



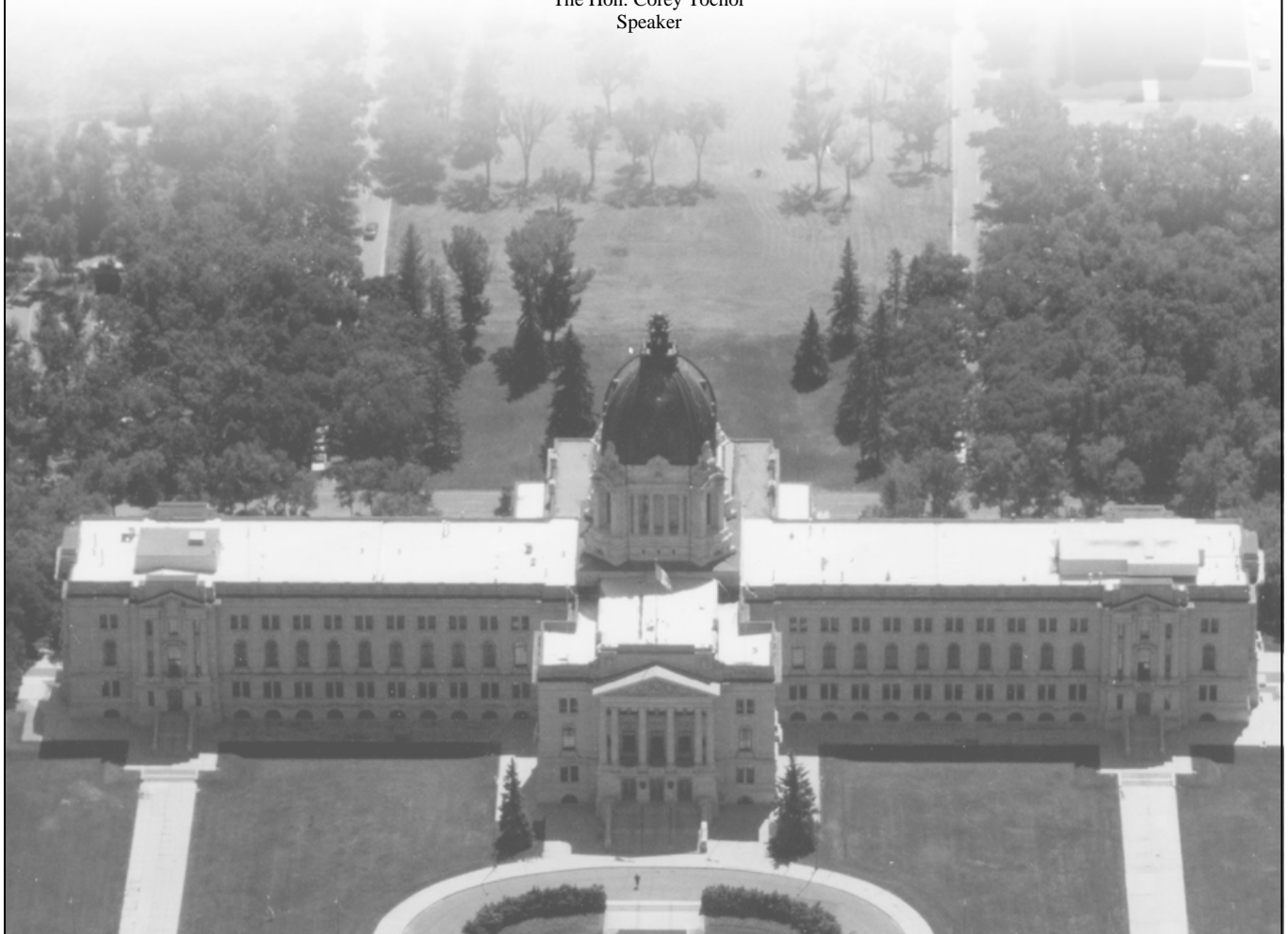
SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

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
2nd Session — 28th Legislature

Speaker — Hon. Corey Tochor
Premier — Hon. Brad Wall
Leader of the Opposition — Nicole Sarauer

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Beck , Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)	McMorris , Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)
Belanger , Buckley — Athabasca (NDP)	Meili , Ryan — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
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Doherty , Kevin — Regina Northeast (SP)	Sarauer , Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)
Doke , Hon. Larry — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)	Sproule , Cathy — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
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Eyre , Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)	Steinley , Warren — Regina Walsh Acres (SP)
Fiaz , Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)	Stewart , Hon. Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)
Forbes , David — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)	Tell , Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)
Hargrave , Hon. Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)	Tochor , Hon. Corey — Saskatoon Eastview (SP)
Harpauer , Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)	Vermette , Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)
Harrison , Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)	Wall , Hon. Brad — Swift Current (SP)
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Lawrence , Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	
Makowsky , Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)	
Marit , Hon. David — Wood River (SP)	Vacancies — Kindersley, Melfort

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 47; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12; Vacant — 2

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Gregory A. Putz
Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel — Kenneth S. Ring, Q.C.
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 Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I ask for leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to colleagues. I'm going to, I guess, make a number of introductions from people that I can see in the gallery. And I know that I will miss some that are here and I apologize to them in advance. This is my sheet, so we're going to go by visual identification, Mr. Speaker.

In no particular order, I note that Doug Moen is in the gallery today. Doug of course is a long-time professional public servant in the province of Saskatchewan — maybe Doug would give us a wave — who served different governments, three different parties in power, and was my deputy minister for most of my time as Premier. He is from the great community of Cabri, Saskatchewan and wonderful things come from that community, Mr. Moen included. I am very grateful for the advice and counsel and service he gave. And so I want to note that he's here, and I'm grateful he is, and I thank him publicly here in the Chamber and welcome him to his Legislative Assembly.

There's some folks from Swift Current that are here as well. Everett Hindley, who's been working with me since I started in 1999, first as a constituency assistant and then helping me in my job that I have now and where he's more like a younger brother. He's a gentleman. He's got a great sense of humour. He's a very hard worker, and now he's on to other pursuits that I wish him well in as well. But I just want to welcome Everett to his Assembly.

Seated beside him, Reg Howard from Regina. Reg was helpful to me early on when I decided to run for the leadership, one of the first folks to encourage me to do so and to help. And so I note Reg is here; we welcome him.

And then some Swift Current people as well beside him, Nola and Dave Smith. Dave is the worship pastor at our church as well as a local business person, together with his wife Nola. And Nola is also my constituency assistant. Now, Mr. Speaker, if members opposite want, you know, if they're interested in a real scandal, here's one: Dave cheers for the Hamilton Tiger-Cats and Nola, the constituency assistant to the Premier, cheers for the Edmonton Eskimos. I have been wanting to get that off of my conscience for a very, very long time. She even

has a little Edmonton Eskimos flag that I've tried to hide and destroy in various ways, but it is a resilient thing. And Nola does a great job as a constituency assistant and I'm very grateful for all the work she does with the constituents of Swift Current.

There's so many staff in the building I think that I can see up there. I want to single out a couple. James Parker, who has helped me with my remarks and as well as general communications in the Premier's office and become a good friend. And my long-time chief of staff, Joe Donlevy, who was chief of staff for all but the last few months really, the longest-serving one in the country. And left business, and there was certainly some personal sacrifice for him to serve in a public way. And I'm very grateful to him for his friendship and for his help and counsel over the years. Joe is here in his Legislative Assembly today.

I see the mayor of Regina is here, Michael Fougere; Gay Patrick, former head of the potash producers. I'm just going to list . . . I won't list everybody. I see Lee Elliott, also originally from Swift Current. There's Gord Dobrowolsky. And I would be remiss if I didn't introduce my friend Patrick Bundrock, who's the general manager, the executive director of the Saskatchewan Party and also a good friend that has just done a great service to all of us on this side, to our party, but to me personally.

And so I know that I will have missed some, and I apologize to those that I have, and welcome all the members that are here in the gallery that are visiting today on this particular last day of the session. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask members of the House to please join with me in welcoming all of those who have been introduced today in the House.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the Premier in welcoming all of the individuals he had just mentioned to their Legislative Assembly. I won't go through all of them, but in particular I do want to welcome Doug Moen. Thank you so much for being here today. Also Gay Patrick, who I had the opportunity to see be deservedly recognized at the Sask Mining Association reception last night. Also His Worship the mayor of Regina, Mayor Michael Fougere, is here. And seated next to him is his chief of staff, Kyle Addison, who I would call a friend but I would worry that he would think that I was cramping his style if I told everybody that. Also in that row, John Hopkins, the CEO [chief executive officer] of the Regina Chamber of Commerce is here. It's always a pleasure to see you in your Legislative Assembly as well.

I would also like to recognize — I'm sure he'll be welcomed later on, but while I'm on my feet I might as well do it now — the former MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Regina Douglas Park is here seated as well, Russ Marchuk. It's always a pleasure to see him. Welcome again to your Legislative Assembly.

And while I'm on my feet, I do want to recognize two other individuals seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. It's a very special day for the Premier, his last day in the House, but less

importantly, but still it's my last day in this seat as interim leader in the House. And so, seated in your gallery are my parents, Owen and Donna Sarauer, who have come here from time to time.

[Applause]

Ms. Sarauer: — I'm assuming they are being applauded for raising such a wonderful daughter, Mr. Speaker. That's very well-deserved. I'd like to ask all members join me in welcoming all of them to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, seated in your gallery are two individuals that I would love to introduce. Shantel Lipp is the president of Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association. And seated with her is Sean Wilson, who is past Chair of the Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association — a good friend of mine, but is also the mayor of Buchanan. So I'd like all members . . .

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce someone in the west gallery who was my summer student. We've become very good friends. Tye Hapke is sitting up there, who is also now the president of the Saskatchewan youth party, and is a student at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], going into law. So I'd like all members to welcome my guests here to their Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a number of people I would like to introduce as well. The Premier has indicated to me that he wanted to specifically recognize and introduce John Hopkins from the Regina Chamber of Commerce. And also seated in the west gallery is Tye Hapke, the reasonably newly elected president of the Saskatchewan Party Youth wing. Great people. And also seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, are Shantel Lipp from the Heavy Construction Association; former deputy premier Doug Moen.

And, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of spouses that are in the gallery today, as well: Valerie Doke and Debbie Michelson. And I apologize if there are more of which I wasn't aware. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize today especially my own spouse, Sandy, who's here. The last time Sandy was here, Frank Quennell was the Justice minister. He saw her coming into the building, beat me to the punch, and introduced her before I had a chance to. They used to work in the same law office, and Frank was always trying to outsmart me all the time and sometimes he was successful. So in any event, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to be able to be the one that's introducing Sandy today and thank her for her long-suffering life as my spouse.

And I note as well the Leader of the Opposition's parents are here. I want to welcome them to the legislature as well. It's a day where we recognize and thank families and friends. And the two leadership hopefuls on that side, they should be very glad that these people's daughter is not one of the candidates because they would be very, very sorry. Thank you.

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

Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Very quickly I'd like to also give a shout-out to Mayor Fougere and also to the Chair of the Regina Chamber, John Hopkins, from the better city in Saskatchewan. I just had . . . Also to my friend, Rod Donison who is here, a constituent of mine.

But most importantly today, Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome my husband to the Legislative Assembly. We all spend a lot of time in this place, and my husband actually had to come here to the Legislative Assembly to remember what I look like. And so I just want to say, welcome to the Legislative Assembly and thank you for all you do to keep our household going while I've been out busy here. So thank you very much for that.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask for leave for extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Yes, is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all the members of this House, I would like to introduce a few guests sitting in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to request everyone to raise hand when I call your name.

We have Samir Patel and we have Vishna Kansara, and both are the small-business owners in Regina and representing the Hindu Samaj Regina and very good community workers.

Also we have Baldeep Singh Dhindhra with his father, Gurdeep Singh Dhindhra. Mr. Speaker, Baldeep is very busy in community work and doing a great work and advocate for organ donations and have set up many swab camps and blood donation camps as well.

Mr. Speaker, we also have ICNA — I-C-N-A — that is Islamic Circle of North America, all those sisters are here — Naila Asif Butt, Shumaila Khalid, Jahasid Jahmeed, Farzana Anwar, Gulnaz Khan, Shumala Siddiqi are here. They have a big social centre and very busy in many activities such as organizing charitable events and fundraising for needy people in Regina and all across Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we have Surrender Grewal. He is ex-president of Sikh Society of Regina. Now he is general secretary of Sikh Society of Regina. On December 16, he will be president of India Canada, and we all know about India Canada's supper. I believe in the last supper they raised about \$70,000 for Hospitals of Regina Foundation.

We have Tajinder Hayar. He is from Punjabi Media as well. And we have Shahid Pervaiz. He is a long-time friend of mine. And I have a few of my other constituents. We have Waqar

Bokhari. He is a best friend of mine and he is known in my colleagues as Bokhari. He's been with me since my nomination meeting until these days, Mr. Speaker.

Also my family is here. Attia is here, my wife, with two sons. One is in Campbell; two are here. Kashif and Arsalan are here.

And, Mr. Speaker, all these delegates are here to say thank you to the Premier of Saskatchewan for his extraordinary service for the people of Saskatchewan, his sacrifice for a consecutive 18 years — 8 years MLA and 10 years as a Premier. I ask all the members to join me in welcoming all these valuable members of society in their legislative.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to welcome and to join with members to welcome some of the guests that are here today, or all of the guests that are here today. We have within this Assembly many leaders within our community and across our province, and I say welcome to you all.

It's great to have His Worship here today and to have John Hopkins here today as well. To have Gay Patrick, somebody who's served our province and the potash producers so well within Saskatchewan. Great to have the Sarauers here today, and I concur with the Deputy Premier on his statement on that front as well. And thank you for being here.

But I would like to join in welcoming as well in the west gallery, some of the leaders that have joined us here today, leaders from the Gujarati Samaj of Saskatchewan, who are leaders in business, leaders within our community. They come from a state in India that's not unlike Saskatchewan, with agriculture and a resource base that's quite similar, and that proudly build our multicultural province. It's an honour to join them for the garba during Navratri. It's a pleasure to join them for Diwali. It's a pleasure to build those friendships that build our province.

It's also an honour to join leaders within the Sikh community here, leaders from the Sikh temple, from the Gurudwara that are here today; Surender "Gary" Grewal that's here today. Thank you so much for your leadership in our community, a business person as well, and taking on the post with the India Canada Association, a very important post.

[10:15]

And it's important for me to mention at this time, as we have the leaders that are here from the temple, from the Gurudwara, that are here today to say that we stand in prayer and thought and care for Sahil at this time, a young leader within our community, someone that I've gotten to know, who's in critical condition right now, Mr. Speaker, but has a province that's praying in many faiths for that young man. And those that are here today are raising dollars and coordinating blood drives and supporting parents that have come all the way from India to support Sahil, Mr. Speaker.

So I say thank you to the leaders that are here today that are

wrapping their support around Sahil at this critical time. They're putting on full display the values of our province and extending love and care in a very meaningful way to these families. I welcome all that are here today, on this I guess the final day for the Premier here today, and I thank them for their attendance.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Mr. Moe: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Assembly, I want to make a couple of short introductions, but I do want to join with others in welcoming everyone to this House here today.

But I do see that Al Brigden has wandered in and he's brought with him the previous MLA from Estevan, our previous caucus Chair, Doreen Eagles, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to acknowledge in your gallery, Mr. Gord Dobrowolsky, Mr. Speaker, otherwise known, as I've been informed, as Dobber. Mr. Speaker, he is the Chair of the Workers' Compensation Board here in the province of Saskatchewan. But I got to know Gord as he was Chair of the Prince Albert Parkland Health Region a number of years ago. And he had a business in Prince Albert where a young guy from Shellbrook used to wander in and talk to him about hospitals and such things. And I want to thank him for his time, as I know I was taking him away from time in his business at that point in time. Mr. Speaker, he also has an affinity for the Rosthern-Shellbrook constituencies. He likes to walk through the bush and scare the moose and the deer with his firearm, Mr. Speaker, every now and again.

