we saw evidence of that yesterday with respect to the layoffs at the Cory mine, west of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

The reality is this: that our tax revenues are down some \$400 million in year, Mr. Speaker. At the same time, at the same time spending is up in Agriculture because of crop insurance claims. Would the Finance critic want this government to deny those claims?

Spending is up in health care in this fiscal year, Mr. Speaker, because of utilization pressures at our health care facilities across the province. Would the Finance critic want us to stop doing surgeries and shut down ERs [emergency room] across the province?

Spending is up in education, Mr. Speaker. Spending is up in social services, as the Minister of Social Services evidenced yesterday with respect to the amount of money we're spending. Would the Finance critic have this government stop making

those payments on income assistance to people across this province? Yes or no?

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, once again this minister has to acknowledge that this party has been in government for almost a decade. If he wants to tell tales about the past, he should tell the tale of the last government he worked for, which was plagued by mismanagement, scandal, and waste, and drove this province to the brink of bankruptcy. Sounds familiar. But, Mr. Speaker, this is no fairy tale. \$3.5 billion of debt added to the debt in just two years. And 11,000 more Saskatchewan people looking for work this year than last year.

Mr. Speaker, instead of digging up the past, we would rather fix the growing crisis right now. And right now, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party's mismanagement, scandal, and waste are hurting Saskatchewan people and putting our future at risk. So, Mr. Speaker, will the minister admit that the Sask Party's mismanagement, scandal, and waste has left him feeling some *déjà vu*?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — I think it's . . . Again I welcome the debate. She's criticizing the policies of this particular party. We provided \$6 billion in tax relief to the people of this province, Mr. Speaker. People vote with their feet: 1.15 million people living in this province right now, 150,000 . . . Well the member from Athabasca can get up and ask a question if he wants to enter the debate. 1.15 million people, Mr. Speaker.

We have new schools being built across this province. We have new health care facilities being built across this province. We have new buildings going on at the universities in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. We have highways and infrastructure that for years, for years, Mr. Speaker, had been neglected by the NDP when they sat on a rainy day fund of \$1.2 billion.

We had thousands upon thousands of our young people leaving, where mothers and dads and grandparents asked the government of the day, could you do something to try and keep our young people here? While they sat on \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker. We had tax revolts across rural Saskatchewan while they sat on \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker. At the same time they were closing down hospitals and closing down schools. We're keeping people employed in this province, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Support for Agriculture

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that minister and that entire cabinet have squandered our future for years and years to come. This government arrogantly acts like they and they alone own the issue of agriculture, but farmers and stock growers are being let down by the Saskatchewan Party's mismanagement, scandal, and waste as well. Like oil and gas, they need to get their product to market, and that means defending rail space,

particularly for grain. But since this government could not build a single pipeline to tidewater, rail space is precious and rare.

Mr. Speaker, add to that the closure of the Port of Churchill and their eager support of giving away the Wheat Board to Saudi Arabia so farmers in Saskatchewan are in even greater need of a strong voice in their corner.

[10:45]

Mr. Speaker, Growing Forward 2 is expiring in a year and a half, so it's the Sask Party, the cabinet with a penchant for Twitter tantrums and storming out of meetings, that will be representing our farmers and stock growers. Can the Minister of Agriculture commit to working constructively with counterparts from across the country in ensuring that Saskatchewan farmers and stock growers get strong representation that they need and deserve?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Well, Mr. Speaker, you know, I think our producers, whether they be grain farmers or livestock producers, would be very quick to say and very quick to point out that they get much more support from this government than they ever did from them.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, they would not even fund fed programs upfront, leading to years of delay for payouts. They cancelled GRIP [gross revenue insurance program]. They were part of that, which they were taken to court for, Mr. Speaker. They totally failed agriculture on every front. I hope the member has more questions on this one.

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

Funding for Lighthouse Emergency Shelter

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services certainly showed a lot of frustration yesterday, but she is not nearly as frustrated as the people who are being let down by her failures. The shell games and playing with the numbers made for an interesting video clip, but with colder and colder days coming, her bluster and arrogance won't keep those with no place to stay warm at night.

Even when presented with documents from her own ministry that clearly say the services will no longer be funded, she will not admit that there have been cuts. She calls the Lighthouse a wet shelter, and said they aren't funding it because it's not the responsibility of Social Services. She also said she doesn't think it's the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. She has no answers.

Of course this minister, the member for Regina University, is feeling pressure to cut as deeply as her colleagues are. But does the minister not understand that her ministry is about more than a spreadsheet? And when Sask Party mismanagement, scandals, and waste results in cuts to the Lighthouse, their consequences are real, whether she admits them or not.

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Mr. Speaker, our officials are actually meeting with the Lighthouse, and we will continue to meet with them to work on a plan forward for a sustainable plan forward.

With respect to funding for the Lighthouse, I've said it before and I'll say it again here. We fund emergency shelters. That is the mandate of our ministry. We try to make sure that people are out of the cold for the evening, so we will provide funding on the basis of utilization to people who we are not funding for shelter somewhere else in the city. So we're not going to pay for someone to have shelter somewhere else in the city and also pay for them at the Lighthouse. That is not what we do, Mr. Speaker. And I'd be happy to take further questions on the matter. Thank you.

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

Release of Long-Term Care Facilities Reports

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, if that minister isn't going to take responsibility for her cuts, I sure hope the Minister of Health is going to do something and is prepared to support the hospitals that are already feeling the costly burden of caring for those who are turned away by the Lighthouse, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, his answers yesterday don't give me much hope of that.

We asked for the CEO tour reports. He said no, not even before the end of session. Most have been on his desk since the end of September. The minister says he needs to review them before releasing them, but we don't want sanitized reports spun by the minister's communications team. The people of Saskatchewan deserve the straight facts.

The Ombudsman has said the issues are system wide. Facilities are understaffed, and basic care needs like baths and providing water are being dropped. The minister's mismanagement is hurting our parents and our grandparents. Mr. Speaker, why won't this minister just release the reports, unsanitized, and be straight with the people of Saskatchewan about the real needs in long-term care in this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the member's preface of the question, I didn't yesterday, I did not say no to releasing the CEO tour reports. They will be released. Mr. Speaker, they're not on my desk. Mr. Speaker, the last I checked with ministry officials, not all the reports were in yet. They need to review them. And to her version of sanitizing them, Mr. Speaker, they need to be checked for privacy before they're released publicly. They will, in due course, be released publicly.

Mr. Speaker, we take long-term care very, very seriously. The member opposite is always calling for more resources into it. We have almost 800 more long-term care workers than those members did when they were in government. If somehow it's under-resourced, what does that speak to when they were representing the people of the province?

Mr. Speaker, this member is always criticizing, always asking for more resources. And yet in their campaign, in their platform, Mr. Speaker, you know what they promised for health funding? Less than what we're providing this year, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

Support for Education

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, from where do those ministers get the arrogance for answers like that? They are so out of touch with the realities facing Saskatchewan people.

Yesterday when I asked the Education minister about cuts to our kids' classrooms and breaking his commitments to teachers, he said that he "believes in the teachers of the province." Believes in them, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that someone is comforted to know that he acknowledges that they exist, but he sure doesn't seem to believe them when they show proof that they need more support from this government.

Classrooms are getting bigger and bigger, and teachers aren't getting the supports that they need. I know that the minister wears a lot of hats and that he has a lot of pressure to cut deeply to make up for the Sask Party's mismanagement, scandal, and waste, but why is he putting our children's education on the chopping block?

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member as well for the question. Mr. Speaker, in 2007 the enrolment in our classes was 161,261. In 2016 it has grown to 179,707, an increase of 11 per cent or 18,000 students. Mr. Speaker, during that time, funding per student overall is up from \$8,762 to \$10,461, an increase of 19 per cent or \$1,700 per student. Overall our funding is up from \$1.41 billion to \$1.88 billion, an increase in operating funding, Mr. Speaker, of some 33 per cent or \$475 million.

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

New Request for Proposal for Liquor Store

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, oh there's nothing to see here; just trust us. Those are the sentiments we often get from the other side. In fact they even mock us for asking important questions on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

Yesterday after my colleague raised questions about the RFP [request for proposal] process for the sell-off of liquor stores, a member opposite took to her feet to chastise and arrogantly scold a respected member of the official opposition. We now know that there was in fact a conflict of interest.

I understand the minister is retroactively now redoing the RFP process. But, Mr. Speaker, after nine years of government, how are these folks still mismanaging their files this badly? And is the minister now redoing the entire process because there was a conflict or because they got caught?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this government has done the right thing. We were . . . The member for Carrot River Valley issued a statement earlier today. I'll let that statement speak for itself. But when we were informed that there was a conflict, we acted immediately. The Conflict of Interest Commissioner was contacted, provided an opinion, and this morning I directed that a new RFP be issued for the Carrot River store in particular, to make sure that there was no question with regard to the integrity of the process.