But, Mr. Speaker, I do ask, in all seriousness, that all members of this Assembly welcome Al Brigden, Doreen Eagles, and Gord Dobrowolsky to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the member from Rosthern-Shellbrook in welcoming a former member of this legislature, Doreen Eagles, who's sitting in the west gallery.

Doreen was part of the class of '99, which I am, and the Premier is the class of '99. So today is a special day, and we're certainly pleased to see her here. She was our caucus Chair for many years. She ruled with an iron gavel, but she was very fair and gave each one of us an opportunity to express our opinions. And so I would ask all members to welcome her to her Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Doke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seating behind the bar in the government side here, I would like to welcome Russ Marchuk here today — a good friend, long-time educator in the province of Saskatchewan, and former MLA for Regina Douglas Park.

Mr. Speaker, in your gallery there are two ladies up there that I

would like to introduce, first being Karen Marchuk, wife of Russ, and a long-time educator also in the province. And seating beside Karen is my wife Valerie. And as we all know, our spouses, our partners, we could not do this job without the strong support of our wives and spouses, so I'd like to welcome my wife Valerie to the Assembly. Also, I know that Black Friday is a major sales event in the city of Regina and across the world, but it doesn't touch when my wife and Karen Marchuk get together and go shopping. So, Mr. Speaker, I would like all members to welcome Russ and Karen Marchuk and my wife Valerie.

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

Mr. Doherty: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with members on both sides of the House in welcoming all these guests here today, in particular the mayor from Regina. As a Regina MLA, welcome, Your Worship, Kyle, and Lee, who are very good friends of mine that the Leader of the Opposition identified as well.

But in particular, Mr. Speaker, there's two gentlemen seated in your gallery I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly. They can't see me and I can't see them, but I know that they're up there. And I met with them earlier this morning down in the cafeteria, who are here today to honour their friend, the Premier of Saskatchewan on his last day here in the Chamber, Mr. Speaker, and on a very bittersweet day for us here in the Saskatchewan Party, and that's Cory Furman and Iain Harry, who go all the way back to university days with not only myself but with the Premier and others here on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

They've been extraordinarily instrumental in the development of this party and this Premier's career, his political career, and certainly mine as well, Mr. Speaker, as well as other members on this side of the House, so I want to welcome Cory and Iain to their Legislative Assembly on this last day for the Premier, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was wondering if I could get a show of hands from anyone that hasn't been introduced just yet. But anyway, in seriousness, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to very quickly introduce and to say a word of congratulations and thanks to an individual named Clare Isman. She's now one of the senior advisers to the deputy minister to the Premier, but she'd recently last month finished up a stint as the deputy minister of Finance.

And certainly in terms of the service that she has provided to the people of Saskatchewan — I got to see her in action as the Chair of the Public Service Commission a few years back — but certainly there's someone that has given a lot of her life and talent, her abundant talent, in service of the people of Saskatchewan. So I'd just like to take this moment to again welcome everybody else, but certainly to say, Clare Isman, thank you very much for your service to the people of Saskatchewan and welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Hon. Mr. Bonk: — Well I saw my wife, Candace, put up her hand when the last member made the statement, so I'd like to take this chance to thank her for all the good work she does behind the scenes to help support me in my job here in the legislature. And I am nervous because she's sitting awful close to Mrs. Doke and Mrs. Marchuk, so I hope we can get her out of there very soon. But I'd like everyone to help me welcome her to her Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition calling on the Sask Party government to support mental health emergency units. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners point out that Saskatchewan's mental health funding is among the lowest in Canada. I know in conversations with many of the petitioners, they're appreciative that the government did come to the table around funding the mental health assessment unit, temporary unit, at RUH [Royal University Hospital], but they hope to see something more permanent in place once the adult emergency moves into the children's hospital, Mr. Speaker, in a couple of years.

And I've spoken to people who want to see these mental health assessment units and beyond that, Mr. Speaker. They don't just want assessment units, they want short-stay units. They want us to reimagine how acute mental health is treated here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. But I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to support mental health emergency units across the province and commit to supporting the otherwise funded mental health emergency unit in Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, this petition today is signed by citizens from Regina, Saskatoon, Shellbrook, Asquith, Martensville, LeRoy, Dalmeny, Montmartre, and Yorkton, to just name a few. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I so submit.

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Regina and Fillmore. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud to stand in my place today to present a petition as it relates to Orkambi. Whereas Orkambi was approved by Health Canada for use in cystic fibrosis patients with two copies of the F508del-CFTR mutation, aged 12 years and older; whereas Orkambi is the first drug to treat the basic defect in the largest population of Canadians with cystic fibrosis, it can slow down the progression, allowing patients to live longer, healthier lives; whereas CF [cystic fibrosis] specialists have established clinical criteria for Orkambi, including start-and-stop criteria, these specialists are best suited to manage access to medication in the treatment of CF patients.

The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Urge the Ministry of Health to negotiate a fair price for Orkambi and make it available through the Saskatchewan drug plan for those who meet the conditions set by Health Canada and the clinical criteria established by the Canadian CF clinicians.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated, we have a great number of pages. I think the petitions are signed by thousands of people, Mr. Speaker. And the pages that I have before the Assembly today, the great number of pages, the people that have signed this petition are from all throughout Saskatchewan. And I want to name a few of the communities: Yellow Grass, St. Walburg, Meadow Lake, Beauval, Prince Albert, Lumsden, Carrot River, Nipawin, Melfort, Invermay, Tisdale, Maple Creek, Rapid View, Flying Dust, Green Lake, Buffalo Narrows, Loon Lake, Lloydminster, Dorintosh, Ile-a-la-Crosse, Cole Bay, Marcelin, Kelvington, Melville. And the list goes on and on as the names are signed from all throughout the province of Saskatchewan and beyond. And I'm so proud to present this petition today.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising to present a petition to end the unfair Sask Party tax hikes for Saskatchewan families and businesses. The people who have signed this petition want to bring to your attention the following: the Sask Party has hiked taxes on Saskatchewan families and businesses by one billion dollars per year, and at the same time the Sask Party's handed over 100 million in tax breaks to corporations and the wealthy and well connected.

The Sask Party's new tax on crop insurance is a devastating hit on producers. Many small and medium-sized businesses, including those in the restaurant, tourism, and construction industries, will be hit hard by the Sask Party tax hikes. These businesses will be forced to pass these rising costs on to their customers. This is hurting job-creating businesses and producers and will only cause more damage to the economy and do nothing to the 40,000 people in Saskatchewan that are looking for work. I'd like to read the prayer. The prayer reads as follows:

Respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party to immediately stop their unfair tax hikes on Saskatchewan families and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who've signed the petition here today are from Regina and Coronach. I so submit.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand today to present a petition for a second bridge for Prince Albert. The individuals who signed this petition want to draw these following points to your attention: that the Diefenbaker bridge in Prince Albert is the primary link that connects the southern part of the province to the North, 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. That the 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; and that the Saskatchewan Party government refuses to stand up for Prince Albert in this critical infrastructure issue. 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, the individuals signing this petition come from the community of Regina. I do so present.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to restore funding to post-secondary institutions. Some of the items these citizens wish to bring to your attention: that the Sask Party is making students and their families pay for Sask Party financial mismanagement; that Saskatchewan students already pay the second-highest tuition fees in Canada; and that the Sask Party has broken a 2016 election promise by cancelling their first home plan.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately restore funding to Saskatchewan's post-secondary institutions and stop the damaging cuts to our students.

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by individuals from Estevan, Saskatoon, and Regina. I do so present.

[10:30]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a

petition calling on the Sask Party to stop the cuts to our kids' classrooms. Those who have signed this petition wish to draw our attention to the following: that the Sask Party has cut at least \$674 in government funding for every student across this province; and they hiked education property tax by 67 million but cut total government funding for education by \$121 million. Even though the Sask Party is making us all pay more, our kids are getting less. And the Sask Party cuts mean that students will lose much needed supports in their classroom, including busing for kindergartners and programs to help children with special needs.

I'll read the prayer:

We, the undersigned, call upon the government to reverse the senseless cuts to our kids' classrooms and stop making families, teachers, and everyone who works to support our education system pay the price for the Sask Party's mismanagement, scandal, and waste.

Mr. Speaker, those who have signed this petition today reside in Regina. I do so present.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition to reopen the Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre. The closure of this facility represents a step backwards for those who have been incarcerated, a step backwards for their opportunity to be rehabilitated; a step backwards for their families to be close to them; a step backwards for the community, with fewer employment opportunities; a step backwards for our province as a whole in terms of decreasing crime, increasing safety, increasing well-being. I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan immediately reopen the Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre to better our community for future generations to come.

The individuals signing this petition hail from the community of Buffalo Narrows. I do so submit.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions to re-establish emergency access to Balgonie, a community that's been shut out with the design of the bypass, and community and emergency service providers are incredibly concerned about what this means for the safety of those within the community. The prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan take the necessary steps and actions to leave the west-in, west-out driving access for vehicles into and out of Balgonie at the intersection of Highway 1 and Main Street.

We also respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan put up a locked gate on the apron between

the eastbound lanes and westbound lanes of Highway 1 and Balgonie's Main Street intersection. This gate would allow emergency services access to the eastbound lanes of Highway No. 1 at the Main Street, Balgonie intersection but would not allow the public access to cross east- and westbound lanes.

These petitions are signed by concerned citizens of White City, Avonhurst, Balgonie, Pilot Butte, and Edgeley. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Saskatchewan Couple Recognized as Outstanding Young Farmers

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, every year Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers national event brings recognition to outstanding farm couples in Canada between the ages of 18 and 39. These couples have exemplified excellence in their profession, while fostering better urban-rural relations. Couples are nominated from multiple provinces before national co-winners are selected at the annual conference, this year held in Penticton, BC [British Columbia].

This year Tannis and Derek Axten from Minton, Saskatchewan were selected as Saskatchewan's Outstanding Young Farmers nominees. Tannis and Derek operate Axten Farms with their children, Kate and Brock. They are the third generation of farmers in their family, still farming the land their grandfather homesteaded in 1916.

Mr. Speaker, the Axten farm is a 5,500 acre no-till farm, and Tannis and Derek have worked on innovative ideas to improve their farming operations through soil advancements. Tannis has a Bachelor of Education, majoring in biology, which has helped them determine the best practices in their mission towards improving the soil health and regenerating their farmland. They have implemented intercrops, companion crops, and cover crops, as well as controlled traffic farming and composting to improve their soil productivity.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to say that Tannis and Derek, along with the nominees from Quebec, were named this year's Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers. On behalf of this entire Assembly, I'd like to congratulate Tannis and Derek on this prestigious honour and wish them the best as they continue to discover and implement creative farming practices. Thank you.

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

Saskatoon Resident Wins Multicultural Youth Leadership Award

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am honoured to recognize a constituent of mine, Bwe Doh Soe, who recently received the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan's Multicultural Youth Leadership Award. Bwe is a leader in his own community of Karen refugees but also in the broader Saskatoon community. As a child, Bwe came to Canada with his family, fleeing ethnic cleansing in his home country of

Burma in 2007. He was grateful to be safe with his family here but saw early on that it was important to preserve the Karen language and culture. Over time, Bwe also understood the importance of providing opportunities for Karen people to integrate into the community.

I first met Bwe this summer in the lead-up to the Karen community culture and language camp, where he has worked with Karen leaders to facilitate a youth camp every summer for the past five years to help maintain the Karen language and culture here.

Bwe has also developed a Karen youth leadership group that is learning about the history of indigenous peoples in Canada, as well as the cultural practices and protocols of local indigenous groups in Saskatoon. He has promoted learning about reconciliation and what it means in practical ways, such as arranging an elders' gathering of indigenous and Karen elders in order to share their experiences and to learn from one other.

I ask that all members join me in congratulating Bwe on his leadership award and wish him all the best in his own journey of reconciliation and his work with others on theirs. Thank you.

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

Team Saskatchewan Places Fourth at National Women's Championship

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to highlight and congratulate Hannah Pennell, a talented hockey player from Kamsack. Hannah is a member of Team Sask under-18 female hockey who took fourth place this year at the national tournament in Quebec City. This tournament was a major landmark as the under-18 team placed higher in national competition this past month than ever before.

Mr. Speaker, Hannah is following very closely in the footsteps of her siblings; her two brothers and sister had very distinguished and impressive careers themselves. Hannah began playing hockey at the age of four, playing with Kamsack teams until recently when she became a member of the Parkland Lions AA team based out of Springside. Mr. Speaker, though Team Sask fell short in the overtime loss against BC in the bronze medal game, they made history and represented our province well on the national stage. Hannah is very grateful for the opportunity to represent her community and is looking forward to continuing her career with Team Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I now ask the members to join me in congratulating Hannah and the under-18 team of Saskatchewan girls' hockey on a successful and historic fourth-place finish at the nationals in 2017.

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

Sports Club Provides Access to Community Sports

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge the work of Mr. Shakeel Ahmed, founder and president of the Envision Sports Club in Saskatoon. Shakeel is a constituent of Saskatoon Fairview, and I had the chance to meet

him this past summer at Eid celebrations.

When I met Shakeel, I could immediately tell that he was passionate and an advocate for sports and he saw sports as a way to teach children about responsibility and discipline. I had the opportunity to attend Envision Sports Club's first soccer camp, a free activity they ran on Saturdays this summer, where kids from all over Saskatoon were welcomed to come and learn soccer skills.

They even had a special coach, Jawad Hassan, sharing his expertise with the kids. Jawad is a very talented FIFA [Fédération Internationale de Football Association] certified coach and international soccer player who represented the Pakistan junior team in various international tours.

I understand that Envision Sports Club is now expanding and taking registration for field hockey, cricket, volleyball, badminton, and athletics, in addition to soccer. They are a non-profit organization, so they are charging small registration and insurance fees but are not charging any coaching fees. They are working to make sure that the community sports are available and affordable and serving the community in a positive way.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Envision Sports Club on a successful start-up, and to thank Shakeel Ahmed, and all the team members of their club for their volunteer efforts.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cannington.

Government Principles

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the principles for members on this side of the House is efficient government. That's why we introduced lean into our health care system which has achieved 154 million in savings since 2008. We have allowed for private MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging] for patients who wish to purchase them, which also provides for those on the public waiting list to access MRIs at no cost to the taxpayer.

We have reduced the CVA [central vehicle agency] fleet and utilized the private sector, reducing CVA spending by an estimated 7 million. We have reduced travel and communication costs across the government compared to the NDP [New Democratic Party] administration.

Mr. Speaker, this government has a record and a plan going forward to keep improving our province because one of the other principles is constant economic and social improvement. That is why we introduced a tax plan to help small businesses, which the NDP voted against. That's why we introduced a made-in-Saskatchewan climate change strategy which fights the effects of climate change, but not noise, without the burden of a carbon tax, which the NDP voted against. That is why we introduced ride sharing as another tool against drunk driving, which NDP members don't support, although we did this without getting Trudeau Liberal permission.

Mr. Speaker, this session we have listened and waited for new ideas from the members opposite, especially the leadership candidates, but all we have seen is the same old, noisy NDP.

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

Couples Celebrate Their 70th Wedding Anniversary

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to highlight two very special couples who live in my constituency and are both celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary.