There was no . . . I can speak directly. There was no involvement on the part of the minister or Executive Council or members of Executive Council in any of the awards of contracts. This was done by a third party, KPMG, in consultation with senior officials at SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority]. But with regard to this particular matter, I have directed that a new RFP process be issued for that particular permit.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

Appointment of New President of SaskEnergy

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House that the SaskEnergy board of directors has just announced the appointment of Mr. Ken From as president and chief executive officer of SaskEnergy.

Ken From is no stranger to members of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, after working for SaskEnergy and, before that, the gas division of SaskPower, from 1981 until 2007. Since that time, Ken has co-founded a junior oil company; worked for the Technical Safety Authority, TSASK; and is currently CEO of the Petroleum Technology Research Centre.

Mr. Speaker, Ken has demonstrated that the skills learned by employees in the Crowns are in high demand in other sectors of our growing economy. As Ken has also demonstrated, many workers take that additional experience and return to the Crowns to further strengthen those organizations. And, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with Ken in his new role.

I'd also like to thank Susan Barber and members of the SaskEnergy board of directors for their leadership in interviewing a very talented and experienced group of candidates.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank another dedicated Crown professional, that being Doug Kelln, the retiring SaskEnergy president and CEO. Mr. Speaker, with Doug Kelln as CEO, SaskEnergy has become an industry leader in safety and innovation. The corporation provides the energy infrastructure for the many businesses continuing to invest in our economy. SaskEnergy is also a utility the people of Saskatchewan have come to know that they can depend upon, much as the Government of Saskatchewan has come to depend upon the leadership of Doug Kelln. Thank you, Doug, for 34 years of service to the province of Saskatchewan. You've made your

hometown of Wadena very proud. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and on behalf of the official opposition, I'd like to join with the minister in congratulating Mr. Ken From on his new appointment as CEO of SaskEnergy. I know Ken to be a very capable and forward-thinking, intelligent person, and we certainly sincerely wish him well at the head of SaskEnergy, one of our important public utilities, Mr. Speaker.

And I'd also join with the minister in thanking Doug Kelln for the very capable and strong lead that he has provided for many years, both at SaskEnergy, but also over the course of his 34-year career. So again, on behalf of the official opposition, I'd like to say congratulations and thank you to both of these men. Thank you.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies

Ms. Young: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies to report Bill No. 17, *The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 2016* without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill and that the bill now be read a third time.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 17, *The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 2016* and that the bill be now read a third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No 17 — *The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 2016*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskPower.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that the Bill No. 17, *The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 2016* be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly

ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — On division.

The Speaker: — Carried, on division.

Principal Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

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 219 through 226.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has ordered the responses to questions 219 to 226.

[11:00]

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Benefits of Free Trade to Saskatchewan

Mr. Bonk: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan was once known as the breadbasket of the world. It was a designation that we wore with pride. We were the tillers of the soil. We tended the herds. We fed the world. We put our backs into our labour, and the hungry of the earth were the benefactors. It was always held up to us that without Saskatchewan the rumbling stomachs of the world were unlikely to be satisfied.

The problem with this image was of course that while we were given credit for our sweat and toil, our province was still an economic backwater. We entered the 21st century as the poor cousin of Confederation. And like our beloved Saskatchewan Roughriders, we were relegated to being a poster child for the next year country, the place where it was nice to come from, but where opportunity was sadly lacking for our young people.

But, Mr. Speaker, with the advent of the Saskatchewan Party government in 2007 this picture began to change. Like a colleague from Manitoba recently said, it was like watching someone flip a switch. Almost immediately Saskatchewan transformed from a province where our main export was our young people, to a diversified economy where our youth began to think about a future much closer to home.

A large part of this transformation, this shift, was due to trade. Trade is absolutely vital to the Saskatchewan economy. According to EDC, Export Development Canada, one of out of every three jobs is dependent on trade. Our government made

trade a top priority and has worked as quickly as possible to provide the support and create the environment for our exporters to flourish.

The numbers that demonstrate these changes are astounding. Saskatchewan exports to our largest trading partner, the United States, totalled 7.6 billion in the year of 2000. By 2010, after three years of the policies of the Saskatchewan Party government, Mr. Speaker, it had almost doubled to 14.7 billion. And by 2015 it had increased again to 17.7 billion.

Asia illustrates the turnaround even more dramatically. In 2000 the province's exports to Asia totalled 2.3 billion. By 2010 it had more than doubled to 4.8 billion. And by 2015 it had almost doubled again to 8.8 billion. Mr. Speaker, keep in mind that Asia has almost been completely undervalued by the previous governments as a potential trading partner. In fact one of the first things the NDP did the last time they formed government was to close our trade offices there. Asia's now one of the focal points of our efforts and continues to grow as a destination for Saskatchewan exports.

Nearly 70 per cent of what Saskatchewan produces is exported to over 150 countries around the world. The United States is still our primary trading partner, but we are making significant inroads into markets in China, India, Brazil, Japan, and many other countries. And helping this effort is the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, known as STEP.

STEP is a Saskatchewan government agency that has existed for 20 years. And while it was initiated under the previous administration, it seems to have only reached its potential in the last 10 years. It is membership-based and while the agency is consistently seeking out new markets, it also dedicates much of its energies to increasing existing and established markets. Exporters are able to customize programs, including market intelligence and sorting out challenges of international financial and logistical diversities.

As some of our most significant exports come in our agriculture sector, our government's recent budget included a 7.5 per cent increase in funding for our Agriculture ministry. It further provided almost 15 million for agriculture business risk-management programs and 27 million for agricultural research. It will solidify Saskatchewan positions as a world leader in innovative and safe technology which world markets are clamouring for. Saskatchewan exports 95 per cent of our agricultural production. Only 5 per cent is consumed in Canada. Once again, trade is absolutely vital to our provincial economy.

Seed Hawk in the Moosomin constituency, a world leader in precision drilling equipment, is just one example of how Saskatchewan is leading the world. And our government's policy have given companies like Seed Hawk the opportunity to succeed. And, Mr. Speaker, we have done this by cutting red tape, rewarding innovation, and contributing to a supportive business environment. The opportunity to succeed, Mr. Speaker, that is what our government stands for. It will provide the support, conditions, and opportunities, and if we can get out of their way, our Saskatchewan companies will flourish.

Again the numbers that bear out our success of our government's policies are extraordinary. In the last 10 years,

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has increased its wheat exports by \$4.2 billion or 141 per cent. Lentil exports have increased by 2.5 billion for an astounding 992 per cent. Perhaps we should be known as the protein basket of the world. Canola, in the last 10 years, an increase of 467 per cent; canola oil, an increase of 864 per cent; peas, 217 per cent; uranium, 99 per cent. And potash, did you know, Mr. Speaker, we have the largest reserves of potash in the world? In the last 10 years, we've exported over \$6.6 billion worth, an increase of 153 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, we are now making significant inroads into the Chinese markets. In 10 years we have increased our export activity to China by 347 per cent. I'll emphasize that — 347 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Canola and canola oil, potash, peas, soybeans, and much more — a total of 3.4 billion of Saskatchewan products were exported to China in 2015.

And the big picture, Mr. Speaker, shows us that in 2015, Saskatchewan exports reached \$32.6 billion. That's roughly \$30,000 for every man, woman, and child in this province, an amazing achievement by any economic measure. As a note of comparison, Mr. Speaker, the last NDP government of Saskatchewan had a grand total of \$6.4 billion in exports in 2007. That is less than 20 per cent of last year's exports.

Our government also strongly supports trade agreements such as CETA [Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement] and TPP [Trans-Pacific Partnership]. Trade agreements are another very important piece of the puzzle and are a key to keeping us competitive globally.

A good case study to support the value of pursuing trade agreements can be found by looking at our trade relationship with South Korea. Saskatchewan exports to South Korea were nearly \$300 million in 2011. About that same time, our competitors in that market signed free trade agreements with South Korea and quickly became suppliers of choice. Our exports then shrunk to \$85.5 million by 2014. Canada's free trade agreement with South Korea was implemented a year later and our exports then rose to \$104 million. In 2016, year-to-date statistics indicate a 150 per cent increase in our exports to South Korea, proof of the potential of what trade agreements can accomplish.

Mr. Speaker, growing world populations mean that the world's nations not only have to feed their people but they must also increase production, and we know Saskatchewan is ready and able to play a central role in fulfilling these needs. Mr. Speaker, in the fastest growing economies of the world where they prize food security and energy security, we find ourselves very well positioned. Saskatchewan is truly a food, fertilizer, and energy superpower.

We almost take for granted the tremendous talents and resources that we have in this province. Saskatchewan provides 65 per cent of the world's lentils, 55 per cent of the world's peas, 39 per cent of the world's durum, 30 per cent of worldwide production of potash, 15 per cent of the world's production of uranium, and Saskatchewan is the second-largest exporter of oil in Canada. There is no other jurisdiction in Canada that can even come close to what people of Saskatchewan export per capita.

But as much as I'd like to continue to amaze you with the statistics regarding Saskatchewan exports outside Canada's borders, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to move on to another initiative in which our government has taken a leading role, and that is the New West Partnership Trade Agreement. Since 2010 the New West Partnership has been a driving force in the Canadian economy, resulting from an agreement between the governments of Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. When it took full effect in 2013, it represented 9.8 million people and 610 billion in GDP [gross domestic product]. In the three years since then, those numbers are now 11 million people representing a GDP of 750 billion.

We are very pleased now to announce that Manitoba will join the New West Partnership in 2017. That province's new Premier, Brian Pallister, made the announcement recently stating that business owners, community leaders, and chambers of commerce from across Manitoba have long called on our province to pursue new opportunities for growth and reduce trade barriers.

Mr. Speaker, the partnership will represent 94 per cent of Canada's natural gas production, 85 per cent of our nation's arable land, and major exports of beef, potash, uranium, gold, and copper. As free trade between western provinces is at the heart of this agreement, the Pacific Gateway Alliance, which resulted from a New West Partnership transportation and infrastructure summit in Regina, has been meeting with producers to address transportation issues such as high volume seaports, adequate integrated highway systems, upgraded rail, and improved and expanded pipelines.

Improving our trade infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, will not only create jobs but it will improve our overall competitiveness. Saskatchewan has led the way in establishing regional transportation performance measures and targets, starting with the grain sector. Additional target tables in forestry, energy, potash, and coal are slated for the completion in 2017.

The single economic region established by the New West Partnership will go a long way in creating what our government knows will be Canada's most open and competitive economy. Certified workers and professionals will now be able to enter workforces throughout the West without being subject to additional training requirements. This will help foreign-trained workers encounter more consistent regulations in having their qualifications recognized. In addition, Mr. Speaker, apprenticeship mobility protocols will be established to facilitate the movement of apprentices throughout the region.

Procurement agreements are being negotiated with thresholds low enough to ensure that small businesses in the region will have more opportunities to bid on government contracts and ensuring the best value for our tax dollars. An example of this would be the joint purchasing of government vehicles. Vehicle inspection regulations on newer and recently inspected cars will be changed to create fewer inconsistencies and on movement between provinces.

Mr. Speaker, the New West Partnership, Energy, and Environment ministers along with industry representatives are also exploring a common approach to performance metrics for oil pipeline monitoring. Each province has committed to

develop open education resources for post-secondary students. Our government, Mr. Speaker, has already provided grants to the universities of Saskatchewan and Regina and Sask Polytechnic to develop made-in-Saskatchewan open course modules which will be shared throughout the region.

Unnecessary differences in business standards and regulations will be eliminated. This will allow for goods, services, investment, and workers to flow freely across the region's borders. This will not only boost trade but it will make it easier for businesses to expand into other provinces, lowering costs for businesses and taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, we welcome the entry of Manitoba to the New West Partnership. Together with the Western provinces, we will continue to take the lead in reducing trade barriers and creating an open and stable marketplace in our region. The Government of Saskatchewan is proud of the role we have taken in continuing to be a part in development and growth of this economic powerhouse, and encourages investors, nurtures innovators, and rewards the best instincts of our people to improve themselves and the world in which they live.

I'd just like to go back, Mr. Speaker, to highlight some of the markets that we're working on now, and I'd just like to go back to the Chinese markets in Asia, what we're doing. In 10 years, we have increased export activity to China by 347 per cent. These are huge numbers, Mr. Speaker. In the big picture that we . . . In Saskatchewan this year, we've had \$32.6 billion worth of exports. Or in 2015, sorry.

An Hon. Member: — How much did the NDP have?

Mr. Bonk: — Oh, not as much as that. Mr. Speaker, to that end, because of the absolutely critical role that trade plays in the Saskatchewan economy, I'd like to move the following motion. And that is:

That this Assembly recognizes the importance of free trade, both within Canada and outside our borders, and acknowledges the benefits that trade brings to our province.

I so move.

The Speaker: — The member from Moosomin has moved the following motion:

That this Assembly recognizes the importance of free trade, both within Canada and outside our borders, and acknowledges the benefits that trade brings to our province.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As ever, I'm good to take my place in this Assembly, join debate, and offer a few thoughts on the motion before the Assembly. And certainly, as is often the case with various of the initiatives of this government, there are certain things where, you know, of course they're worthy of support, Mr. Speaker. Of course they're important. And again the . . . I'd compliment the

member from Moosomin on his fine rendition of what's happening in the landscape in terms of the way that Saskatchewan goods and services are being exported throughout Canada and indeed the world. But as an individual tasked with a Legislative Secretary position for trade, I guess, Mr. Speaker, we'd expect no less.

[11:15]

And I guess, Mr. Speaker, I was also interested to note what was absent from the member's speech. And certainly there was some places where it got skirted around and some places where it was, you know, glaringly absent, that kind of insight that you'd be expecting from a person with a specific task in this regard — to serve the legislature, to serve the Premier, serve the minister for trade — in terms of that particular work. That certain of these things were absent from the member's comments is a bit disappointing, Mr. Speaker. But who knows, maybe the things we're looking for will emerge in the speeches yet to come.

But one thing in particular, Mr. Speaker, I note that there was no absence of the tremendous uncertainty that is there in the global trade arena that has been set off by such things as the Brexit vote, and certainly with, you know, the impact that will have on the future of CETA. But also what is the future of documents such as NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement] itself? What's going to happen with the bilateral agreements on things like softwood — and the impact that has on the forestry sector here in Saskatchewan — with the United States?

And then of course, the election of a new president in the United States, and what impacts are anticipated from that occurrence, Mr. Speaker. And certainly, you know, there's a playlist been put out by the new president-elect, and one of those is that one of the actions that'll be taken within the first 100 days, and indeed within the first day of that presidency, if memory serves correct, Mr. Speaker, is that the Trans-Pacific Partnership will be no more.

So I guess if we're going to have an informative discussion here today, Mr. Speaker, it would've been good to hear what the latest developments are and what actions the provincial government is taking to protect the interests of Saskatchewan in that environment, and what the different plans are to make sure that if that's not a go-forward, then what is the plan, Mr. Speaker. And again when we see, you know, on different files . . . And again the member gave a fine speech. So maybe I've got a bias towards folks that come from Wolseley, but you know, it was a fine speech. But again it was silent in an unhelpful way, Mr. Speaker, on some of the developments in the current landscape but also on some of the more glaring failures on the part of this government on matters related to trade and matters related both internal to Canada and certainly in terms of the global situation. And it would have been good to have had some recognition of those issues, but that was not there.

And certainly one issue that I think of, Mr. Speaker, is the way that this government has been laggards rather than a leader when it comes to matters of tendering and the way that other jurisdictions have aggressively promoted their own particular

provincial interest. But the way that, you know, the member from Saskatoon Northwest, kind of late to the dance in terms of some of the moves that this government had played in serving as Boy Scout to the Canadian context, Mr. Speaker, in terms of, you know, not advantaging, not making certain that every last ounce of local benefit was there to be derived for Saskatchewan companies, for Saskatchewan workers, and for the Saskatchewan family as a whole, Mr. Speaker.

And again it took some kicking and screaming to get that government dragged to the realization that local benefit should play a much more active consideration in terms of where they're at, so that when you're putting forward projects such as the Regina bypass, that those dollars are maximized here in Saskatchewan instead of exporting dollars to France in that particular case, Mr. Speaker. Or the way that other international concerns are, you know, at the front of the line and making, you know, piecing in the local economic interest in sort of a haphazard way, instead of that being the first and foremost consideration. That when we, as the Government of Saskatchewan, is making those expenditures, you know, spending Saskatchewan people's tax dollars, that the maximum benefit should go to Saskatchewan people. That should be straight ahead.

We've seen other jurisdictions pursue that interest aggressively, Mr. Speaker, and we've seen this government kind of late to the dance when it comes to defending those interests. So that was nowhere in that member's speech other than a brief reference to the thresholds around small business. And now I hear the business guru from Moose Jaw Wakamow chiming in. This is of course is the, you know, most recently notable for voting against the Moose Jaw Wakamow Valley Authority Act, you know, and not really having a good answer for the people of Moose Jaw Wakamow when it came to pulling the funding for the Moose Jaw Wakamow Valley Authority, Mr. Speaker. So you'll forgive us if we take his advice with a massive grain of salt.

In terms of other places where this government has fallen down, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to see when it comes to the possible entry into the Saskatchewan market of a player like Yancoal, a Chinese national entity, what is the answer that they have on the environmental front but certainly on the economic front, and what impact that will hold for Canpotex and where the economic benefit — or lack thereof — analysis is, Mr. Speaker. And we don't see that from this government. And we certainly didn't hear that in the 15-minute speech from the member from Moosomin. And again perhaps we'll hear that in speeches to come.