Ruth and Neil Crosby were married in 1947 in Assiniboia, Saskatchewan. Neil worked for the sodium sulphate plant in this area. They were blessed with one son. They moved to Medicine Hat, where Neil worked for the city for 38 years, but then they returned to live in Saskatoon to enjoy their retirement. Ruth wrote me a letter at my request recently saying that “Seventy years have passed quickly and happily, and we feel fortunate we are still able to live on our own and enjoy life.”

Roland and Therese Dupuis were also married in 1947 in Domremy, Saskatchewan. They lived in the Shellbrook area, where they operated a grain farm. Together they raised five children and now have seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. They are a very active and social couple spending time with family during the summer at Chitek Lake and relaxing in the winter in Arizona. They still enjoy playing cards and visiting with family and friends.

It is so encouraging, Mr. Speaker, to see both couples celebrate their later years in life together in Saskatchewan, where their love stories began. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members please join me in congratulating Ruth and Neil Crosby, and Roland and Therese Dupuis on 70 years of marriage. Thank you.

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

Merry Christmas

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, as we came into the building we saw the lights adorning the building. We hear the songs filling the hallways. We notice that magnificent tree that is displayed in the rotunda. The Christmas season is upon us. This is truly a special time of the year, a season filled with joy and laughter and sharing and giving. What is most important is the time we spend with our loved ones. Members of this House can attest to the joy spending this time at home, especially after spending the last few weeks here in Regina looking forward to that home-cooked Christmas meal.

But as we enjoy the beauty of the season, let us not forget the less fortunate that are among us. Two thousand years ago, the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, delivered an eternal message of love, compassion, and hope that we are our brother’s and sister’s keepers and we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us.

Mr. Speaker, these are the values that guide our citizens of all faiths and all backgrounds and have helped keep the people of our province then and earned a reputation of kindness and character.

Mr. Speaker, I wish a Merry Christmas and happy holiday and a blessed new year to all. Merry Christmas.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

[10:45]

Global Transportation Hub

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] thought there was enough reason to have the Premier answer some questions during their investigation. So should a judicial inquiry or legislative committee also want to ask him some questions after he has resigned his seat, will the Premier commit today to return and testify? Yes or no?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, as I’ve said in the past, I’ll rule nothing out. But while we’re asking hypothetical questions on this day, I would invite the members opposite and the Leader of the Opposition to answer a hypothetical question. Should, for example, the RCMP investigation bear out no further concerns, no charges, and should any other review of the government that we decide to do demonstrate the fact that the Global Transportation Hub is not a scandal — it might be a number of things but is not that — will she and her colleagues be prepared to admit that, and even apologize to those characters they’ve smeared?

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, this is the last day we get to ask the Premier questions in QP [question period], so this is the last chance to make good on his promise to be the most open and transparent government in the history of the province. Mr. Speaker, as the Premier knows well, since taking a leave to run for premier, the deputy minister to the Premier has said that the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] scandal would not have happened under her leadership because she would raise the ethical bar. Does the Premier agree with the person he hired to be his deputy minister? Could better leadership have prevented the Sask Party’s GTH scandal?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Environment, GTH, and SaskPower.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we have done on this side of the House, we have worked with the Provincial Auditor. The Provincial Auditor identified that there were a number of changes that government needed to make to ensure that the types of problems aren’t repeated by government, Mr. Speaker.

All of those recommendations have been implemented by Global Transportation Hub as well as Highways, Mr. Speaker. And that’s in stark contrast . . . As I’ve said before to the fact that we worked openly with the Provincial Auditor, gave the Provincial Auditor access to all information that she required to do her work, in contrast to the members opposite, who did not go that far when it came to questions of concerns in terms of operations of their government, Mr. Speaker. We’re going to continue to operate that way on this side of the House under this Premier and under the next premier.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, no clear answer, same tired lines. So let's try another one. Even though the Premier has repeatedly said that Bill Boyd got an opinion from the Conflict of Interest Commissioner before pushing ahead with the land deals at the heart of the Sask Party's GTH scandal, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner has made it clear that that never happened. Why did the Premier make that claim and why did the government not seek an opinion after the commission publicly clarified that he had not ruled on these deals?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, the information that the member is talking about in terms of what the Conflict of Interest Commissioner actually ruled on, I believe that letter was made public. It was on a news website, Mr. Speaker, on the CBC's [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] website for all to see. So in terms of what the Conflict of Interest Commissioner actually ruled upon, it's not for us to say what he did or didn't rule upon. That was made public. The record of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner and the ruling stands on its own. And it was made public, Mr. Speaker, as were the recommendations of the Provincial Auditor in terms of the work that her office conducted with respect to reviewing this matter.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have worked with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. We have worked with the Provincial Auditor. We have worked with all authorities that are reviewing this matter, Mr. Speaker. And that's the way that this government operates and will continue to operate.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, more spin and still no answers. In 2015, trying to claim that there was no conflict of interest, Bill Boyd said, "I have never met Robert Tappauf." But by now anyone who is following this story knows that Bill Boyd has all kinds of dealings with the Tappauf family. Some of their land is even involved with Mr. Boyd's Chinese irrigation system. So after the Conflict of Interest Commissioner made it clear that he had not been asked to investigate a conflict of interest, why did no one in the Sask Party ask him to look into it? Were they afraid of what they might find?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, these questions have been asked and answered, Mr. Speaker, by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, by the Provincial Auditor's office. Obviously there are further reviews that are taking place, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, and as the Premier has indicated in the past, this government's not going to rule out taking further action once those reviews are done.

And I would repeat the question that he asked earlier. Should those reviews come back and determine, as the Provincial Auditor had indicated, that there was no wrongdoing in any of these matters, will the members opposite apologize? And will they apologize to the House and to people, private citizens, and former member of this House in which . . . who they have smeared?

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

Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party has also let the GTH get embroiled in an immigration scheme. There are accusations of false claims about the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program and huge amounts of money not being returned to people who believed their claims.

Will the minister finally condemn these actions, and commit to investigating them and ending all relationships with any companies that are breaking the rules and taking advantage of innocent people?

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

Hon. Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program does not give preferential treatment to any individual or company — does not, has not, will not. Further to that, Mr. Speaker, companies cannot apply for SINP [Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program]. Applications are made by individuals only.

During this decade of growth unmatched in the last 80 years, our population has grown by over 161,000 people compared to the NDP's last decade in power, where the population actually dropped 15,000, Mr. Speaker. In 2002 the NDP processed 25 SINP claims. We're doing over 500 a month now, Mr. Speaker, a clear demonstration of confidence in our system.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, there have been multiple allegations of fraud and criminal charges have been laid. Still earlier this year the government welcomed one of the key players in these accusations, someone whose business partner is on the Interpol watch list. Mr. Speaker. What will it take for the Ministry of Economy to put an end to all of this and protect the victims of this scandal and the integrity of the immigrant program?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, so much of the preamble of the hon. member's question, a new member, is just fundamentally wrong. The minister has just answered very directly the allegations that she has made. Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of the record of this government with respect to the immigration program that we've implemented, a marked change from when members opposite had the chance to be in government.

Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well it is true actually. The member for Nutana is saying it's not. We've made fundamental changes wherein the previous years, the previous 10-year period of their time in power, I think there was about 26,000 people under the nominee program that came, newcomers; since then, 92,000 people.

The Leader of the Opposition, when she was asking similar

questions not long ago on this particular issue, said this: “Mr. Speaker, why is the Premier letting a government website host a misleading advertisement to help create jobs for other people while Saskatchewan people need his help so much more?” What does that mean, Mr. Speaker? If anybody becomes a citizen of this province through the nominee program, they’re not other people. They are our people, Mr. Speaker. They are our people — 167,000 more people living in the province today than when members opposite were the government, Mr. Speaker. They are not other people, these newcomers. They are welcomed here, Mr. Speaker, and we stand behind our immigration policy.

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

Land Acquisitions for Regina Bypass Project and Global Transportation Hub

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the government has paid out millions in lawsuit settlements stemming from their land expropriation practices. Can the minister finally provide the total amount that was paid out in lawsuits — not the total amount of the purchase — over land sales at the GTH and the bypass?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Mr. Speaker, let’s make it perfectly clear. There were no lawsuits. There are no lawsuits. There are pending cases where landowners are dealing with the ministry on settlement on cost of land.

They are not lawsuits, Mr. Speaker. We have settled . . . There’s, I think, 19 claims left to go. We had a budget. We had a budget for land acquisitions, Mr. Speaker. And we are well under that budget right now, Mr. Speaker, and what it’s cost us to acquisition that land, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, it seems we’re amending *The Interpretation Act* for a new definition of “lawsuit,” Mr. Speaker. These are lawsuits. Now also, Mr. Speaker, the last time I asked, the minister was unable to explain why Highways paid such a high price for land they bought from Loblaw when at the same time, on the same day, the GTH sold a similar parcel of land to a private company for far less. After looking into it, can the minister now explain what happened and why?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Mr. Speaker, in 2009 Loblaw acquired 160 acres under trust conditions, Mr. Speaker. And at this time the land was neither serviced or neither subdivided and had no roads or access to it, Mr. Speaker. Also Loblaw at that time did not know exactly how much land they were going to require at that time or even where they were going to locate their building, Mr. Speaker.

Eventually Loblaw determined that they needed about just over 80 acres, Mr. Speaker. And at the end of that, they returned that land back to the ministry and there was a value put on it at that time, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the government’s land flips go on. In 2011 the government sold a parcel of land near the Regina bypass for just \$20,000 per acre, but in 2015 they bought it back for over \$400,000 per acre, Mr. Speaker. Why did they buy land for 20 times more than what they sold it for just four years earlier?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Mr. Speaker, there are so many issues that could have come in to that land being repurchased, Mr. Speaker. It could have been rezoned. It could have been reclassified. It could have been serviced, Mr. Speaker. There could have been a lot of different things that have changed the value of that land from the time it was purchased till the time that it was bought back, Mr. Speaker.

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

Carbon Capture and Storage

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I think that minister needs to be briefed a lot better than he has been. Now while the Premier was off boasting about Boundary dam 3 at his last meeting, was he clear with the governors that the province’s own power company doesn’t think that expanding CCS [carbon capture and storage] makes sense? Yes or no?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskPower.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to say that over 1.8 million tonnes have been captured since the operations have started up. Mr. Speaker, this is a technology that has garnered a lot of interest. Earlier this year in Regina we had a symposium where there were over a dozen countries that were represented, knowing the fact that there are 1,600 coal-fired power plants that are on the books to be built or under construction around the world, Mr. Speaker. And so this is technology that we need to further development.

Certainly in discussions with any number of stakeholders, Mr. Speaker, the government has been very clear about the operational challenges, particularly in the start-up period, Mr. Speaker. We are sharing all of that knowledge with individuals.

And in fact, Mr. Speaker, the federal Minister of Environment was just in China and witnessed an MOU [memorandum of understanding] between the knowledge centre and agencies in China, Mr. Speaker. So there is a great deal of attention and a great deal of interest in this technology. And if we want to be serious about reducing emissions, this technology needs to be a part of that.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, their so-called plan to address carbon emissions says they need to “determine the viability of extending carbon capture use.” Now, Mr. Speaker, SaskPower says the business case for CCS is weak, and the CEO of SaskPower says that expansion is highly unlikely and time is up. Will the minister finally tell Saskatchewan people if he agrees with the experts at SaskPower and confirm that they will not expand CCS?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of SaskPower.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows that a decision hasn't been made, a recommendation hasn't been brought forward in terms of what SaskPower's next steps are for the most immediate decisions that need to be made around coal-fired generation. She will also know, or should know, that there are a number of units over a number of, frankly, decades, in terms of when those decisions need to be made.

But in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, this is technology that the world's going to need. That's why the federal Environment minister was just in China to witness the signing of an MOU between the knowledge centre and agencies in China, Mr. Speaker. This is why individuals such as Katherine Romanak were just in Regina from the University of Texas and spoke to the need for developing, further develop this technology, Mr. Speaker.

We're a part of that. We need to be a part of that going forward. We have technology. We have knowledge here in Saskatchewan, and we need to partner all around the world if we truly want to see emissions being reduced going forward.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

[11:00]

Licensing of Vehicles on Job Sites

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Before the Sask Party threw a fit over the Alberta licence plates, they didn't consider trade deals. They didn't think about Saskatchewan contractors and workers in other provinces, and they didn't even first engage with Alberta, Mr. Speaker. They also didn't cancel their \$2 billion contract with a foreign company that is hiring out-of-province workers. So how can the Saskatchewan Party justify spending money in court battles while they're handing out taxpayers' money and Saskatchewan jobs to an out-of-country company?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — You know, Mr. Speaker, it's very, very interesting. The people of the province of Saskatchewan have an expectation of all of us I think that we would represent their interests in this Legislative Assembly to the best of our ability, but also that they would stand for our interests against, for example, a federal government if a federal government were to do something like impose a carbon tax.

Earlier in this week — and she's talking from her chair now — the critic that was up just a while ago wanted to know if the Minister of the Environment, if the Government of Saskatchewan had checked with the feds before we announced our plan to reduce emissions and to continue to oppose a carbon tax. We made it pretty clear, Mr. Speaker. No, the federal government that unilaterally imposed a carbon tax, no, we didn't check with them. The federal government that changed the rules on Energy East and wrecked that pipeline, no, we didn't check with them. We don't check with the federal government, Mr. Speaker. We will check with the people of this province and defend their interests.

Now, interesting. Now the Deputy Leader stands up and says, well did you check with Alberta first before you undertook this measure to protect Saskatchewan companies? The construction association has joined us today. They're the ones that are saying, Mr. Speaker, that there are some practices in Alberta that need to be addressed. That's exactly what the minister announced yesterday. No, we didn't check with Alberta; we defended the interests of the people of Saskatchewan. And may I say thank you to the member for Rosemont who's running for the NDP leadership, because just a few years ago here's what he said:

It's also a matter of acting in the interests of Saskatchewan people and companies and not selling out, not acting like Boy Scouts when it comes to trade, Mr. Speaker, but acting in a way that puts the interests of Saskatchewan people and businesses first.

If only, Mr. Speaker, their words matched their actions.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Contract Details for Regina Bypass Project

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party is demanding out-of-province trucks be disguised, and they're bragging about handing the contract for and control of the largest infrastructure project in Saskatchewan's history to a foreign company who cut off Main Street access to Balgonie and designed traffic circles that don't work for transport trucks, for farm equipment, and emergency personnel. With their newly found courage, Mr. Speaker, will the Saskatchewan Party step up and get Vinci to fix the bypass problems and get Balgonie's access back? Will he do that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Mr. Speaker, we're very proud of the Regina bypass project. Over 80 per cent of that project is Saskatchewan contractors doing work, Mr. Speaker, and if you notice . . . [inaudible] . . . the Regina bypass vehicles are all purchased here from dealers in the city of Regina. They're plated here in the province of Saskatchewan.

I have no problems standing in this House any day, Mr. Speaker, and defending Saskatchewan companies and Saskatchewan contractors to do work in this province, Mr. Speaker. I will stand here all day if I have to, to defend Saskatchewan companies, Saskatchewan contractors to do the

work. The Regina bypass is a good project.

We have an MOU signed with the town of Balgonie. We have addressed their concerns. And the bypass is going well, and those bypasses are open and working very fluently, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Truth and Reconciliation Issues

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, when the Premier was first elected, he spoke a lot about reconciliation, and he, as well as we all, acknowledged that we're all treaty people.