But we want to hear about the current landscape certainly, but you know, far too often this is a government that is quite content to put the greatest hits on the turntable, Mr. Speaker, you know, get the headphones on, and just have a great listen and think of better times because there are . . . And that doesn't cut it, Mr. Speaker, because there are challenges on the horizon and there are challenges in the landscape.

And again, Mr. Speaker, if we're going to build on Saskatchewan's strength, if we're going to make sure that Saskatchewan workers and Saskatchewan families are the benefit of this proud tradition of trade and export that we have

in this province, if we're going to make sure that Saskatchewan taxpayers' dollars are being spent in the best interest of Saskatchewan people which, you know, is as common sense as it comes, Mr. Speaker, that we've got a massive common sense deficit racking up on that side along with their \$1 billion deficit, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the finances.

If we can't have those things addressed in a speech like this . . . I mean I understand it's Thursday and I understand the members have got time to fill, but I'm expecting more from an individual that has been tasked with being the Legislative Secretary for trade. And I'm certainly expecting more from that government, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the defence and the advances they should be making for Saskatchewan trade, Saskatchewan workers, Saskatchewan communities, Mr. Speaker.

So you know, maybe that will be corrected in the speeches to come, but if, you know, some of those individuals could tell us what the impact is of something like Yancoal coming into the market here in Canada and in Saskatchewan, what impact that will have on Canpotex where, you know, just yesterday we have the kind of pressures that that sector is already under. What analysis has been done? If they can talk about that, Mr. Speaker, that would be helpful. And what kind of, what kind of take do they have on their ideological cousin Donald Trump being elected president of the United States? And with that, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the other interventions in this debate.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today in support of the motion calling on this Assembly to recognize the importance of free trade, both within Canada and outside of our borders. And I would like to acknowledge the benefit that trade brings into our province.

Mr. Speaker, on November 17th, 2016, Manitoba joined the New West Partnership. This is great news for our Western provinces and for our Canadian economy. The New West Partnership was initiated in March 2009 by the premiers of British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, and its purpose was to explore opportunities to expand trade and investment opportunity and to reduce impediments to trade, investment, and labour mobility.

Moving forward, Mr. Speaker, a year later the premiers of British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan signed the far-reaching New West Partnership Trade Agreement. The agreement created the largest, most open, and most competitive interprovincial marketplace in Canada, eliminating obstacles to trade, investment, and labour mobility among the three provinces. On May 3rd, 2010, Mr. Speaker, from the other side of the House, John Nilson called the New West Partnership trade deal, and I quote, "a sellout trade deal." In today's economy, we need to remove the barriers to trade and create opportunity for Saskatchewan's economy to diversify and grow, both within Canada and internationally.

The new west premiers last met in November 2014 in Regina, and since then significant progress has been made, including work with industry to improve the transportation system and supply chain through the Pacific Gateway Alliance, joint

government purchasing of fleet vehicles to improve efficiency and reduce costs to taxpayers, mutual recognition of apprenticeship training to improve apprentices' mobility, waiving vehicle inspection requirements for people moving between northwest partnership provinces, and developing open education resources for post-secondary students. Manitoba joining the NWP [New West Partnership] will create even more opportunities in the West. Saskatchewan is looking forward to working with the other jurisdictions to build on our competitive advantage.

Mr. Speaker, with the addition of Manitoba, this economic and political partnership is now representing over 11 million people with combined GDP over 750 billion in GDP. With the inclusion of Manitoba, the NWP will now cover over 30 per cent of the Canadian population. Mr. Speaker, NWP energy ministers, along with industry, are exploring a common approach to perform metrics for oil pipeline monitoring through the western regulatory forum and the National Energy Board.

Mr. Speaker, modernizing internal trade in Canada will help us strengthen our province's economy as well as the Canadian economy. The new Canada free-trade agreement will do that by expanding procurement opportunities for Saskatchewan business in other parts of Canada, ensuring labour mobility for our workers. And it will tackle hidden barriers to trade created through our regulatory difference using a new regulatory co-operation mechanism.

Mr. Speaker, our premiers are committed to finalize the new CFTA [Canada free-trade agreement] before the end of this year, but we will only sign on this agreement if it meets Saskatchewan's interest: that means fair treatment and reduced barriers for our business and for our citizens. A new Canada free-trade agreement will benefit Saskatchewan people and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, at the July 2016 Council of the Federation meeting, premiers were able to resolve a number of . . . [inaudible] . . . issues and announced an agreement in principle that will strengthen Canada's economic union for the benefit of Canadian businesses, workers, and consumers. Trade ministers have been asked to resolve outstanding technical issues and present a final agreement with hope that the new agreement comes into effect for Canada's 150th on July 1st, 2017.

[11:30]

Mr. Speaker, since December 2014 negotiators have been meeting face to face on a monthly basis, and trade ministers have met five times. Mr. Speaker, some key achievements under the new CFTA would include a comprehensive agreement that covers all aspects of the economy, better transparency of what is covered and not covered by the agreement by using a negative-list approach, a regulatory co-operation mechanism, a comprehensive review of the legal regulatory regime in Canada that will be completed within two years. Recommendations will be made to the ministers for areas of improvements such as personal import limits, direct-to-the-consumer sale, markup rates, bottle size, and increase the monetary penalties that will strengthen the dispute resolution mechanism. Architecture of a new agreement will be more similar to the New West Partnership Trade Agreement in

that general rules will be used rather than sector-specific chapters.

Mr. Speaker, now that our eastern neighbouring province has joined the New West Partnership Trade Agreement, Saskatchewan looks forward to continue to work with our partners to reduce hurdles affecting long-term businesses, opportunities, and make Western Canada even stronger. The agreement commits each jurisdiction to enhance trade, investment, and labour mobility, and to remove barriers to movement of goods, services, investments, and people within and between the provinces.

There has been a lot of positive reaction to Manitoba joining the New West Partnership. Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister remarked that:

Business owners, community leaders and chambers of commerce from across Manitoba have long called for our province to pursue new opportunities for growth and reduced trade barriers. Joining the New West Partnership will bring these advantages. We look forward to working with British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan to expand opportunities and support stronger economies right across western Canada.

BC [British Columbia] Premier Christy Clark noted that:

Western provinces are leaders in reducing barriers to trade, and bringing Manitoba into the New West Partnership Trade Agreement can only strengthen our open market. By joining forces, we can continue to expand our economies and benefit all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, even Alberta Premier Rachel Notley was pleased to welcome Manitoba into the new partnership.

Mr. Speaker, according to the Bank of Canada, removing interprovincial trade barriers would be comparable to the projected economic benefit from international trade deals such as CETA and the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership within Asian countries.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to wrap up my remarks today by reminding members of the principle of the New West Partnership:

Eliminate barriers that restrict or impair trade, investment or labour mobility;
 Enhance competitiveness, economic growth and stability;
 Increase opportunities and choice for workers, investors, consumers and businesses;
 Reduce costs for consumers, businesses and governments;
 Provide access to information to facilitate trade, investment and labour mobility;
 Promote sustainable and environmentally sound development, and high levels of consumer protection, health and labour standards . . .
 Minimize the impact of other measures that may adversely affect trade, investment or labour mobility;
 Resolve disputes in an effective, inexpensive and timely manner;
 Support ongoing trade and investment liberalization both nationally and internationally; and

Demonstrate the benefit of freer trade within Canada by simplifying and expanding upon the scope and coverage of the agreement on international trade.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to finish by saying that I am proud to support the motion brought forward by the member from Moosomin. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Brkich): — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into this debate on trade. And it's an important debate that we have, you know, because it's been something in Saskatchewan's history for a long, long time. And we have some comments here, but I was just busily working, looking up at this book. I'm not going to go long into this, but I did want to . . .

You know, it was interesting. I was up at La Ronge a few years ago, and I saw a beaver pelt, you know, put up on the wall of the store. And I said, well that's interesting. That's an interesting thing. Then all of a sudden the owner of the store said, well there's a long story behind that beaver pelt. And really, truly in Saskatchewan with the whole issue of trade, it goes back a long, long way.

And as I was listening to the people speak here, I just want to say — and this would be of interest to some of the members opposite — that I come from Mortlach, Saskatchewan. And we just talked about Wanuskewin. And I just want to take . . . If people have read this book, *A World We Have Lost: Saskatchewan before 1905*, talks about the Mortlach site. I won't go long into it, but the whole thing about Mortlach was the whole issue of where they traded.

And I quote from page 82:

An obvious explanation is that the Mortlach people secured whatever foodstuffs they required from the Missouri-Mississippi villages through trade, and that the prize items they could offer in return were bison meat and other bison products. This exchange network enabled them to take advantage of renewable resources, the great herds at their disposal.

So what was interesting, we were having trade in this province from around Mortlach — if you know, is a little west of Moose Jaw — down into Mississippi and that whole thing. So this has been going on for about 1,000 years, trade. And so I just wanted to highlight that, Mr. Speaker. I won't go into a long, long discussion about that.

But I do want to say that this is an important discussion because we are a trading nation, a trading province. And as the member from Moosomin went through the statistics, and we're very proud of that, of the kind of good work that we do here in Saskatchewan. But I do want to say that this whole idea that all of a sudden — and he used the metaphor of a switch — I don't think quite is very accurate. And we talked about this in this House, that somehow the members opposite feel a switch came on on that November day, in November of 2007. That wasn't the case at all.

We have over the decades, over the decades, been building on trade, and we know that's an important area here in our province. There was no switch. There was no switch for potash. There was no switch for oil. We know those things were building and building.

And in fact what was interesting, I know the member from Kindersley, who was the economic minister at the time, was talking about how they wouldn't change the royalties or the structure around potash because they liked the way the NDP had done that, the way Premier Calvert had set that up to seize the opportunity of, you know, those great prices that we could see in potash. But we needed to make sure we had the structure here in Saskatchewan to seize the moment.

And the other thing that's so important to make sure we are on the record in Saskatchewan is that STEP, Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, was founded in the '90s, I believe, by Premier Romanow's office. And so we have a long, long history within the NDP, within the CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation], understanding that trade is so critically important.

Now one of the members was talking about a former member here in his speech, Mr. Nilson's speech of 2015, November 24th, and I do want to quote from that speech he gave. And I think it was one of his best speeches if not his best speech really. And I often tell people to take back and take a look, read that because he went through and talked about the trade partnership ... [inaudible interjection] ... Well TPP ... [inaudible interjection] ... Yes, the TPP agreements that we were ... Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement. And he gave a great speech. He did go on a bit, but I think that was okay because he covered a lot of territory, and it was very, very important. But I want to quote from him, and he says, and this is from November 24th, 2015:

And I think I want to start from a perspective where the New Democratic Party and the New Democratic Party governments over many decades in Saskatchewan have always been pro-trade. We've always been a party that's [been] promoting what's happening in Saskatchewan

We're concerned about getting an open market for Saskatchewan products, and we've always held that perspective. But we've also held the perspective that Saskatchewan citizens deserve the best, they deserve protection, and they deserve careful review of any document. It was very distressing, you know, a few weeks ago when the Minister of Trade for Saskatchewan made the comment about our party saying, "I'm hopeful that they don't say that they need to see the details."

And I'll read that little quote from what the minister of trade for Saskatchewan, the current member from Meadow Lake: "I'm hopeful they don't say that they need to see the details." Mr. Speaker, that speaks volumes, volumes about the management style of this government.

You know, here we are, just this week, getting the mid-term report. We're \$1 billion in debt in the operating funds here in Saskatchewan, and this just shows ... And we've seen the scandal. We've talked about the GTH daily, daily about how

it's important to know those details and be able to talk about details.

And here we have the government side proposing a motion that generally sounds good on paper, but really when you dig into it, we need to see what this government is all about.

And even this morning, even this morning we heard that they couldn't even deal with a request for a proposal in Carrot River, in Carrot River.

An Hon. Member: — Couldn't run a three-car parade.

Mr. Forbes: — Couldn't run a three-car parade. And here we have them back to the drawing board on a very, should've been a pretty straightforward piece of work for them to be able to handle the RFPs for selling off the liquor board stores. And within a few days, within 48 hours we'll see if we get more of these situations as it comes out. But here we have one example of how they have a problem.

Well here's another problem that we see. And this is one that we were very proud of as a province in terms of making sure our own people had the chance to participate in the economy in a meaningful, meaningful way. And you know, our leaders often talked about how the French won the contract to build the Ring Road here in Regina.

But here we have a headline, "Alberta companies cleaning up abandoned Saskatchewan oil wells." Well that's an interesting thing people have a lot of questions about. Here we have a Premier wanting the federal government to chip in and help Saskatchewan workers clean up abandoned oil wells. And here we have, "About 40 cents on every dollar spent to clean up oil wells in Saskatchewan is going to Alberta." How does that sound like Saskatchewan oil workers are getting the benefits of this good trade deal? And I'll just read a little bit more:

The province's Saskatchewan Oil and Gas Orphan fund put up a request for proposals in January looking for companies to, "successfully conduct the down hole abandonment(s) on oil, gas and industry related wells, flow line abandonments and well ... decommissioning."

That's what they're looking for. But this is what Brad Wagner, the director of the Economy ministry's petroleum and natural gas says: "We don't show any preference to local Saskatchewan companies."

Now it just seems really odd. On one hand you have the government calling for action, and they're going to do something, but here's something they could actually make happen. They could actually make happen and say, here we in Saskatchewan are going to support our Saskatchewan oil workers. They are hearing one thing, but on the ground they are seeing something completely, completely different and that's because of the New West Partnership.

Now we've seen that in the Crowns, and how they've had to cut back on local shopping. And in fact this government over here has been very clear about their stance on our bill about supporting local governments.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that I'll conclude my remarks. I look forward to hearing the next speaker on this issue. Thank you.

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

Mr. Olason: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the outset I want to make it perfectly clear that I unequivocally support the motion brought forward by the member from Moosomin, recognizing the vital role played by free trade within Canadian economy and the international economic sphere and acknowledging the many benefits that free trade has brought out in our fair province of Saskatchewan.

[11:45]

Saskatchewan's economy is heavily focused on exports. Our province exports goods to over 150 countries. Saskatchewan exports are ranked number one in Canada at \$29,000 per capita, Mr. Speaker. The total value of Saskatchewan exports doubled from 16.4 billion in 2006 to over 32 billion in 2015. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan provides 65 per cent of the world's lentils, 55 per cent of the world's peas, 39 per cent of the world's durum wheat. Over 30 per cent of the total worldwide production of potash comes from Saskatchewan, and 15 per cent of the world's production of uranium. Saskatchewan is also the second-largest exporter of oil in Canada. As well, Mr. Speaker, we ship over \$5.8 billion in manufactured goods every single year, including dryland farm equipment and mining machinery. According to Export Development Canada one in every three jobs in Saskatchewan is dependent on our exports.

It goes without saying, Mr. Speaker, that free trade offers many substantial benefits to Saskatchewan's economic development and our sustained prosperity by opening up new opportunities for people, investors and businesses, and eliminating barriers to trade and facilitating economic exchanges between our provinces here in Western Canada. Vital to the economic growth and benefits afforded by free trade are trade deals and partnerships that establish regulations, mutually benefit market exchanges between different regions.

Nowhere are these partnerships more vital to the establishment of stable and prosperous market relationships than they are between Saskatchewan and its fellow Western provinces of Alberta, BC, and Manitoba. As such, dynamic and expansive trade agreements such as the New West Partnership and the prospective Canadian free trade agreement are a pivotal component of our relationship with our fellow provinces and an important driving force in our economic success.

Originally here signed in Regina in 2010 as an economic partnership between Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia, the NWP has acted as a pillar of economic activity in Western Canada for years. Membership in this agreement commits each province to improve trade, investment, and most importantly the mobility of labour, as well as eliminating barriers designed to obstruct the free movement of people, goods, services, and investments between the member provinces.

Between Saskatchewan, Alberta, and BC, the NWPTA [New West Partnership Trade Agreement] represents over 5.4 million

workers and \$651 billion in GDP, a figure which comprises a full third of Canada's national gross domestic product. Thus the NWPTA area represents the largest and most open and most competitive inter-provincial trade market in Canada.

The most tangible benefits of membership in the NWP are enhanced labour mobility, streamlined business registration and regulations, increased competitiveness, best value for public spending, collaborations on infrastructure, and our sharing of educational resources. Mr. Speaker, NWP's labour mobility provisions enable certified workers to practise their occupation in any of the market provinces without being required to undertake additional certification exams or training.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that part is the most important to me and to my family. Way back in 1996, Mr. Speaker, our family was looking to move out of Saskatchewan and into Alberta because it seemed like everybody else had. So we decided to take a look at the market; we decided to take a look and see what opportunities were out there.

I had no problem. My wife however was a hairdresser, and apparently hair is different in Saskatchewan than it is from BC or Alberta. As a hairstylist, she would have had to go back to school, spend about \$9,000, take another test, go through the apprenticeship, and then write her journeyman's certificate, Mr. Speaker, to style hair. Now I'm not sure how hair differs from Saskatchewan to BC, but apparently it was a huge difference, and it would have cost our family over \$25,000, Mr. Speaker.