It's 10 years later, and he has a Minister of Education who didn't understand treaty education. First Nations employment is close to 20 per cent. Stand-your-ground laws are being called for. Communities are being cut off. Programs are being cut. And there's still no apology for the Sixties Scoop. Mr. Speaker, why does the Premier think he wasn't able to do more on reconciliation? Is this his biggest failure?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in terms of the comments made by me, again we have repeatedly committed to fulsome and continued treaty education in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Earlier this week, Mr. O'Soup filed his report, and certainly the important issues that he references take cross-ministry efforts to address. And the same goes of course for addressing TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] and truth and reconciliation, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. O'Soup referenced bullying initiatives in education. He referenced La Loche of course and communities in the North, Mr. Speaker. The tragedy of almost two years ago stays with us all. We recently announced we were moving ahead with the renovation project at the Dene High School in La Loche to help to heal that community, to address all the issues there that we can.

We have engaged with those communities, Mr. Speaker. Ministers have been to La Loche, have been to La Ronge to listen multiple times — not just in times of crisis, Mr. Speaker, but all the time — to heal and build on what we can, Mr. Speaker.

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

Support for Agricultural Producers Following Fire

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, that is certainly not the answer that that question deserves, but I'll move on. Mr. Speaker, first the Sask Party said that they could do nothing. Then they announced that they'd match some aid. Now some limited relief is being forwarded in the form of PDAP [provincial disaster assistance program].

Mr. Speaker, producers, APAS [Agricultural Producers

Association of Saskatchewan], and SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] have all been clear that these dollars are welcome, but they are inadequate and they won't help many who are struggling right now. And I know that the Minister of Agriculture knows this. So why won't they just deliver the disaster relief that is so desperately needed?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have done a number of things. We've helped municipalities to assist producers in disposal of stock that perished in the fires. We've provided veterinary services, dispatched veterinarians to check and treat animals that were injured in the fire. We've given the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association \$100,000 to dispense to the victims of this fire as they see fit, Mr. Speaker. They're on the ground in the area, and I think they know best where the money should go. And more recently, PDAP has agreed that they will cover losses of winter grazing grass that's been burnt off in these fires.

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

Support for Education

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the mother of a child living with autism was here, and we asked on her behalf if the Sask Party would reverse the cuts that are damaging our kids' classrooms across this province. And instead of looking Katie in the eye and answering her questions, the minister read from prepared notes that covered an entire decade but ignored the current context. And then she thanked Katie for her fundraising success to make up for the Sask Party's failures. My question is simple: would the minister like to try that answer again?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will repeat again, Mr. Speaker, that it was lovely to have Ms. Emde here yesterday, and again commend her on her amazing fundraising and awareness-raising efforts. Her Inside Out campaign, Mr. Speaker, is both poignant and very effective.

Our commitment to autism and autism funding as a government, Mr. Speaker, was outlined yesterday. The way funding works, from an education perspective of course, is that supports for learning is distributed to each school division, which is what I outlined yesterday, Mr. Speaker — a quarter of a billion this year, 1.5 billion since 2012, Mr. Speaker. Supports for learning may be used for both the salary costs or non-salary costs in divisions, related to those supports for learning.

But it is up to each division, Mr. Speaker, to determine how those funds are best used. Supports for speech-language pathologists and occupational therapists, both of which Ms. Emde was calling for yesterday, are included in services provided by supports for learning funding. These have gone up across the province, Mr. Speaker. Some divisions have faced some challenges, but overall, in terms of those FTEs [full-time equivalent] and staffing and teachers, Mr. Speaker, the message and the view is good.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, from not acknowledging that they are failing students, to showing a complete lack of understanding about curriculum and diversity to claiming that Connaught School was a P3 success when it was a traditional build, Mr. Speaker, every day that minister shows just how ill-prepared she is to deal with her file. Will the minister please offer Saskatchewan parents some comfort and commit today to resigning from cabinet before we return here in March?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Mr. Speaker, on this side it is all about passion for education and the students of this province. Not to pick overly on one leadership candidate on that side, Mr. Speaker, but really, the member for Regina Rosemont has said repeatedly that “Under the Sask Party government, we went through a resource boom and the government has underfunded education.” Not that old classic, Mr. Speaker.

I don't know where the member has been for the last decade, but let's take a short walk down memory lane. The Education budget is now \$2 billion, Mr. Speaker; the last year of the NDP, under 1. We've opened 40 brand new and replacement schools, 21 this year including nine joint-use schools in new and growing communities, a model that's setting the trend for other provinces, Mr. Speaker; 176 schools closed under them. We've undertaken 25 major renovations. Emergent fund under the NDP, zero; we created one. Preventative maintenance and renewal under them, zero; we created that too. Over 1.5 billion in supports for learning funding since 2005.

Early years plan created under this government, close to 6,000 more child care spaces — double what they were under the NDP, Mr. Speaker. Increases in graduation rates, the highest in 20 years. Reading rates up 10 per cent since 2013. And now we're joining the world in introducing coding to classrooms. Broader, deeper, common sense supports in math. Finding ways to attract more French teachers to the province. And invoking the notwithstanding clause to protect school choice. A lot can change in 10 years, Mr. Speaker, and boy, has it ever.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Question period is over. We'll get to do this all again in March.

I'm advised that Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor is here for Royal Assent. All please rise.

[11:15]

ROYAL ASSENT

[At 11:15 Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took her seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following bills.]

Her Honour: — Pray be seated.

The Speaker: — May it please Your Honour, this Legislative

Assembly in its present session has passed several bills which in the name of the Assembly I present to Your Honour and to which bills I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

Clerk: — Your Honour, the bills are as follows:

Bill No. 84 - *The Income Tax (Business Income) Amendment Act, 2017*

Bill No. 100 - *The Agrologists Amendment Act, 2017*

Bill No. 116 - *The Saskatchewan Employment (Interpersonal Violence Leave) Amendment Act, 2017*

Her Honour: — In Her Majesty's name, I assent to these bills.

The Speaker: — May it please Your Honour, this Legislative Assembly has voted the supplies required to enable the government to defray the expenses of the public service.

In the name of the Assembly, I present to Your Honour:

Bill No. 117 - *The Appropriation Act, 2017 (No. 2)*

to which bill I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

Her Honour: — In Her Majesty's name, I thank the Legislative Assembly, accept their benevolence, and assent to this bill.

[Her Honour retired from the Chamber at 11:17.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would ask for leave to have permission of the Assembly to use the member from Swift Current's proper name.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

GOVERNMENT MOTION

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Farewell to Brad Wall

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I will be moving:

That the Legislative Assembly give thanks and pay tribute to Premier Brad Wall for his 18 years of service to the people of Saskatchewan, as the member for Swift Current, as Leader of the Opposition, and as Premier, and for his many contributions to the people and province of Saskatchewan.

I stand today . . . Well actually, I stand a lot of things in this House, usually because I've forgotten my speaking notes. Some of the members on both sides of the House have actually had a bit of a laugh at my expense, but only one of them actually had the courage to call me Standy McStandface. He said he was getting me back for referring to him as a lame-duck premier,

which I did the morning after he announced his retirement.

With the upcoming retirement of Brad Wall — and I have a hard time saying that, but I'll work at it — we have heard many thank yous, many tributes, many testimonials. We've heard what a remarkable communicator Brad Wall is, how he has the ability to make Saskatchewan feel proud, and that Saskatchewan now takes its rightful place in Confederation. We have heard how he is a tireless advocate for our province. He's not afraid to take on the federal government, the Prime Minister, other trading nations, even the former mayor of Montreal. We've also heard about his commitment to the Riders, and how he's the type of a guy you'd want for a next door neighbour.

But what I'd like to do instead of droning on with more of the same, I want to relate a little bit about him as a co-worker and a friend. Some of you will know that over the years I have played the occasional prank. But you should know that no matter what I would do, he would have to top it.

On one occasion I'd gone myself to a CPA [Commonwealth Parliamentary Association] dinner at the Hotel Saskatchewan. For those of you that don't know about CPA events, they're long, stuffy events where they seat you with people that you don't know. On my way home, I get a call from Everett Hindley, Brad Wall's assistant, who said, "The Premier wants to see you tomorrow right after caucus. Something about what you said at the CPA dinner." He gave me no details.

I went home and I started agonizing about what it could've been that I had said. I didn't have a speaking role at the event, so it had to have been something that I said at the table with these people that I didn't know. I don't drink, but I've been known to make the odd comment that later requires an apology. So in my mind, I relived the evening in excruciating detail, even as to who was at the adjacent urinal in the washroom.

I narrowed it down to five or six possibilities — nothing definite, but a handful of potential mistakes. No one I knew, so I decided that I would make the best of it. I would just fall on my sword, start apologizing, and hoping that the ensuing conversation would provide me with some identity of who it might have been or what I had done.

So after caucus, I trudged down the hall for yet another visit. When I get there, Brad and Everett were laughing. They knew the agony that I had gone through. The answer was that they had conspired with and joined forces with each other to get me back at something that I had done to Everett months before. He never, ever forgets.

A year or so ago, I was cleaning up from the campaign and I was throwing out an old banner that had a picture of my face about three feet high. I couldn't bring myself to throw out something that I regarded as, well, quite beautiful, even though Sandy instructed me that I should. So I carefully cut out the picture. I waited until Brad was out of town. I go to see Ruth in his office and with a small bit of trepidation, I stuck it on the wall in his washroom. After he returned, I waited for the expected laughter or ribbing. It never came.

After several days he takes me aside and he says, "I don't know

what you were planning when I was away but whatever it is, Ruth is furious with you. You better go down and make it right." So I go down to see Ruth, who deadpanned it absolutely. She said and I quote, "This is not at all funny. You might not have respect for the individual but you should have respect for that office." I said, "Ruth, you were in on it. You let me in." She said, "I had no idea what you were doing in there." I carried in a three-foot-high picture of my face. I was dumbfounded and I thought, what next? I agonized for a while. I spent some time considering alternate careers.

Well the reality is this: I had done something to Ruth earlier so he and Ruth schemed to get back at me for what I had done to Ruth. So they let me stew for several weeks. Then they went out to the parking lot and they stuck the picture on the passenger side of my car.

So I go and I get in the driver's side, drive down Albert, stop at Tim's, go inside for coffee. I come out, there's a half a dozen of the usual Tim guys standing around and looking at the car. One of them shouts, there he is. Another one says, who are you? Why do you have a picture of your face on your car? An elderly lady looked at the picture and said, why don't you get your real face airbrushed like that picture? Anyway I later learned that the Minister of Health had a hand in it as well so I want him to know, publicly, that he is on my list now as well.

Recently a number of us attended the opening of the medical isotopes facility at the U of S campus. The area is highly radioactive so we were required to wear these blue slip-on booties over our shoes. We were instructed to be very careful where we went, where we stood, and what we touched. So on the way out we go through a testing area where they have a wand. So I'm at the back of the line and when I get up to the front, the technician checks my one bootie and she says, you're contaminated. Let me see your other foot. So I hold up the other foot and she says, that one's contaminated as well. Let me see your hands. I hold out my hands and she says, those are contaminated. What were you touching in there?

So I don't know. I've got this fear. I look at her and she's got this, maybe a smirk, but I didn't know. I don't know the person. So I'm having this fear factor that maybe I'm going to turn green, glow in the dark, grow gills. Then I look up and there's the Premier and the Minister of Health standing in the doorway killing themselves laughing at my discomfort, Mr. Speaker.

Brad, you will be missed. Every one of us regards Brad as a friend. To him I say, thank you; don't be a stranger. To all of us, he has been not just a colleague, but also a friend. He knows who has health issues, who is dealing with aging parents, who is dealing with children. He cares and shows it. The incredible kindness and amazing statements following the deaths of MLAs Parent and Phillips demonstrate his humanity and how much he cares. His humour and kindness are special.

So from all of us, Mr. Premier — I can't say Brad in here; I just can't do it — we thank you. We wish you, Tami, and your family all the best. We hope that your remaining weeks as a lame-duck premier go well.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to move the motion:

That the Legislative Assembly pay thanks and pay tribute to Brad Wall for his 18 years of service to the people of Saskatchewan as the member for Swift Current, as leader of the opposition, and as Premier, and for his many contributions to the people and province of Saskatchewan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Premier of Saskatchewan has moved the following motion:

That the Legislative Assembly thanks and pay tribute to the Premier, Brad Wall, for his 18 years of service to the people of Saskatchewan as the member for Swift Current, as leader of the opposition, and as Premier for his many contributions to the people and province of Saskatchewan.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I can't top that speech from the Deputy Premier. I'm not even going to try, but I do want to give some words today. Mr. Speaker, as it is every single time I have the opportunity to rise in this place, whether it's as the representative of the good people of Regina Douglas Park or as Leader of the Official Opposition and on behalf of all Saskatchewan New Democrats, it is an honour for me to join in this debate and second the motion of the Deputy Premier and say a few words about the Premier, Mr. Speaker. But I'm happy to add on behalf of the members on this side of the House some thoughts and pay tribute to the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, no matter what one thinks about his politics and no matter how one feels about some of the decisions he's made along the way, I think we can all agree that the personal commitment and dedication the Premier has shown and the sacrifices he has made for our province are worthy of respect and gratitude. Mr. Speaker, regardless of where you stand on the political spectrum — and if I can continue, with leave, to use proper names as the Deputy Premier has — Brad Wall is without question the most successful conservative Premier in our province's history. After a decade in office and even with the economy coming down from the boom years, he is still the most popular Premier in our country. So I think he'll understand, and it's fair to say that for a number of reasons, there are many in our party who are not too sad to see the Premier go on to other things.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think anyone would be surprised to hear that I often disagree with the premise of what the Premier may have to say, but the style with which he makes his arguments is hard to critique. Mr. Speaker, the first time I saw the Premier speak, it was seven or eight years ago and I was voluntold by the law firm that I was working at at the time to attend the Premier's gala. Yes, I've attended a Premier's gala. Yes. Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to lie: I completely disagreed with pretty much everything the Premier said in his speech, but his skill as an orator, the way he captivated the room, Mr. Speaker, it was undeniable.

[11:30]

Mr. Speaker, it is an intimidating skill. But while reading the new book, *Risk and Reward* — shout-out to Gail Krawetz — I had to smile when I read a section in which he is quoted telling a story about a speech he gave while serving in the opposition. He was on fire, attacking the minister who was calmly trying to tell him something by mouthing some words. Finally Mr. Wall realized that he was ripping into the minister on the completely wrong bill. Mr. Speaker, it's not just the mistake that he shared, but it's that he offers stories like that without hesitation. It shows the sense of humour and self-deprecation that he uses with such great effect.

Well there are many reasons that I am honoured to serve as the interim Leader of our party and as the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. Most of that is for another time but there is one honour that I would like to share today. It is that I've had the chance to go head to head in debates with Brad Wall.

Mr. Speaker, as I thought about what I would say today, how I would honour Mr. Wall, the Premier — the leader of a party of some ideals and beliefs against which I have worked so hard against, Mr. Speaker — I was looking for inspiration and I dug into *Hansard* and looked to see what he himself had said to honour the premiers who had come and gone before him. On Lorne Calvert's last day in this place he was leader of the official opposition. The former member for Saskatoon Nutana moved a motion to honour his service, and not only did Mr. Wall stand to speak to that motion, he also seconded it.

Mr. Speaker, on that day he ended his remarks by speaking briefly of his son whose music career had not quite taken off yet; he was a little younger then. He spoke about Looney Tunes. He said one of his favourite cartoons was of Ralph the sheepdog and Sam the coyote. As you probably remember, Ralph and Sam would punch the clock in the morning, Sam would relentlessly try to get a lamb, and Ralph would consistently stop him. This would go on until their workday would end and they would punch out together. At that point they would say, good night Ralph, good night Sam, and leave essentially as friends. Mr. Speaker, if I may, I will quote Mr. Wall's own words in describing the relevance:

When this place is working right — and it doesn't work right every day — when it's working right, we go at it hammer and tong and we have debates and we disagree. But when it's working right, we acknowledge the fact that we are all here for the same reason. We think maybe we ought to get to places a different way and maybe at a different speed. But we're here for the same reason.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if every person who's ever sat in these seats in this place have done so with nothing but the purest of intentions but I can tell you that whatever you want to say about Mr. Wall, he came here to serve.

Mr. Speaker, it's easy to look at the office he has now, to look at all that he has built the Sask Party to be, and perhaps say that he's in it for the glory — but that would be wrong. Mr. Speaker, that would be to forget how his elected political life began. He was elected in 1999. The newly amalgamated Sask Party was built to defeat New Democrats and they did better than many thought, but they fell short of their goal. And I just want to digress for a moment. I should note that I wasn't paying super

close attention at this time. I was 13. I was a little bit more interested in what the Backstreet Boys were up to than what was happening in this House. But then came the 2003 election and hopes were high for his party. But the Saskatchewan people made it clear that they had no interest in any privatization of our Crowns, and in the end the seat count didn't really turn out the way they were hoping.

Mr. Speaker, to give you some perspective, as the Premier likes to mock the number of people running to lead our party, in 2004 he was the only person who put his name forward to run for his. Mr. Speaker, though he waited until the next election before he would say it, that's when he could have first proclaimed, "And now for something completely different." Because things really changed for the Sask Party then. Mr. Wall helped give them the new-car smell they'd been wanting from the beginning. People wanted to hear what he had to say. People liked him. People trusted him, and by extension they trusted the Sask Party. Mr. Speaker, in 2007 he led their party to that side of the House.

The former government left a lot of money on the table, and the Premier went to work spending it in ways that people on the left were not necessarily expecting. It was a charm offensive to help the Sask Party look good and caring, but it also genuinely helped Saskatchewan people in many ways. These investments should not be forgotten, and for them I thank the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, riding on rising resource prices and Mr. Wall's coattails, the Sask Party grew. And as many have said before, Brad was the brand. In fact, while honouring the Premier at their recent convention, the Minister of Education said that when knocking on doors during a campaign, she could tell someone would vote for her because they would say, I like Brad.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't think anyone can argue with that. It's hard to imagine a Sask Party without Brad Wall. He is not only the face but the embodiment of who they are, and to be fair, for many across the country he is the first thing people think of when they think of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, that is no small feat. Some premiers come and go. They don't necessarily work any less hard nor are their intentions necessarily any less noble. They just lack a certain something of note.

All of us in politics stand on the shoulders of giants who came before us. In our party, even when you consider progressive politics across this country, some of the most notable of our giants come from right here at home. But Saskatchewan conservatives have not had that same history. Now I don't want to presume, nor do I imagine the Premier would want me to be the one to proclaim what his place in history should or shall be, and I don't know. But I do know that Mr. Wall will not soon be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I joked earlier about age but in all seriousness, when Mr. Wall took over the reins of the Sask Party, Ralph Klein was still the premier of Alberta. Twitter didn't exist, and neither did Facebook. Now, almost two decades later, the Premier uses Facebook to make major policy announcements or occasionally take some shots at us. No matter what he uses it for, he uses it masterfully.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has the ability to adapt, evolve, and

always connect in formidable ways. He is one of the guys while still maintaining *gravitas*. He buys fancy cars but still comes across as a man of the people. People trust him and, no matter what happens, they don't want to stop trusting him.

Mr. Speaker, it's an intangible skill that is vital to his political success but it's also clear in other ways. His inner circle is incredibly loyal. They have stuck by him through it all, and that is a very rare and special thing. It says a great deal about the man that we're honouring today. And, Mr. Speaker, so does the caucus he is leaving behind. He has been their leader for nearly a decade and a half. They are a party with some very diverse opinions and they've had some very challenging times. In 2004 they snatched defeat from the jaws of victory, and too many times they've lost members of their caucus. Mr. Speaker, through it all he has managed to leverage his leadership skills and his popularity to hold his cabinet, caucus, and in fact his party together. That accomplishment is as remarkable as it is commendable.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before I wrap up, I want to finish a little bit where I started and that is with acknowledging and honouring the great sacrifices that have been made over the years that he has served our province as Premier. This time I want to acknowledge his family. I'm lucky to live in and represent people here in Regina, so I can only imagine the challenges, the daily drive to and from Swift Current, the events, the travel, the public scrutiny. All of this weighs heavily on a family and so I want to take a moment and ask all members to join me in honouring Tami and their three children for their years of sacrifice.

[Applause]

Mr. Speaker, I want to use my last comments on my last day in this House as Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition to thank Mr. Wall on his last day in this House as Saskatchewan's Premier. I wish him well in his future endeavours as long as they have nothing to do with electoral politics. And again, stealing from a speech he gave to honour Lorne Calvert, let us all remember to say, good night, Ralph, and good night, Sam. And we can say, thank you, Mr. Wall, and good night, Brad.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I am standing, I think, to give the perspective of the class of '99. I too ran in the fall election, September 16th, 1999, the election that surprised the province. It shocked the NDP, and it resulted in a very rapidly put together coalition government. And among the founding members of the Sask Party there were 17 fresh, new, energetic, possibly very idealistic, new faces that came to the Assembly and among them was Brad Wall.

I was not the norm to be elected to this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't politically connected. I had no experience. I followed politics, but I never followed politicians. I was intrigued by the Sask Party, but I was not involved with its founding. And I ran, thinking I was going to lose. It was an experience that I thought I would, you know, just try but I didn't expect to win. And when I did, I knew I was in over my head. And I was extremely intimidated, and that's when I met Brad Wall.

Brad Wall was, well he was young and he was witty and he was politically wise and he loved history and he had a great sense of humour. And he was just a really nice guy, or so I thought at the time.

An emergency session was called that fall, right away, soon after we were elected, because of the unrest in agriculture, Mr. Speaker. And session at that time was five days a week, it wasn't four. And first and foremost, I was a mom of three young girls. So I was in a career that was over my head, was out of my comfort zone. Christmas is huge to me, and I'm in Regina, and I bought a tree. It was a little 4-inch Christmas tree. It sat on my desk. It was my Christmas pity tree. And I looked at it and I just felt sad and overwhelmed. And one time I went to my office, Mr. Speaker, and my pity tree was gone. And there was a little sticky note that said, crime scene. See, there was crime back then too.

And so I went looking for my little Christmas pity tree, and I found out where it was. Who does that? I mean who steals Christmas other than Scrooge? And so I just waited, bought some supplies, waited until Brad Wall was in the Assembly speaking to adjourned debates. And I completely took everything out of his office. I taped an outline for every book, every pen, for his TV, for all of his crazy Elvis paraphernalia. I removed everything. All that was left was a desk and a chair.

I outlined a dead body on the floor just like you do in crime movies. I had the crime tape, the yellow tape you put across — crime scene; do not enter. And I went back in the Assembly and just waited. And he never said a word. He never said a word. And a couple days later I heard him talking to some of the gang and he said, do not take on that woman unless you have a tag team because you will lose.

Mr. Speaker, so much is going to be said about our Premier in the days . . . today and was at our convention and will be going ahead. And all of those are true and far more. He's an amazing man.

There was a businessman in BC who's connected to my family, and he wants to meet Brad Wall. He wants to talk to him. He's a rags-to-riches success story. And so I asked Brad. I said, you know, would you mind meeting this guy? He just wants . . . He'll fly here on his own expense just to meet with you. Brad said, why would he do that? And I said, I don't know either. I don't know either.

Because we're going to hear about the 95 per cent Brad. But working with him as a colleague over these years, I've also seen the 5 per cent Brad. I just want to slap him. He does have an anger from time to time and he can be stubborn from time to time. But the 95 per cent Brad is why he remains the most popular premier across our country year over year over year. The 95 per cent Brad is why he has the loyalty that the Leader of the Opposition so eloquently spoke about, why he has the dedication and the commitment and the love of this province.

Brad Wall told us he was leaving when we had a caucus retreat outside of Regina. It was really hard. And everybody lined up to say goodbye. I did not. I walked out. I just walked out and thought, I'm not saying goodbye. So I need to ground myself. So I did what I do to ground myself. I went to Toys"R"Us and

spent a boatload of money on my grandkids. I felt marginally better. My grandkids wished he would have resigned earlier.

So you know, he will be missed. This province is better because of Brad Wall. Our party, our caucus is better because of Brad Wall. But I am better because of Brad Wall. And I wish I had my little 4-inch pity tree; I threw it out or I'd gift it to him today. Merry Christmas, Brad, and I wish you all the best.

[11:45]

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So often we stand in this House after a budget speech or a Speech from the Throne and it's a pleasure to enter into debate. When I was thinking how do I start this, it isn't necessarily a pleasure to enter into this motion.

You know, I stand here with certainly sadness, thinking over the 18 years. As the Minister of Finance had mentioned, there was a lot of us that were elected in 1999 — 17 of us. I think there's seven of us left, down to six and dropping, Mr. Speaker. But blessed, absolutely blessed to have spent 18 years in this House watching Brad perform, from eight years on the opposition benches of course until the past 10 years sitting in the front row centre. Most of his career he's been in the front row centre, thank heavens for our party. But blessed to be able to have that opportunity, and certainly blessed to be able to stand here today.

There isn't a person on this side of the aisle that wouldn't want to stand and show their gratitude and their appreciation because we all know that, yes we may be popular in our constituencies or not so popular in our constituencies; it's the party and it's the leadership that put us all here. And so we're deeply gratified and appreciative. And I know my remarks will be woefully inadequate to represent all of these members, 51 — can you believe it? — 51 members after the last election to be standing on this side of the House.

I remember the first day I met the Premier, Brad, and there was a bunch of us in orientation. It was bizarre because we went into orientation, orientation of all new MLAs, and it was a two-day event. And we went in there and the Speaker was Glenn Hagel at the time. He was there one day and gone the next. He didn't show up the next day because the coalition had been formed, where the Liberals formed . . . And they were offered certain things which put Glenn Hagel out of the Speaker's chair, and so the next day he wasn't there. And I just thought, wow what an interesting place. It changes that fast.

But you know, it didn't take long because, as again the Minister of Finance mentioned, we went into the House early that year, shortly after the election because of ag issues. And a lot of people were able to speak on different subjects, and I remember very distinctly the Premier's maiden speech at that time. And I thought at that time, oh wow, my God, am I over my head. I am nowhere close to that.

But you knew right away. And with certain athletes when they step on the ice, you can tell right away. Artists when they go on

the stage, they demand respect. And you could tell as soon as he stood in this House that very first time that he was something special, that this province was going to be blessed because of the work that the Premier did, or the leader of the opposition did on that side.

And I remember sitting in committees different times. The CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] committee, he was CIC critic a little while after we were elected and going up against, you know, people that had been in charge of these Crowns for many, many years and just going after them. I was amazed that he had such a communication skill and such a debating skill that he'd go after Don Ching on SaskTel: what are we doing investing outside of this province. And John Wright on different issues with SaskPower. And then I remember him going after Ron Clark at SaskEnergy about a gas variance account, and I think maybe that one time he might have overstepped his . . . I do remember an editorial that talked . . . But I won't go any further into that. This is to be a tribute. Sorry.

I also remember, and it's interesting that the Leader of the Opposition mentioned it because that was one of my stories about him standing in the House one day. And I was the Whip and he was just going after . . . He was the Justice critic. We were blessed without any lawyers at that time, so Brad was the Justice critic at that time. And you know, in legislative sessions because it's legislation, there's a lot of bills that come from the Attorney General, if he can remember to stand, Mr. Speaker. So there are a lot of bills.

And one day we came into the House when we were in opposition and the Clerk stands up and said, adjourn debate on Bill No. 75. And the Premier stands up and he starts going after it, and he's giving it to the government at that time. And at that time, the minister of Justice was Eric Cline. Eric didn't say a lot, but when he said something you could hear it. And he said, "You don't have a clue what you're talking about." And it was quiet and everybody could kind of hear it, but that didn't faze Brad. And he keeps going on and he's given them the what for. He finally says, "Do you have a clue what you're talking about?" And I just happened to look down on his desk and I saw Bill 74, and in his hand was Bill 73. And he just stopped and he just kind of took a glass of water: "If the government ever introduces something like Bill 73, that's what I'd have to say. Now to Bill No. 75."

As was mentioned also, I want to thank his family: Tami and Megan and Colter and Faith. I was the Whip early on when we were in opposition days, and of course we had a young family. The boys were young. Can you believe that you were the youngest in the House, and I was the second youngest in the House back then? That's hard to believe.

But anyway, he made that trip back and forth to Swift Current. Didn't have the blessing of Everett driving them each and every day. It was back and forth to Swift Current because spending time at home with the kids as they were growing were paramount. It's just an amazing effort to get home. But I just want to thank the kids and Tami because it's not always about the person being there; it's about the sacrifice that they give. You know, there's lots of positive in the job, but it's not very easy when you're a loved one and they're being criticized.

And so I, at the convention, had the opportunity to run into your dad and mom, John and Alice Wall. I said to your dad, who's very direct of course, I said, "How do you feel that Brad is quitting?" I just out and out asked. "Good." And I was surprised because his son is the most popular Premier in Canada. You know, his son has led this party to three consecutive majority governments, each time increasing in seats. And I said, "What do you think of him retiring?" "Good. That's great." And I couldn't quite figure it out. And he said, "You know, there's a lot of positives, but when somebody takes a run at your family member, it hurts." And so thanks to Tami and the kids, and thanks to your mom and dad for sacrificing.

Just one quick note on that. I know I shouldn't take too long, but one other quick story. We came back to the House after a weekend. We were sitting and, as we did, we talked about what went on through that weekend and, you know, talked about the boys. And Brad was saying, "Well I spent the weekend at the gym." And I go, oh that's kind of interesting.

And Colter was into wrestling at that time, and it was funny because he said, "You know, Colter was doing quite well. He'd gone through the first couple of matches or bouts or — I don't even know what you call it for wrestling — and then he ended up battling against or wrestling against a kid that was quite a bit bigger, and it was really tough." And he said, "It was impossible to stand beside that mat and not go out and help. I mean it was just . . . You see your kid being kind of pushed around and you just want to get out there." And I said, "What did you do, Brad?" And he said, "Well I stayed back because I thought he'd pin me too."

Anyway just in closing, you know, we all . . . and I truly believe that every person that puts their name on a ballot does for the right reasons. And if you're so lucky to get elected, you come in this place and you want to leave the place better than when you came. But it's a daunting task when you come into this building. As the Minister of Finance said, it's intimidating as all get-out. It's a daunting task. You know, how do you ever? You come in with these ideals and you've heard from your constituents and you want to make a difference. And it almost looks impossible.

And I heard one person say to me early on, and some of you may have heard this analogy before, but this place and government as a big "G" government is a little bit like an iceberg. When it breaks off the polar cap it's set in a direction, and to change that direction is virtually impossible. And we can push and we can tug and we can pull and we can chip away at it, and if you're very lucky you change that direction of that iceberg just a millimetre. There's very few that can change the direction of the iceberg. And I would say, Mr. Premier, through your passion and compassion, through your humour and wit, for your absolute love of this province and the people of this province, you have changed this province's attitude.

You've changed the way we look at ourselves. You've changed the way we have confidence in ourselves. We are no longer the poor cousin to Ontario and Quebec. We are the leader in the country and a leader in the world in job security, in food security, in energy security. You have put us on the map. You have moved the iceberg. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Martensville-Warman.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was trying to think of what to say today. And I have these tiny moments where I have a sense of humour and I thought maybe I could tap some of that, but every time I sat down none of that came out. So I appreciate the fact that others have been able to inject some humour into the discussion today. But I'm going to speak from the heart and hope I get through it.