Now as my son enters Sask Polytechnic to take the automotive service technician program, once he's completed his apprenticeship and his journeyman certificate, Mr. Speaker, he'll be allowed to practise anywhere in the Western provinces, Mr. Speaker. Business registrants in member provinces are now enabled to register in all other provinces at the same time as their first incorporation with all previous residency requirements removed. As well, all unnecessary differences in business regulations and standards have been removed under the NWP.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the free passage of capital, goods, services, and workers across the borders of member provinces significantly streamlines the process for businesses to expand into other provinces, lowering the cost for corporations and taxpayers in the process. In addition, the NWP's open procurement policies make it significantly easier for small- and medium-sized businesses to make bids on our public contracts.

The NWP also aims to reduce costs for consumers, governments, and businesses; increase access to information; to facilitate economic exchanges; increase co-operation between member provinces; and provide support to ongoing trade at both a national and international level. As well, the agreement is designed to encourage the resolution of disputes in the most effective, fair, and timely manner possible.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is likely due to these substantial benefits that an exciting milestone recently has been achieved in the history of the New West Partnership. Earlier this month, the Government of Manitoba concluded negotiations with Saskatchewan, Alberta, and BC to join the NWPTA. This

signals a welcome expansion of the largest, unobstructive interprovincial market in Canada.

Manitoba's government is eager to join the NWP and begin mutually beneficial joint work with its partner provinces under the agreement. The hard-working citizens and entrepreneurs of Manitoba will also reap the benefits of the agreement, including greatly increased mobility and streamlined regulations for accessing and engaging with interprovincial markets. With the addition of Manitoba, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the NWPTA comprises a common market of more than 11 million Canadians, bringing the combined GDP up to more than \$750 billion. The NWP now includes over 30 per cent of Canada's total population.

Despite the welcome addition of Manitoba to the NWPTA, Mr. Deputy Speaker, relations between our province and Alberta recently came under strain because of the Alberta NDP's government's imposition of an unfair beer markup to brewers in the NWP area, including Saskatoon-based Great Western Brewing.

In October, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission announced a new markup regime for beer products, dividing products into four tiers of increasing markup based on annual worldwide production volumes. In July of 2016, the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission modified that beer markup regime so that — and I want to get this straight — as of August, all brewers were subject to \$1.25-a-litre markup. However this change also coincided with the announcement of a grant program for small brewers just in Alberta, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which effectively offsets the costs of that increased markup. Mr. Speaker, that's the NDP in Alberta.

However in October of 2016, Great Western launched a challenge on the constitutionality of the Alberta markup regime. The Government of Saskatchewan is pleased to note that Great Western breweries has successfully applied for an injunction stopping Alberta from applying its unfair beer markups to Great Western products, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We continue to support Great Western as it continues to challenge NDP Alberta's discriminatory markup system and look forward to a full resolution on this matter.

The Alberta government's unfair beer markup is not an outlying incident, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Far from it. On the contrary, it fits within a much larger record of New Democratic opposition to trade agreements, which in turns stands in stark contrast to the Saskatchewan Party's consistent embrace of free markets.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I would like to emphasize my support for the motion affirming this Assembly's support for free trade within and outside of Canada and the many advantages that this trade brings to our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure and honour to rise and join in on this debate. To put it simply, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a funny choice for a 75-minute debate because of course the Sask NDP have always

been supportive of free trade, and we've been very vocal in that and critical of the Sask Party when they fail miserably in terms of their inability to effectively advocate on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan on many important trade files, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it's been interesting listening to the members opposite's comments. It's quite an interesting fictional display of the history of the province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I know that the backbenchers on the government side and members opposite have a lot of time on their hands, Mr. Speaker; you know, there's not a whole lot that they have to do. And I don't know if they're all taking a group class in creative writing 101, if that's being offered to the backbenchers on the opposite side of the House, Mr. Speaker, but regardless to say, it's been quite an entertaining ride, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of a creative — which is a very generous word to say — take on the history of the province in terms of trade.

If you listen to the members opposite, you'd think that trade was created in 2007 when the Sask NDP formed government, which is a ridiculous thing to say. Mr. Speaker, not only is it wrong, but it flies in the face of hundreds of years of hard-working Saskatchewan people. I'm pretty sure the province of Saskatchewan wasn't created in 2007, and the hard-working values of this province weren't created in 2007. The innovators and the entrepreneurs that have been here for decades, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's an offensive comment to say to them, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

In fact even just one small point to correct the record from the members opposite, it was a Saskatchewan NDP government in the 1990s, well, promoting free trade because guess what? We agree with free trade. We created . . . well not me because I was a child at the time . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — I'm having some difficulty hearing the member so I would ask the members to restrain their enthusiasm. I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It was in fact an NDP government in the '90s that created the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership group which is a very successful organization that highlighted and promoted trade at that time, and continues to highlight and promote trade to this day.

So that's one of the many things that the Sask Party seems to like to take credit for, but forgets the actual, the history behind the organization, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again as I said, this is yet another example of many examples of the Sask Party taking credit for things they have no right to take credit for. And then again, similar to what we see now, when times get tough and the economy slows down, they run away from any type of ownership, which doesn't do anything, frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to serve the people of Saskatchewan which is what we're all elected here to do, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

As I said, trade is extremely important to Saskatchewan's economy. We've been an import-export province since inception essentially, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to run off a few numbers for you.

In 2012 Saskatchewan's agri-food exports totalled \$11.1 billion. The top Saskatchewan agri-food exports were grains such as

non-durum wheat, barley, and oats at \$3.7 billion; oilseeds like canola and flaxseed at \$3.1 billion; and oilseed products like rapeseed oil at \$2.3 billion; as well as dry pulses at \$1.3 billion, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In 2012 exports of primary agricultural products, which are also very important for the economy, Mr. Speaker, were valued at \$8.5 billion in 2012, and accounted for 77 per cent of Saskatchewan's agriculture and agri-food exports.

These are important things for the economy of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. It's really important that we're doing all we can to ensure that there's an open line for both imports into this province as well as exports out of this province, and that the government is doing a good enough job of advocating for the people of Saskatchewan to ensure that the people of Saskatchewan are both getting not only an open source but also a fair deal in the whole thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[12:00]

Exports of processed products were valued at \$1.7 billion in 2012 and account for 23 per cent of Saskatchewan's agriculture and agri-food exports as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And there's been several comments on the different types of agricultural products that get exported to other, not only other provinces but around the world, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but it's a really important part of our economy. We have a really great, strong agricultural history and agricultural industry that still exists, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So it's important, I think, to list off some of the great products that come from Saskatchewan, such as chickpeas, canary seed, lentils, durum wheat, flax, mustard seed, field peas, oats, industrial hemp, canola, spring and winter wheat, rye, and barley are just a few of those examples, Mr. Speaker. From what I understand, out of the total amount of exports that Saskatchewan produces, agri-foods account for almost half of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And most recently, the most significant increase we've seen in terms of exports are in lentils, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the demand for that increases throughout the globe, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So as I said, the people of Saskatchewan deserve a government that is going to work hard for them, both to ensure that trade is open for them, that our markets are available to the people of Saskatchewan, and also that it's being done in a fair way. And the failures from the Sask Party in this regard essentially show absolutely no end, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There's many, many examples in the last nine years that I could choose from to provide as examples that the members opposite have failed to acknowledge, failed to gloss over.

It's too bad. You'd think in these debates we could have a reasoned, logical discussion about perhaps what's been done in the past, what's good, what could be done better, and maybe what are some of the challenges for the future, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But that never seems to be the case as I said at the beginning of my remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I don't think that's part of the members opposite's creative writing 101 class, so of course that won't come up yet. I'm hoping that maybe in the next couple of years they'll take a bit more of a . . . another class perhaps in types of logical reasoning or investigative journalism or something to that effect, so that when we come to

these 75-minute debates and they have speeches, that they're a little bit more logically sound and we can have a better discussion about the challenges that actually exist in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This government has a propensity to outsource government jobs and contracts. We've seen that time and time again, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So when we want to talk about trade, we want to also talk about it, and the government wants to talk about what a great job they're doing. They should maybe also look in their own backyard and see what they're doing in terms of helping the people of Saskatchewan.

The Deputy Speaker: — Once again I would just ask the members to restrain their enthusiasm for the debate and let the member from Regina Douglas Park make her comments.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If you look, as an example, to SaskEnergy, you'll see the amount of government jobs that have been contracted out now to different out-of-province contractors, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm not too sure if that's their idea of a strong export-import economy and that's good trade to them, but it's not good trade to the Saskatchewan NDP, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Another obvious one that this government has failed to do is getting us a new pipeline to trade water for the ability for us to export our resources, our natural resources. This government has failed time and time again to do that. They've had nine years to advocate and get that and they have failed. Instead, we see a Premier who would rather have Twitter tantrums and Facebook battles with, for example, the Prime Minister of Canada or it depends on who it is of the day, basically. I think the most recent Twitter tantrum was about A&W, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So instead, I'd like to see a Premier show some leadership, a Premier who takes his seat and his job seriously and be a good diplomat for the people of Saskatchewan and ensure that he's working hard to ensure that our reputation, both interprovincially as well as globally, is as strong as it should be, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that's the most important thing. I think that's what the people of Saskatchewan want to see in terms of improving trade in this province, which is extremely important.