I don't actually remember the first time I met Brad — I can't look at you when I do this — but I remember my first day in this Chamber. I was elected in a by-election in March of 2007 and was sworn in. And within, I don't know, minutes, I was asked to be up in question period. And the file that was given me was to defend and be a voice for the victims of Murdoch Carriere, which was a daunting task. And additionally daunting is the minister that I had to ask questions of was Pat Atkinson, who we all know was formidable in this Chamber.

And to have that kind of confidence instilled in me . . . And Brad didn't really know me. He obviously knew my dad. He didn't really know me. To be able to take on that file — and it was more than a file — and to be the voice for those women who had no voice was humbling. I recently was going through some boxes in my office and came across cards and notes that I had received from them afterwards, thanking me, thanking me for being that voice. But I was only able to do that because of the tenacity that you had and the leadership that you provided on that file.

It was the right thing for the right reason. It wasn't about politics. We've had this discussion since then just to make sure that we were doing it correctly. And then after winning in 2007 and moving into government, we carried on because it was the right thing for the right reasons and offered a formal apology to those women and additional compensation, not that any of that could make up for what they had been through. But it was such an amazing lesson for me as a new MLA.

Well I love politics. I love question period and the give-and-take in this place, and hopefully you give more than you take. That was such an amazing moment for me to start my career off with that, so I want to thank you for your confidence in me in letting me be that voice and being an example of doing the right things for the right reasons.

I also want to thank you for having a family-first policy. As a lot of the members here will know, my little family has probably faced more than their fair . . . of challenges in the last few years. I had asked to be out of cabinet a few years ago so I could spend more time with my girls and that request was met with such amazing grace from you, and a genuine care and understanding of what we were going through and that my girls needed me at home. And there was never any judgment. This job always comes second, always comes second. And as important as it is, it is not the most important thing.

This is going to be the tough part. In the last ten and a half years here, I have never once professed to be able to speak on behalf of my dad. I'm going to try. And just to make sure that I wasn't offside on this, I phoned Mother Heppner earlier this week to

ask her permission and to run past her the things that I wanted to say just to make sure because I figured if anybody has the right to be offended, it would be my mom. And mom said, you go get 'em; that's exactly what dad would want. And she passes on her love for you and you know that if she were here, she'd give you a great, big, squishy Mother Heppner hug and hold you up. And so on behalf of Mother Heppner, I wanted to pass that on to you.

[12:00]

I know what my dad would say if he were here, knowing the man that he was. First of all he would commend you on being a man of integrity. Integrity in the job that we do here doesn't mean that you always get it right. It doesn't mean that you're blameless. It means that you enter into the actions that you take with sincerity and honesty and that when you make mistakes, you apologize. And we know that you have done that. And so he would commend you for that.

He would commend you for your humility. My dad was a very proud man, but he was not an arrogant man. And I see the same qualities in you. I see you cringe when people call you Premier Wall because you just want to be Brad to all of us. Whether inside this Chamber or outside this Chamber, that is the most important thing that you have surrounded yourself by is this humility, and people see it. They know that. That's why they want to be your friend. That's why they want to go for coffee with you. That's why they want to fly out from BC and see you. They want to know just Brad the way that we do. We know that our time in this place is fleeting. The names on our doors, they're removable for a reason because they are not long-lasting. And you know that.

Thirdly and maybe most importantly, he would commend you for your continued . . . to be continued to be offended by the use of bad grammar, propositions at the end of sentences, and the use of "irregardless" which we know is not a word, and we don't know why people keep using it. So him being a former English teacher, he would certainly appreciate that.

The last visit I had with dad at RUH in Saskatoon before he moved into palliative care, Brad and I actually showed up at the same time. And it was, I think, one of the first times I'd actually had a conversation with you because I had been out in Ottawa. And so I let you have time with dad and I'm sure you talked about politics because dad was still looking forward to the 2007 election and he actually wanted to be Speaker. That was his plan. And so I let you have your time, and then I went in afterwards and had a chat with dad and again talking about politics. And at the very end of our conversations, one of the last things he ever said to me, with that smile on his face, he said, "That man will be premier next year and he will do a good job."

So on behalf of my dad who never doubted your ability, if he were here today he would say, I'm proud of you. Job well done.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to the leadership candidates that are running

on this side of the House, I have to admit that my first inclination on this motion is just to run the clock out and not let it come to . . . [inaudible] . . . then maybe that way the Premier won't be able to leave us. But I know that this motion isn't granting permission. He has earned that in his own accord. And so, Mr. Speaker, to say that I'm honoured to say a few words merely scratches the surface of what I feel.

So in about 2001, I was a student at the U of R [University of Regina]. I had an interest in politics for a long time and got together with a couple of other people that I met on campus. And we wanted to get a youth wing of the party going. These were heady days, Mr. Speaker. The memories of the 1999 election were still pretty fresh. Premier Romanow's resignation was in the offing. And we had a lot of youthful enthusiasm. You know, we'd set up tables at the campus at the U of R, even had some chocolate milk thrown on us at one time. Those were good days, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, one of those guys, Bill Cooper, who a lot of members will remember from his time working in this building, Bill Cooper and I decided that we're going to organize a policy convention — nerds — not just a convention, a policy convention. In fact that's where we met the member from Meadow Lake for the first time. He was one of our delegates.

And so, Mr. Speaker, Bill and I, we got ourselves an invitation to address caucus and to urge their support for our endeavours. And we sent a letter . . . I believe we sent a letter to Elwin Hermanson asking him to be our keynote speaker. Mr. Hermanson declined, but in his stead the caucus sent to be our keynote speaker a first-term MLA from Swift Current. And that's how I met Brad Wall.

So he spoke to us that afternoon in Saskatoon. And honestly, I don't remember what he had to say, but Bill and I both agreed that this was our guy. And so in fact we wrote a letter to Brad and in that letter we offered to help him. We put in writing that we would help him if the day ever came that he decided that he was going to run to be the leader and to be the premier of Saskatchewan. We drafted that letter, and then with sober second thought, we destroyed this seditious dispatch. After all, the Saskatchewan Party already had a leader, and if our act of treason was ever discovered, that we would be done for in Saskatchewan politics before we ever began.

But, Mr. Speaker, from that convention, I still have in my office a photograph of the three of us. I have a similar photograph of the three of us from the day I was sworn in as a member of this House. I have a photograph in my office of the three of us on the night of the 2007 victory celebration in Regina. And we're putting you on notice; we want to add a fourth photo to that collection before the 27th of January.

You know, it's quite something to see those photographs. I haven't . . . They used to hang in my office. I haven't hung them in a few years but I pulled them out in the last week. We're so young in that original photo. I mean, not you, but we were so young. You know, I compare myself now to then. I have significantly less hair. You have more. I don't know how that happens.

I apologize for my voice, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, there

were on occasions we would come down and just watch proceedings, sit in the Speaker's gallery. And on a couple of occasions we caught Brad's eye as he was sitting on the opposition benches. And he'd invite us back to his office, this small, little office that members, all members are familiar with, for opposition members. And he would just spend time with us and talk to us about our interests. And this place really isn't going to be the same without you.

Here I grabbed a sticky note and was talking to the Minister of Education. I've kind of lost my place because I wasn't supposed to move it until I got to that part.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a few minutes telling you about some of my thoughts. And I've been thinking about this a lot, especially in the last week. And I will apologize right from the beginning because my thoughts will be like that of a Coke Zero that you left unopened in your truck in 50-degree temperature. It's going to be all over the place.

Some people get elected to be something and others to do something. And it has always been clear which camp you are in. It's been incredible to watch how people have rallied around you, not just how you have communicated with them, but what you have communicated with our province.

This past summer I was at a family reunion in Medicine Hat, and I introduced myself to a great-aunt who I hadn't seen in years. She knew that I was in politics back here in Saskatchewan, and her first question to me, with a big smile on her face, was, do you know Brad? And I think we all have a story like that on this side of the House.

That connection with people hasn't just been because of who you are but because people could see that you knew where you wanted to go and where you wanted to take us. So even now, and I know he's referenced it before, even now, despite the Deputy Premier's jokes, many jokes about being a lame duck, you're still thinking about the long term even with months remaining, Mr. Speaker. Just recently the Premier asked me about some initiative in one of my files, you know, something that's not going to be decided while he's still the Premier, if ever, Mr. Speaker. And so I took his request seriously, but in the back of my mind I thought, really dude? Really? You're asking that?

People ask what it's like to work for Brad Wall. And a lot of people have already mentioned that he's a great speech maker. He's got vision and compassion and compassion. He's smart, s-m-r-t, I mean s-m-a-r-t, for those that are Simpsons fans.

But as my colleague, the Minister of Energy . . . He's just been so supportive. In the lead-up to the by-election in 2006, I remember I was in Yorkton with the member from Cannington and the Finance minister and the former member from Estevan. I was staffing. I was a staffer in this building. And Premier Brad was at a meeting in Weyburn, and he phoned me and he said, you know, I was at a meeting and we're planning a nomination and your name came up. And I just want you to know if you decide to not run for the nomination, I'll support your decision, if you want to stay on staff. If you decide to run for the nomination, I'll support that decision. Whatever you decide to do. And that has been the way it has always been. When you

need to take time from this place, it's no questions asked. Family comes first. Absolute support.

One of the other things that I was thinking about, and you already have seen a little bit of it today, is just how much fun we have around here. And we take our lead from you in that. Even on the most difficult days, there's just always something that we can find to share and to laugh in. This is a joy within you that has really just infused us as a family.

Not to say that there isn't the odd row. In her speech at the convention, the Minister of Education so perfectly summed it up — the taking off of the glasses and the rubbing of the eyes. I've been on the wrong end of that look, Mr. Speaker, on more than a couple of occasions. But before long, and in my case usually with a timely Simpsons reference or the odd impersonation of a political columnist that resides here . . .

An Hon. Member: — Do it.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — No. Well the Deputy Premier's urging me to do it. He's retiring; I'm not. It's not going to help me out any. But, Mr. Speaker, before long it was just right again. Don't let the sun set on your wrath.

So I can't thank you enough, Brad. I have been so blessed. To start as a university student, to be elected with you, to be a member of your caucus in opposition, to work for you in opposition, to be in your cabinet, I am very blessed. You have been very generous to me, and you have taught me an important lesson: your candle loses nothing when it lights another.

So I'm looking forward to what's next for you, and I'm going to be watching. We all will be watching. I'm going to be looking forward to the next successes of all of your family, all of your children. And I'm looking forward to the day where I will bring my two boys to this building and see your portrait unveiled. It's going to be a special day.

So to you and to Tami from Psalm 20:4: "May he grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all your plans." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is going to be difficult, I think. Just before I begin, I notice that two very special people have joined us in your gallery that I have, I think, introduced on one occasion, but they should be introduced each and every time they're in this Chamber. And that's Ruth Gaura and Rhonda Romanuk who have been in the Premier's office now, in the case of Ruth, since I started, and Rhonda for many, many years. They're like family. They're absolutely wonderful and thank goodness they've been running the government for all these years. I just want to, I just want to acknowledge them and thank them now that they've joined us in the House.

[12:15]

So a couple of days ago there was a school group from, I think it was White City. Was it White City?

An Hon. Member: — No, it was Hawrylak.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — That's right, in the Minister of Central Services' constituency and she introduced them. And shortly thereafter the minister came to the office and dropped off a card that one of the students had . . . I think they were grade 4 students. And so I just want to begin with this. Here's the card now. And I know it's a prop, Mr. Speaker, but it's wonderful. And it was given to me, sent to me through the minister by Emily Simpson and it says:

To Brad Wall from Emily Simpson.

Dear Brad Wall,

You are a great Premier. It's okay that you are stressed out.

I have a feeling that Emily was here for question period. I have a feeling that the Leader of the Opposition may have played some role in what Emily observed that day, effective as she has been. She went on to say, "Just so you know, my mom once stayed at your house."

Mr. Speaker, I will miss many, many things about this, first and foremost the people. But Emily, I will miss this. I will miss things like this.

I want to begin with a thank you to those who have said very kind things to me, both here on the record but also to all my colleagues and others who have said well wishes beyond the formality of *Hansard*. I want to thank the Deputy Premier and not just for what he had to say, but for his lasting friendship and also for being the kind of person that brings joy, as the Minister of the Environment alluded to, to our team, and frustration from time to time.

What the Leader of the Opposition had to say, I just truly appreciate it. Thank you that you would've looked back into those remarks from the day that Mr. Calvert had a similar moment. But I really appreciate what you've had to say. And I agree with the Deputy Premier by the way. As someone who will long support the Saskatchewan Party as long as it's around, I'm kind of glad that you're the interim leader and the deadline for running has passed. But I wish the other two well.

I want to thank the Minister of Finance for what she had to say. And I had forgotten about the Christmas tree until just moments ago, but it sounded exactly like something that myself or the Deputy Premier would do. Don McMorris and Donna, we were all three in that class of '99 that you referenced. I'll just touch on that briefly here in a moment.

But, Don, the member for Indian Head-Milestone, the former deputy premier, we became very close friends almost immediately upon meeting each other and had spent a lot of time together at our very first caucus retreat which was at Good Spirit, I think. And we have been friends ever since, cheering on each other and our respective families. So thank you for what you had to say, to both of you.

And to the Minister of Energy and Resources, what you said at the end was wonderful to hear, but it was hard to get through it because, as I am of you, I am a great admirer, was a great

admirer of your dad and love Mother Heppner. I am grateful that I got to serve with you and I am very grateful that I got to serve with and learn from your dad, who did not suffer especially the word “irregardless” or other grammatic mistakes. And he was one of my only allies, may I say, Mr. Speaker, in my 18-year and failed campaign to prevent this House, on a regular basis, from ending formal sentences in prepositions. We did it yesterday. We just did it yesterday when all the committee Chairs read their reports and moved that they “be now concurred in.” To quote Winston Churchill, “That is the kind of grammar up with which we should not put.”

I want to also thank my friend, the Minister of the Environment. I didn’t know if he would win that nomination when he decided to run. There was some very formidable and quality candidates that he faced. And he had been in Regina for a time and away from his home of Weyburn, and was, I don’t know, 17 or something at the time. But he prevailed and thank goodness that he did because he has become a very dear friend and an outstanding addition to this government, a good minister.

I remember when I first was talking to him about potentially serving in cabinet. He knows that I’m an enthusiast of Abraham Lincoln, so he threw back at me a Lincoln quote, when Lincoln referred to someone else very young being asked to consider service at a senior level. And that young person had said, I think, to the President, I think this fruit might not be ripe enough to yet be plucked. And that’s a paraphrase, obviously, of a Lincoln quote. And he gave that to me, and I remember shortly after he had spent some time in cabinet, I remember saying to him, and it’s true today, “I think the fruit was quite ripe.” He has been a friend and a great fellow public servant.

So I’ve got a few remarks. I’ll try to move along quickly. It’s been a long morning already; now afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, it’s not lost on me that what you did moments ago is not going to happen very often, maybe one more time in my life. And you will be the last person who will call me exclusively by my office, referencing the job that I have, at least as it regards this place, this Chamber. The first time I heard that, the first time I was identified only by an office was when Speaker Osika recognized the member for Swift Current 18 years ago tomorrow. And I was seated somewhere over there. I stood and gave verbal notice of three written questions because that was the style at the time, to use another Simpsons reference. Strange though that we would use verbal notice to give a written question, but we’ve leaned that out of the system.

But colleagues, if you think about it, and I have, this is really the only line of work, this is the only vocational pursuit where we work hard to get to this workplace. We toil. We desire to be here for the reasons that members have already canvassed. We desire to join a workplace, this Chamber, where we lose our given names, where we want, I guess, to lose our own personal identity, something probably that we’re all proud of, identity that we have prized all of our lives. We trade our names. We trade them for the honour to serve and to be the voice, not of ourselves hopefully when we get it right, but to be the voice of others, individual citizens, and the collective, those who sent us.

We lay down our identities because we are so very temporary as other members have discussed. As the Minister of Energy and

Resources has eloquently said, those signs on the doors, they do come off readily. We’re just here for a short time. But this institution where we lose our personal identity, this democracy, unlike any other organization to which we might aspire to be a part of or to work at, this workplace is and must be forever, regardless of who sits in these chairs. Women and men have died for that bargain, Mr. Speaker, for that trade that happens when we enter this place, this place that is the permanent and grand keep of every freedom that we value.

In and for this transaction, that trade, 18 years ago less a day, in and for it I have been humbled and blessed with the honour of my working life, the best jobs that I will ever have no matter what’s next. The first job, the first part of the transaction, to become the MLA for Swift Current, and then, and then as Premier of the province that I love. The bargain, the deal, the transaction is more than fair. It was more than fair 18 years ago. I wanted that trade, and I will always treasure it.

So let me first say thank you to the electors of Swift Current constituency. It’s my hometown. When I played Poleconomy as a kid with my generation of political nerds — so often it was maybe just me and one other person — I wanted to be the member for Swift Current. Federally or provincially, it didn’t really matter. I just have long thought that that would be a great honour and so I was excited to run in that first election.

And I will share this with colleagues. You know, the best electoral, election night memory I have, the best one is the 7th of November, 2007, when we all worked together and we were able to achieve a major team objective and form a new government and give ourselves the chance to make a change where we thought it necessary. But right behind it, maybe even tied, is September 16th, 1999. I could not believe it when the television screen showed my picture and a check by my name — elected in Swift Current constituency. I mean we had that sense by looking at the numbers but I couldn’t believe it.

And that campaign I enjoyed very much. I couldn’t do anything but door knock. I’d come home for supper; I wouldn’t eat. All I could think about was all the doors that I had yet to see for the first or maybe even the second or third time. I was running on that occasion against my grade 8 principal, a good man named — he’s now passed away — named John Wall. And that created its own confusion. There was a woman that asked me, how could you run against your own father? I said, he’s not my dad. A third of the phone book is Walls in Swift Current and I’m only related to about a third of that.

August and September of 1999, it was hot. It was a warm, warm summer and it was an amazing time in my life and I’d say in the life of our campaign team. I’m not sure . . . I understood that my campaign Chair at the time, Bryon Campbell, might be here today. I’m not sure if he is, but he was the campaign Chair and I owe him and the team a lot for that particular campaign. A couple of quick stories from it.

At that time, the Swift Current constituency wasn’t just the city. It was rural area, a bit north and a bit west and a little bit south. And the south part was precious to me because both my mom and my dad traced their roots to just south of Swift Current where there is a significant Mennonite settlement. My mom’s family, her mom and dad, Jake and Tina Schmidt, well they

were from McMahon, Saskatchewan, south of town in a very Low German Mennonite community. And my dad was raised in a house in Rhineland, Saskatchewan, which is also south of town. And Rhineland is also a Mennonite community, and my Grandpa and Grandma Peter and Elizabeth Wall raised their six kids there.

So that part of that rural area is now in Wood River, but it was then in my constituency and I campaigned there. And I remember campaigning in Rhineland. There was only a handful of houses to knock. And I was at one; I had gone around to the backyard and knocked on the door and there was nobody there. And so I wrote, sorry I missed you. There was no mailbox so I tried to find a place to put the brochure, and turned to take my leave of that house.

And then a voice from the other side of the caragana engaged. There was a hedge there and we started chatting. And my understanding is that person still lives there today, Mr. Schlamp, and lived there when my dad was raised in that house. And I had no idea. Because after he looked at my brochure he said, are you Peter Wall's grandson? And I proudly said, yes, I am. And he said, is John your dad? And I proudly said, yes, he is. And he said, well that's where he grew up, right there.

And even then I remember a moment of sort of symmetry, to think well what, I wonder . . . consider what a democracy affords us all, because my grandparents, both of them, were of very modest means. My Grandpa and Grandma Schmidt farmed a very small farm, never owned an inch of it. They were sharecroppers. They did what a lot of farmers did. They had a big garden and they had chickens and they had hogs and they had dairy cows and beef cows and they raised five kids with industry and enterprise and integrity. That was their tradition.

And same with my Grandma and Grandpa Wall. My grandpa did a little itinerant preaching, but he was an entrepreneur. He had a water hauling business and he was a bit of a carpenter, but of modest means. And now their son was presuming to run, at that time, for the first time for office. And I wish, I wish my grandparents could have seen what happened in 2007.

There were some other lighter moments on the campaign trail, I want to say. And some of them I referenced in that maiden speech in the House here when I first took to my feet. On the first night of the campaign we wanted to get our lawn signs up, and so I was out with a cordless drill. I had a small cordless drill. And so while they would site the sign location, the team, I'd go up and knock on the door and say hey, you know, just to make sure that they did want the sign — because that's always uncomfortable when the people really don't want it — and that we didn't pound the stakes into the underground sprinkling, which also happened on occasion.

And so I'm at the door and the main door is opened, the screen door is closed, and I'm sure there's somebody there by who's in the driveway. And I know who lives there. It's the south side of Swift Current, known who's lived there all my life. And I'm holding my cordless drill, but no one comes to the door. And I kind of make an executive decision. I said, I think we can put the lawn sign right there and we'll go and we'll check with the owners and make sure everything's fine tomorrow.

[12:30]

Well I didn't have to check with him because the owner, who is a good friend, Marv, called Bryon Campbell, the campaign Chair, and said, Brad and the team were there to put up the lawn sign last . . . And Bryon said yes, I'm pretty sure they were putting up a lot of lawn signs. And he said, well my wife, she was home but she was frightened. She was in the back. She could only see a shadow of what was on the front step, and she thought someone was at her door brandishing a gun.

And I told that story in my maiden speech and I noted that there was at that time three Liberals still in the House here, and that I was hesitant to tell the story because knowing Liberals as we all do, they might try to set up a cordless drill registry.

I'll move through that period quickly, but walking up the front steps after being elected — and I had worked in the building before — I understood the amazing building that this is. But walking up the stairs for the first time as a duly elected member sent by your friends and family and neighbours and constituents you had not yet met to represent them in this place, I will never forget that feeling as long as I live — the stairs outside or the staircase inside. And, Mr. Speaker, I think I've made it known that there's been other parking opportunities for me over the years, but I have always wanted to park out front so that I can remember that feeling.

You cannot walk through that entryway as an MLA, whether you've been around for 18 years or a short period of time, and not be met by the honour of this place and the honour that's been bestowed on us and the expectation of service on all of us that we probably forget from . . . I have moments where I have forgotten all of that from time to time. And I'm grateful for the chance to walk in the front door all of these years.

I remember the orientation too. The Speaker was there for the day, as the member for Indian Head-Milestone has said, and the lieutenant governor at the time, Jack Wiebe. They did a great job. And the Clerks did a wonderful job at the time. Gwenn Ronyk was the Clerk. And we are so well served, by the way, by each generation of Clerks that serve this place who do their work with . . . basically in anonymity, but also help on days like that, on swearing-in days when it's a big deal for all of us. It's overwhelming. And for our families. And so I thank you for that on behalf of all of us that have had the chance to have been fortunate enough to have that service.

It was an amazing first few days. And we've talked about the class of '99. The House Leader was a part of that class as well. I want to inform members of the House that the House Leader gave me a present today. I got a trophy this morning at caucus. I got a trophy for most improved MLA. I don't know this to be true, but I have a feeling it might have something to do with the fact that we all chip in some money at the start of each session so that we can have way more food than we need in the backroom during breaks. And I have been known to be sometimes tardy with my payment. But I made it promptly this year I would say, relatively speaking, I would say to the member for Lloydminster. Well I was thinking that's why I chosen as the most improved MLA.

But he was part of that class and the Finance minister, as we've

noted, and the Deputy Speaker of the House, the MLA for Last Mountain-Touchwood and the Agriculture minister, the member for Thunder Creek. I know that's not the name anymore but it's still my favourite name so I'll take a page out of your book and use it anyway. Our caucus Chair, Mr. Speaker . . . It was a great class and some as we have noted who have retired or who we've lost.

An Hon. Member: — House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Yes, and I mention our House Leader as well.

There were some interesting events that occurred early on. I'll touch on them. When I was a critic . . . And it was the good old days when we didn't have any lawyers in our caucus and so I was the Justice critic. And the member's right. Members have referred to the fact that I was in full rhetorical flight that day, even though I was on the wrong bill. I was probably a little over the top, shocking as that might be to members. And it was also Chris Axworthy was very generous as well as Mr. Cline.

I also got a chance to ask my first question early on in that session. And it had nothing to do with my critic file. It was actually a Health matter and I'm not sure why I was asked to do it until the scrum later, which really wasn't all that fun, and so I've never forgotten Ian and Reg for that. But the set of questions were related to the fact that there were bats in the General Hospital maternity ward, bats reported. I mean I don't think it was an infestation, but let's say enough bats to warrant some question period questions. And so I asked the Minister of Health of the day — it was Pat Atkinson — about three sets of questions. It was pretty interesting.

I've just recently reread them because it was one of my first sets of questions in the House. And one of her answers included to blame the fact that there were bats in the maternity ward at the General on the previous government. To which I said — and members will appreciate this — I said I think that the people of the province aren't interested in what happened 10 years ago. I think they're interested in what's happening today. Things change and they stay the same.

But after I raised those questions, Pat Atkinson did a wonderful thing. One of the staffers in the NDP at the time was a great animator and drew a picture of a Batman in an ill-fitting Batman costume, and it was me. I could tell that much. And she wrote a note on it. She said, great first question period and she also wrote, see you hanging around the building.

And, Mr. Speaker, in a perfect moment of serendipitous historical symmetry, just a few days ago, my friend, the member for Batoche, gave me another drawing of a Batman. It's a little cartoon clip, and it was the day after the Leader of the Opposition had quite effectively raised concerns about my email account. So a *Carpe Diem* cartoon was given to me, I guess almost a year after, or 18 years after the first Batman drawing I ever got. It says this. It's got a picture of Batman and it says, "That expression when you realize you used your batmail to send your Wayne Enterprises messages."

Mr. Speaker, we heckle from time to time. I do. And I know when I have gone over the line when I can't smile, not in a

mean way but in a good-natured way, if I can't smile after the thing that I've said. And I have done that on occasion. And early on I'd try to send notes every time I knew that I had done that. I know I have failed even in that. So for all of those moments — and I kind of probably know when they are more than members — I want to apologize. I think it's a good test for all of us to remember the Ralph and Sam piece. And it's hard sometimes because we come here with our passions. And we are fighting for our side of things, our view of things, always with the desire to see what's best for the province. And so I hope people will grant us some grace when we might not be able to smile after every single thing that we say.

I can remember early on giving speeches in the House, and sitting very close to me was the former member for Estevan or former caucus Chair who's joined us up in the gallery. And I have a number of wonderful memories and some that are frankly not very good. When I speak in the House, I have a tendency to sort of move out in the aisle, probably a little too close to whoever is beside me, and I lock my knees. And it didn't take long for Doreen Eagles to figure this out because she could just swing her toe over far enough from outside the chair and hit the back of my knees. So there are a number of speeches I gave in the House where I seem to be having trouble standing. And I want you to know they have nothing to do with the hour of the day or anything else; they have everything to do with the mischievous former member for Estevan.

There are so many memories, Mr. Speaker. Some, even the routine, commend themselves to tribute and memorialization on a day like today, like for example bowing upon entry in this place — I will have done it now thousands of times — as we leave and we enter through these doors that are reserved for members and former members who've been sent by constituents. It's a door of honour to walk through. I do think it's important that we bow because bowing is an act of service. It's an expression of humility. We bow out of respect for the officiant, for the Speaker, for the institution of the House.

We had a discussion about it earlier in the week. I'd heard this story that we also bow because at the mother parliament, Westminster, there's a cross that's above the Speaker's chair. And so I was told that that's part of the reason why some members bow. And I asked the Deputy House Leader, or the member from Meadow Lake, who knows these things, and he didn't. He actually had no idea, and he said so. And that's another reason why I now know it's time to retire.

We bow out of respect and gratitude to those who sent us here. We bow to honour those who are and were willing to sacrifice everything that we may so assemble in and with every freedom for which humanity has ever desired that reside right here in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I hope you will indulge me, and that members across the way might indulge me the opportunity to talk a little bit about my time in government, not very long, but a little bit about our time in government because it's been noted that I've been able to spend 10 years in this role of the 18 years I've served as the MLA. And I ask the pardon of my friends across the way to perhaps litigate the case for the last 10 years one last time.

Mr. Speaker, there's a question that now is engraved in the cabinet room, in subtle letters just above the door, and it simply asks, "Did you leave things better than you found them?" I want to thank Steve Bata, who helped make that happen, and the building crew here.

By the way, I just want to say to Steve Bata who's become a friend as well to all of us . . . And I've known Steve for years. This man loves this building. He is passionate about this building. He is a steward of it and a protector of it. And I will long be thankful that there's the likes of Steve Bata taking care of this amazing building.

Mr. Speaker, did you leave things better than you found them? It is more than a cliché. It's more than a rhetorical question, of course. It's really kind of devoid of the temporal consideration. It's devoid of a partisan consideration for the most part. And if it can be answered in the affirmative — yes, you left things better than you found them — then it has the potential to be transformational and generational.

If each generation of our people can answer yes to that question, if each iteration of this government, however it's constituted, whoever sits in these chairs can say, yes, we left things better than we found them, well then we will always have progress in Saskatchewan. There will always be progress, the thing that we seek for our citizens. There will always be improved quality of life because different governments of different stripes will be able to say at the end of their time, or individuals at the end of their time, it ain't perfect but, you know, I think it might be better than we found it. What we all want for this province is that it could live up to its motto and its creed. We want a quality of life for every citizen we represent.

And may I say this: that previous iterations of government formed by the party opposite can most assuredly answer that question in the affirmative. They left things better than they found them.

I can think of the Romanow government who faced almost existential decisions. Well if you read former minister MacKinnon's book, they were existential decisions. And they were aided, by the way, I am proud to say, by an MLA for Swift Current who was a minister in the government, John Penner, who was on the side of answering those questions in the affirmative as well. But we need to acknowledge the fact that that government and the Calvert government did leave things better than they found them.

And so what did we find when we came into office, notwithstanding the progress that had been bequeathed to our government and to the people by members opposite and their party? Well we found some things that we did need to work on. And while I go through this list, Mr. Speaker, please know that I don't think the government's responsible for all the good things that have happened in the 10 years. I take responsibility for the bad things, but we're not claiming credit for all of the good things. There is still more work to do. That's another proviso. And finally I think it's important to note, as I litigate this list or the case for the last 10 years, that we have a lot of work left to do on both sides of the House.

But, Mr. Speaker, when we came to office, there was a serious

nursing shortage in Saskatchewan, about 1,000 according to SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses], I think. And there was a doctor shortage. And so we undertook to add training spaces and employ more nurses, provide for the budget for more nurses. And now there are 3,400 more nurses of every designation practising in the province, and that's better than we found it. There are 750 more doctors, and that's better than we found it. We had the longest wait-lists in Canada for various reasons, for orthopedic care, and now we have among the shortest because of private clinics in the system, an innovation we brought to the system. It is not perfect. People wait too long still. But it is better than we found it.