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

Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks so much, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Sorry, we had a few seconds left for debate. I'm not sure if the member is up for questions or not. Before I call for questions, I am going to remind the members to put their questions through the Chair and their answers also through the Chair. And seeing that it's a government motion, I will recognize a member from the opposition. I recognize Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — There you go. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My question is concerning this news story I referenced earlier about Alberta companies cleaning up abandoned Sask oil wells. We know the

Premier's gone on at length about that. And it's calling for the decommissioning of 100 orphan flow lines and 200 orphan wells, and about 10 of the 15 companies that applied to those, to clean up those orphaned sites were Saskatchewan based, but the government chose four Alberta-based companies to do the work. Alberta got the work. And so I'm wondering, to the member from Moosomin, how he can possibly defend that the four companies that got the work were from Alberta, under this trade agreement? Thank you.

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

Mr. Bonk: — Mr. Speaker, this process was open and transparent. It's in line with the New West Partnership. It follows all of the rules of the New West Partnership and further to that, Canadian Free Trade Agreement also. And it's just ironic to me that the member from Saskatoon Centre would bring this question up when their campaign expenses mostly were outsourced, 72 per cent of their campaign expenses were outsourced to companies from Ontario who aren't even in the New West Partnership, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's great to finally be up. We know the member from Saskatoon Nutana, she supports the radical Leap Manifesto. I suspect many of the other members do privately. We know one of the tenets of this very problematic document is the call for "an end to all trade deals." That speaks directly to the motion before the House today. My question, I want to know from the member from Douglas Park: will you stand up against your colleague from Nutana and support the trade deals that Saskatchewan exporters rely on? Or do you also support the job-killing Leap Manifesto?

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member knows perfectly well, and we've said time and time again, that she does not support the Leap Manifesto, so maybe . . . [inaudible] . . . question that does not . . . [inaudible] . . . of Saskatchewan. We've said that time and time again. We'll continue to support trade on this side of the House, and continue to make sure that trade is free and fair for the people of Saskatchewan. Maybe the members on the other side should stop trying to throw up shiny objects of distraction and instead talk to the people of Saskatchewan about their massive deficit.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again we'll give him advance notice so he can, you know, fasten his seat belt and get ready to answer the question, the member from Moosomin. In terms of the abandoned oil well cleanup program and 40 cents of every dollar this government is spending going to Alberta, is the member from Moosomin saying that under the rules of trade that there's nobody in the Moosomin constituency or indeed in southeast Saskatchewan that can do that work and indeed should be doing that work? Is

that what that member's trying to tell this House?

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

Mr. Bonk: — Mr. Speaker, of course there's qualified companies in Saskatchewan. There's qualified companies in Alberta. There's qualified companies in BC. This is an open and transparent process. This is part of the New West Partnership. This is why we have an economic zone that has \$750 billion worth of GDP last year.

But, Mr. Speaker, is there no one in Saskatchewan who knows how to get from Regina to Saskatoon without having the help of a company from Ontario? I find it ironic that they keep asking questions like this. Can't they find a company in Saskatchewan who could plan a tour for their election campaign?

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

Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We know that the members opposite have been opposed to the New West Partnership Trade Agreement. In fact, on May 3rd, 2010, former NDP MLA John Nilson said, and I quote, it's a "sell-out trade deal."

So, Mr. Speaker, my question is for the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre. How can your party oppose a trade agreement that has created new opportunities for Saskatchewan people and businesses and investors by removing barriers and opening trade with Western Canada?

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

Mr. McCall: — Well it's funny, Mr. Speaker. Of course on this side of the House we support trade that works for Saskatchewan workers, for Saskatchewan companies, for Saskatchewan families. That's what we support on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

And I guess the member opposite need look no further than her seatmate and maybe have a good conversation about how is it that, when cleaning up abandoned oil wells is the big *cause célèbre* over there, that under the terms of the agreements that they've signed onto, Mr. Speaker, that 40 cents on every dollar being spent in this effort goes out of the province to Alberta, when in Moosomin and in Estevan, I'd venture to say, Mr. Speaker, you've got people and companies that can darn well do that work? So maybe the member could talk to her seatmate and get him straightened out on how that should be working for the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, day after day we've been trying to get to the bottom of the GTH scandal. And the GTH was designed to be an important part of our Saskatchewan trade strategy, but we've only seen mismanagement and scandal from the Sask Party when it comes to the GTH. And they don't want to seem to answer the

questions.

To the member from Saskatoon University: why isn't this government more concerned about their scandal of the GTH and how it's going to hurt Saskatchewan's trade?

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

Mr. Olason: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question. You know, I think that those questions have been asked and answered on that section of the government, you know, many times. And you know who did answer it, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It was the auditor.

On trade, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it's very clear that we stand up for the people of Saskatchewan. We stand up for the businesses in Saskatchewan. And when we're talking about oil wells and orphaned oil wells and how come 40 cents of every dollar went to Alberta, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would say, you know what? How many Saskatchewan companies are working in BC? How many Saskatchewan companies are working in Alberta? How many Saskatchewan companies are going to be working in Manitoba now and helping our economy that way, Mr. Deputy Speaker? That never happened over there.

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

Mr. Buckingham: — Speaking of fiction, this is not fiction, Mr. Speaker. For years the NDP in Saskatchewan and Manitoba refused to engage with other provinces to reduce barriers to trade within Canada. Since the NDP has been thrown out of office, both Saskatchewan and Manitoba have signed on to the New West Partnership. But now the NDP government of Alberta is trying to rebuild trade barriers, exemplified by their new, unfair beer markup scheme.

My question to the member from Regina Douglas Park: will you call on your Alberta cousins to abandon their protectionist measures and to recommit themselves to working with other provinces to promote domestic free trade?

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I've said time and time again, the Sask NDP will continue to support the people of Saskatchewan to ensure that trade is working for the people of Saskatchewan. We will not be the ones that are throwing stones. Instead we'll be using diplomacy to get the best results for the people of Saskatchewan. That's where this government continuously fails. This beer example is one stark example of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's quite a shame that he would use this as that example, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Question to the member from Regina Pasqua. Now Regina Pasqua's situated in the city of Regina in such a way that you get to the one boundary of it, you can see the GTH from there. So

certainly that member should have some kind of concern about the way that scandal has continued to smoke along in terms of the actions of that government and the impact that that has on the good reputation of the province of Saskatchewan, not to mention the way that you've got people being ripped off in that deal and the kind of questions that continue to not be answered in terms of the debate in this Assembly.

[12:15]

So the question to the member is this: if they're so concerned about trade, how is it they can sit back and whistle Dixie while the scandal at the GTH continues to go on and on?

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Because the Saskatchewan Party government is moving forward with the same momentum they moved backwards in the last 16 years . . . [inaudible].

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 2 — Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Report

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

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to rise to my feet, although I'm somewhat plagued by a cold today. So I'll do my best to be as clear as I can.

We know the Truth and Reconciliation Commission travelled across Canada and did a lot of really important work in terms of listening to people, listening to First Nations, Métis, Inuit people, listening to non-First Nations people, and listening very carefully to the impact of the residential school system amongst other oppressive colonialization programs that First Nations have been subjected to in Canada right from the get-go, Mr. Speaker.

And you know, here in Saskatchewan, I like to point out and am proud to see that our relationship with First Nations and Métis people is proudly represented right here in the Chamber, Mr. Speaker. And we have on our Table, we have the Métis sash representing the Métis people. And we also have a beautiful beaded banner right on the Clerks' Table that demonstrates the promise of the treaty relationship that we have here in Saskatchewan. And virtually all of our province is covered by the numbered treaties that were signed in the 1870s and onward, Mr. Speaker.

This beaded tapestry has an indication of one of the key phrases that describes the treaty relationship, and it says, as long as the sun shines and the rivers flow, the First Nations will have those connections to the land. And we have a beautiful sunshine day with forest and a river and a plain flowing through, beautifully beaded, Mr. Speaker. We also have our mace situated on a pillow made with beaver pelt and beading representing the four directions, Mr. Speaker, and it's a very important part of First Nation sacred teachings.

And I think the fact that our ceremonial mace is situated on top of that pillow talks to me a lot about where our sovereignty comes from here in Canada. And as you know, Mr. Speaker, sovereignty is an important feature of nationhood, and our sovereignty has always been based on the British parliamentary system.

And there's some things in the calls to action that I want to talk about today from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that causes us to think very seriously about how Canada became a sovereign commonwealth nation. But I think the fact that the symbol of our sovereignty and the mace lies on a pillow of First Nation, a sacred First Nations pillow, tells us how important the sovereignty of First Nations is as well. And that's something that we have forgotten about.

That's something that we've forgotten about over the years, and certainly I think as the waves of colonialism and the enthusiasm for settling in Canada from Europe, and particularly western Europe, came across in the late 1800s, early 1900s, sometimes I think the enthusiasm for colonialism completely obliterated the sovereign rights of First Nations people, to the point that by the time we got around to negotiating treaties in the 1870s many of these First Nations, because of the disappearance of the buffalo, were starving.

And when you think about the bargaining table that those chiefs came to, when Lieutenant Governor Morris came out and was negotiating the treaties, I think the unequal power of those two parties, when you had a starving people who were decimated by disease, they were decimated by the ravages of alcohol, and they were also starving — when they came to the table to sign the numbered treaties, they knew all they had was the land. And that was their only bargaining chip, Mr. Speaker, and starvation and death was the only alternative for those First Nations.

So we do have the treaty relationship. They were negotiated, and a number of very important promises were made to the First Nations, and as you have often heard, Mr. Speaker, we are all treaty people. Anyone who lives here in this province is part of the treaty relationship.

One of the important I think recommendations for me in particular in the call to action — and I think of the call to action from the TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] has a total of 94 various calls to action — one that speaks to me personally is no. 28, and I'll share that with the Assembly, Mr. Speaker:

We call upon law schools in Canada to require all law students to take a course in Aboriginal people and the law which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of

Indigenous Peoples, treaties and Aboriginal rights, indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training and intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

And I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, when I went to law school, this was before the legacy of the residential schools was revealed and before the lawsuits started coming in. Out of curiosity I decided to sign up for an Aboriginal law class. And I had a professor; his name was Professor Norm Zlotkin, and this would have been probably 1992 or '93. And I guess I was awestruck and dumbstruck by my lack of knowledge in that area when I started learning about the relationship of First Nations here in Saskatchewan. I had no idea, Mr. Speaker. I didn't know treaties were there. I didn't know how First Nations had come to be settled on reserves. I knew nothing about the residential school process. I knew nothing about the promises that were made in the treaties.

And I remember particularly when we had a guest lecturer come to our class. His name was Sákéj Youngblood Henderson, and he is a Chickasaw member from Oklahoma who came to Canada to teach at the Native Law Centre, which is a very important feature in law education here in Canada. When he spoke, Mr. Speaker, I realized there was a whole side of this story that I knew nothing about. And so at that point I was very interested in moving on to study the second level of Aboriginal law at law school and I was very fortunate to be in Sákéj Henderson's class. And I can tell you that that man changed the way I thought. He was an amazing, powerful teacher. He was an amazing leader, and he challenged everything that I took for granted, Mr. Speaker, and kind of turned my world view upside down to the point where then in my labour law class I actually did a paper on property law and the difference in world views between First Nations and indigenous people's world view in relationship to the land as opposed to western European relationships to land.

And I think one of the most telling pieces that we studied was a piece by a very famous British writer named John Locke. And he wrote a treatise on something called "Of Property." And John Locke was writing, I think in the early 1800s, when for him the notion of all these lands in North America were actually empty and that they were available for the British people to come in and enclose those lands. That was very much the thinking of British settlers, British governments, colonial governments. As they moved further and further west in North America, they brought those notions with them.

The doctrine itself is called *terra nullius*, and it's actually mentioned twice in the calls to action for the . . . maybe more than twice in the calls to action under the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. But in particular you find it under the 45th call to action. And what this call is, is to redevelop a new royal proclamation. But this one . . . The royal proclamation was usually issued by the king back in 1763 when the Hudson's Bay Company was given, basically handed the entire Hudson's Bay area, the largest land mass I think ever granted by a British Crown.

Of course the British Crown didn't have title to it at that time, but that really wasn't an issue for the monarch. And that was an interesting approach to just taking over land without having any

sort of legal right to do so. And the doctrine was called *terra nullius*, and section 45 or the call to action no. 45 says we have to repudiate . . . This is subsection (i): “Repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*.”

And *terra nullius* means “empty land,” and John Locke often talked about the savages and that they couldn’t possibly have any rights to the land because somehow they were substandard, and that they didn’t have the legal structures that they needed to form and have sovereignty over the land. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, he was making it up, but sometimes when things get made up, people start believing them. And I think there’s documented historical documentation that shows how the concept of *terra nullius* and the doctrine of discovery, which is a doctrine whereby . . . It was amongst European nations, and the notion was whatever European nation discovered a land before the other European nation, they had rights to it.

And that happened through the West Indies. That happened through Central America, South America, and certainly North America, Mr. Speaker, where you see differing colonies like France establishing a colony, New France; New England being established by England. The Dutch were claiming territories in the United States, and the Portuguese all across the entire colonial age, Mr. Speaker. That was the doctrine of discovery. But that doctrine never ever addressed the sovereignty rights of the First Nations who actually were present, who were functioning, high-level societies that were present in those territories that were claimed as their own by European colonists, Mr. Speaker.

So that’s one of the main features I think of my experience with indigenous rights, is the rights to the land. I was very disappointed that this government failed to take the opportunity in Bill 34 to recognize and take an opportunity to commence that reconciliation through our relationships with land, and they never even mentioned the treaties or the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at all when they were undertaking to do a complete modernization of our provincial lands Act, Mr. Speaker. And I think that is I guess indicative of the weight that this government puts on those recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. And for me, Mr. Speaker, it’s very disappointing.

Now I could go on for that for some time, but I do want to touch on a report that just came out regarding child and family poverty in Saskatchewan. And again I think the principles in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission can guide our approach to issues affecting First Nations families. And I think what’s staggeringly disappointing in this report that just came out this month — I think it was released today in fact, Mr. Speaker, but it came out this month — and here’s some statistics that should chill the blood in our veins, Mr. Speaker:

For children in First Nations families, the poverty rate in 2010 was 59.0 per cent. Among those families indicating they were Métis, 25.9 per cent were in low-income households. In 2010, of the 55,000 poor children in Saskatchewan, 31,000 were in First Nations or Métis families.

And of course as you know, Mr. Speaker, the percentage of

First Nations people is much lower than that, so it’s an abject failure on the part of our societies when we get these kinds of numbers. What’s even more concerning, Mr. Speaker, is when they talk about the depth of poverty. Some people are just below the poverty line, but many people are way below the poverty line, and in this report they let us know that:

Depth of poverty was greater in the Prairie provinces than in other Canadian provinces. In Saskatchewan in 2014, the income for one-half of families in poverty was at least \$12,000 to \$13,000 below the poverty lines shown in Table 1.

So, Mr. Speaker, that’s half. The depth of their poverty is 50 per cent — or I guess 100 per cent — more than the poverty line. And when you think about those kinds of staggering numbers, and these children that are living in these situations, it’s heartbreaking.

[12:30]

It’s a failure on us as a society, and we need leadership. We need to use the guidelines and the calls to action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report to motivate us to say, what can be done? How can we as a collective whole — and certainly we’re calling on our government to be part of that — how can we ever take it upon ourselves to fix that problem for those children?

I think of my own children and the benefits they’ve had of being born who they were without any choice on their part. And then I think of these children who are living in abject poverty. They didn’t ask for that, Mr. Speaker, and they certainly don’t deserve it. Those families, a disproportionate rate are found in single-parent families as well. We know that the economic impact of those kinds of situations as well.

Mr. Speaker, we know that there was a report done by an economist, Mr. Howe, who suggested that this isn’t just a social issue. It’s an economic issue. We’ve talked about it many a time and my colleagues on this side of the House have talked about that as well.

So the issue is profound. I think the TRC leads the way. It provides us with an opportunity to refocus, and we will be looking to this government and the new Minister for Government Relations to put some meat onto the bones of this, Mr. Speaker. The previous minister indicated that they were addressing many of these. This was back in January. We’d like an accounting of that. We’d like to know what positive actions this government has taken and how they measure up to the calls for action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is the extent of my comments, and I appreciate the opportunity to be able to rise in the House and address the House.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:32 until 12:35.]

The Speaker: — All those in favour please rise.

[Yeas — 56]

Wall	Moe	Stewart
Wyant	Reiter	Morgan
Harpauer	Doherty	Duncan
Beaudry-Mellor	Hargrave	D'Autremont
Heppner	Boyd	Cheveldayoff
Marit	Tell	Eyre
Merriman	Harrison	Ottenbreit
Ross	Weekes	Brkich
Hart	Kirsch	Bradshaw
Steinley	Makowsky	Phillips
Lawrence	Wilson	Campeau
Docherty	Michelson	Doke
Olauson	Steele	Young
Fiaz	Dennis	Bonk
Carr	Nerlien	Lambert
Buckingham	Kaeding	Wotherspoon
Chartier	Belanger	Sroule
Forbes	Rancourt	Beck
McCall	Sarauer	

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion?

[Nays — nil]

Principal Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 56; those opposed, 0.

The Speaker: — The motion is carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This Assembly now stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:40.]

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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