There are significant new health care capital projects that this province needed, the replacement or the building anew of 15 long-term care facilities, for example, in Saskatchewan. The North Battleford hospital, the vision of Walter Scott to have a psychiatric hospital and mental health centre, and it was needing repair and rebuilding, and expensive to do it. And it is now under construction and nearing completion, and it's better than we found it. The same is true for the Moose Jaw hospital or what happened in Humboldt.

[12:45]

Mr. Speaker, for a long time, this province was the only province, other than Prince Edward Island, that did not have a privatization actually, the government-owned part of a fertilizer plant, and we decided, well we don't need to be in the fertilizer business but we should be in the children's hospital business. And so we used those proceeds. And that hospital will come to completion when someone else sits on that chair, Mr. Speaker. And there's lots more that we need to do in terms of pediatric care in the province, but when that hospital is built and for that hospital, things are better than we found them.

There were supports like a seniors' income plan that had been locked at about \$90 for 16 years and it's now \$270 per month, and it's better than we found it. There are more people in the province who need new schools, and there are 40 new and replacement schools in the province, 25 major renovations. There are more teachers and more support and arguably more that is needed, Mr. Speaker.

And with respect to people with disabilities, and this is close to my heart, there's still a lot of work to do here by the way, Mr. Speaker. But when we formed government I remember the Finance minister, then Social Services minister, came into cabinet and said, there is a wait-list of people who have intellectual disabilities. Those are the most vulnerable among us. If we are not here to serve them, to ensure that they have what they need, then I don't know why we are here. And there was a list of 440 of them that were waiting for the dignity of a residence, whose families wanted respite care. And the minister said to an agreeing cabinet, we ought to take care of that because what is the use of all of the money, the dividends of growth, what's the use of a growing economy if 440 of those who deserve it the most are waiting for these basic things?

And, Mr. Speaker, I can report to the House that we eliminated that wait-list. And now it's grown a bit in certain regions and there's more needed to be done, but between that and SAID

[Saskatchewan assured income for disability], finally an assured income for the disabled — not welfare but ensured income that we've actually added to in terms of resources. Not perfection, but better than we found it.

And Highways and Infrastructure, 12 000 kilometres of highways improved: projects like Saskatoon's south circle bridge, St. Louis bridge, the twinning of Highway 11 and 16, passing lanes, overpasses at Warman and Martensville; yes, the bypass around Regina, Mr. Speaker. Major infrastructure investments made in highways but also across our cities with the help of the government and in our Crown corporations. And things are better than we found them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's true that when the Crowns are dealing with infrastructure challenges in the billions of dollars, they're going to borrow. That's what companies do. Companies finance these sorts of investments and they borrow. And so the overall debt, as members like to talk about, has changed from what it was.

But there is also an operating debt in the province. That's the credit card, if the former is a mortgage. The credit card is unsupported debt. It's not attached to a Crown investment or any asset or any house. It's just like the credit card. And sometimes it's not even got a payment attached to it where it will be eliminated or discharged at a certain period of time. And some of the interest rates on that, by the way, from the '90s are high. And I want to say to the members of the House that I am proud of the fact — I wish it was even more progress — but I'm proud of the fact that operating debt is a billion dollars less than it was when we took office.

114,000 people that used to pay tax — low-income folks that paid tax — they don't pay tax anymore. They're off the tax rolls. And we have a good debate in this House, I think. Some even now are proposing, well we should have the private sector and other employers pay a higher minimum wage and that might be the right thing. But first and foremost, we should ensure low-income people aren't paying any taxes to the government. And that change has made things better as well. Not perfect, but better.

Mr. Speaker, our exports have grown the second fastest in all of the Dominion of Canada. Our overall exports are up over 100 per cent. And that's not the government's doing, but I hope we've set the tone. We've provided more funding to STEP [Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership] and we've engaged through trade missions, something new to the province, something that really didn't happen before. And now our standing in the world is different today, especially in that part of the world that does want food security and energy security. Our standing in Asia is different on behalf of the private sector and the government. It's also true in Washington, DC [District of Columbia]. And this was intentional. This was something that we made an effort to help achieve. And it is not perfect, but it is better than we found it.

Population. Mr. Speaker, there are 160 . . . And again the government can't take credit for this. However, there are certain direct things, intentional things again I want to note quickly: 167,000 more people living in the province, many of them newcomers; 90,000 newcomers in the last 10 years to the

province from all over the world, who are again giving life to our provincial motto and reminding us of our best and earliest days in terms of population growth.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you there are parts of the government program that I think helped. The graduate retention program was applied to by 55,000 young people plus, and they're now living in the province. They chose to stay here. They didn't need luggage as a graduation gift. If they did get it, it was to go on a holiday because they're employed here and maybe they used the graduate retention plan to help with that.

And Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program, and we talked about this in question period today. From '97 to '06, the total number of nominees of newcomers: 18,737. We made changes in policy. We did — intentional changes. '07 to '16, 92,869. And let's make sure that our message on both sides of the House is that every, every newcomer shouldn't be new for very long. They are our people. They are our citizens. "From many peoples, strength." Let's always be the place that makes them feel welcome as we were from our earliest days after 1905. And things from a population perspective are better than we found them.

Finally, on attitude, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say it was as if the people of this province decided, almost coincidental to the government getting elected, that they were going change their attitude, that this province ought not to be kind of looking at the dirt and kicking it around in terms of its future and its potential. The people of this province understood we are blessed with all of these resources and the most amazing people in the world. Why would we ever, why would we ever think anything about our province's future other than that we could achieve excellence, that we could be a leader, that we could provide a quality of life.

And so they tried. I think the people of this province decided to change the attitude. And I hope, colleagues, that we assisted in that. I hope they took some of their signal from what we were doing in government.

I remember what was said — you know, and again I think we need to give credit to the other side — but there was a change that happened on the attitude side. Because I remember leaders in the province calling us the wee province and saying that we'll always be in and out of equalization. And, Mr. Speaker, there was sort of a mediocrity about all of that.

I remember a story being told and sort of held up as the quintessential Saskatchewan story about a canoe race in northern Saskatchewan, where someone was leading the canoe race and felt bad because all the other canoes were behind, and kind of stopped and waited for everyone to join them so they could all finish second together.

Well with great respect, Mr. Speaker, that is not the quintessential Saskatchewan story, because my dad raised me, taught . . . My mom and dad raised me to know that it's okay to win. Do it with grace. Do it with honour. Do it in a way so that if you have won, you can maybe benefit others and share in whatever dividends come from that. But it's okay to win. And that's the attitude change that's happened in this province.

People realize when we lead, when we win, when our economy grows, why there is more money for the disability wait-list and you can reduce wait-lists, or you can provide some basic supports for those who are most vulnerable. And I hope that's been the doctrine of this side of the House. And I hope it lasts for a very long time, even on the other side as well. Let us do nothing but dream big for this province, because this province deserves big dreams — not for ourselves, but for the people we represent.

I will be ever grateful, Mr. Speaker, for those on this side of the House who have helped me, who have shared this with me and given me the opportunity to be a part of an exercise whereupon I can say on a day like today that we left things, and I left things, better than we found them. So I thank them for that. I've gotten too much credit for the good things and not enough blame for the bad things. And I'm so grateful to my colleagues and my family.

So all of this brings me to another and final transactional moment, Mr. Speaker, when I give up the title as MLA for Swift Current, first made formal by your predecessor 18 years and one day ago, or the other title that I gained 10 years and one month to the day ago, and I exchange them for just Brad, with no need to share it with any office or title. Just Brad, the grandson of Peter and Elizabeth Wall and Jacob and Tina Schmidt; just Brad, the proud and very thankful son of John and Alice Wall; the profoundly and immensely proud dad of Megan and Colter and Faith; just Brad, the unworthy husband of the amazing Tami Wall.

And as it was 18 years ago, I want this trade. I am grateful for it, and I'm excited by the prospects that will follow. I am profoundly grateful for what I give up in the transaction today, but I'm even more grateful for what I get back. And of this, Mr. Speaker, you can have blessed assurance: as for either side of this transaction, what I might give up and what I know that I gain, I have not and I still do not deserve any of it. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion put forward by the Deputy Premier:

That this Legislative Assembly thanks and pays tribute to the Premier, Brad Wall, for his 18 years of service to the people of Saskatchewan as the member for Swift Current, as leader of the opposition, and as Premier, and for his many contributions to the people and province of Saskatchewan.

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. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I request that this motion be passed *nemine contradicente*, which in Latin means, we're all

agreed.

The Speaker: — *Nemine contradicente*. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, just with leave to make some brief comments as House Leader.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave granted. I recognize the Government House Leader.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Acknowledgements and Christmas Greetings

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's hard to follow the speakers that were here, so I will be very brief. First up, thank you, boss. You've been the best boss I've ever had and ever will have. And I want to thank you again for putting confidence in myself as making me House Leader.

I want to thank my staff, Jarret Coels and Michelle Lang, who has walked me through the many things I've had to in the House and basically did all the work behind the scenes; the member from Meadow Lake, the Deputy House Leader, that has helped me immensely and kept me probably from stepping in it a few times in correcting me with his experience.

The Opposition House Leader who's been . . . We've both been here a very long time and have gone back a long ways. And I'll just say what a previous House leader has said about him, which I know to be true: his word is gold. If he gives me his word as we're working through the House, it's always been good. And I've always respected him for the number of years that we've been here.

Saying that, you'd think it was an easy session. But it wasn't; it was a difficult session. We lost a member, a sitting member, the member from Melfort. I want to thank the Opposition House Leader, acknowledge the Opposition Leader for the changes that they allowed us to make, the flexibility in the House to help us through that difficult time. Thank you.

I want to thank yourself, Mr. Speaker, a very well-run House. Very good. Clerks, who have been here . . . I've been here a number of years, well, as long as the Premier. I've come to you many times over them years for questions, and you've always had the answers. Basically, is there nothing you don't know?

Pages, you did an excellent job here today. I want to thank all the people behind the scenes, give them a thank you: the Hansard, that had to work the late nights as committee goes into the evening; all the people behind the scenes; all the staff that work in this building; all the people that run our dining room that work here late to accommodate the many receptions that come here; the security which keeps us safe and do an excellent job. A lot of people don't realize the many people it takes to make a smooth and efficient running House. And ever since I've been here, we've had excellent, excellent staff that runs this

House. And I want to thank you.

[13:00]

Just to wrap up, I want to wish all the members a safe journey home and to remember what this is about. This break is to spend time with family. I want to say to each and every person in this building, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Recognizing the hour, I want to thank members for not calling the clock on me as well. But certainly just to very quickly join with the Government House Leader in saying, thank you, thank you, thank you. The two most important words there are in, certainly in public life, Mr. Speaker: thank you. To those within the building, as the Government House Leader has ably run the roll . . . It's sort of a cast of thousands that — well not quite thousands; dozens maybe — but that certainly make this place work, that enable us to serve the people of Regina Elphinstone-Centre, or Swift Current, or Arm River-Watrous but to set about the work of serving the people in this Assembly. So we're very thankful for that.

There are those outside the building that we think of as well, be it family, be it the folks that work with us in our constituencies, our thanks to them as well. Thanks to certainly my caucus colleagues and leadership. Thank you to members opposite as well.

The Premier is right: there's nothing like coming up these steps, coming into this Chamber, and to think that you work to represent the people of your constituency, that they thought enough of your abilities to send you here. Sometimes you wonder if that's to keep you out of the riding or, in my case, I come from Regina Elphinstone-Centre where a lot of people know me and know my family, and yet they still vote for me. But it's such a tremendous privilege. And again to be part of a day like today is certainly something you don't forget, something that you will remember.

I do want to say a particular thanks to my colleague, the Government House Leader. His word is as good as his bond, and I thank him for that. And sometimes it's like we're at the circus and, you know, you feel like the Government House Leader and I and our deputies and our various teams are sort of like cleaning up after the elephants at the circus. But sometimes there's popcorn and peanuts and lots of shows to be seen as well. But certainly our work — and I know that we share this across the sides — is to try and make sure that the procedural stuff runs as smoothly as possible so that we can better spend our time arguing, litigating our sides of the issues of the day.

So I want to say thank you very much to the Government House Leader, Deputy House Leader, and certainly to Jarret and Michelle. And again it is, as I've said different times before, being part of this, it's like you're one big, you know, sort of . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I don't know if anybody's ever seen *Shameless* or the Gallaghers. Anyway you're part of a big, big extended family. And certainly through this we send our congratulations to Jarett. They've welcomed young Keiran into their family just days ago, through all of this. So

congratulations on that.

Mr. Speaker, as our head, as our guardian of our rights and responsibilities in this Chamber, I say thank you to you on behalf of all our colleagues, and certainly to the Clerk and the table and everyone in this Assembly that does this tremendous job of helping the people's business progress.

And to those that hold the mirror up to reality in the media, that we might see what is taking place and, you know, do better as well, I say thank you to them. And it's also interesting to see the changing of the guard that is taking place in the press gallery and how good that is and how difficult their work is.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, when I first showed up at this place the then member from Cumberland, Keith Goulet, would often say — he was a tremendous Cree speaker, you know, really fluent and compelling in the Cree language — one thing that he would say to close out speeches, and I think of it now as we head into this Christmas season, and that message of hope and that message of healing and again, how this most wonderful time of the year can be hard for those who have got an empty seat around those tables. And to everyone I just say on behalf of all of us certainly, Merry Christmas. Be safe. But to Keith Goulet I say, *ēkosi, ēkosi, ēkosi*.

The Speaker: — I too would like to take an opportunity to speak because I usually don't, and I have a few things that I would like to share and to thank the members.

First off, I would like to thank all members for their effort and work that they put into their jobs and being down in Regina and away from loved ones. It's much appreciated, the effort that everyone has to put in for democracy.

To the Clerks — to Greg Putz, Iris Lang, Ken Ring, Kathy Burianyak — and the staff of the Legislative Assembly for all their effort in keeping us on task and, in doing so, enabling the democratic process to run smoothly. I too would also like to thank Steve Bata, and Ralph, and Jeff Tochor for making sure that this building is in top shape and as best as possible for our members to do the important work that we do in this Chamber.

I'd like to thank the LAS [Legislative Assembly Service] staff who do their best to make us all look presentable. I would also like to thank my staff. We've been blessed in the Speaker's office to have Sheila Sterling, Irene Bauer, and Hayley Lucas help me out.

I too would like to just very briefly here thank the Premier for his years of service. I remember the first time I met Mr. Wall, and he quickly corrected me that it was Brad. And that was mid-2000s at my very first political event I ever attended. And from that, I was inspired by you to get involved, and I wouldn't be here without attending that evening.

And I would like to thank my staff back in Saskatoon, Conni and Helen, and our friends back . . . All our constituency employees have done a fabulous job to take care of the office while we're down here doing the important work that we're asked to do.

In conclusion, I would like to thank everyone for their work and

please drive safely and Merry Christmas.

I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the House Leader who has allowed me to move the adjournment.

And just before I do, I forgot in part of my remarks to thank members opposite as I was litigating the case. Because I think to the extent there have been successes in the province that emanate from this room, it's been because of the work of all, and being pushed, frankly, in the appropriate direction. And I failed to mention that, and it's a point that I need to put on the record. So I've done that.

And thanks to the House Leader for allowing me to move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. Pursuant to the sessional order dated November 22, 2017, this Assembly stands adjourned until Monday, March 12th, 2018.

[The Assembly adjourned at 13:09.]

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President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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Minister of the Economy
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan
Minister Responsible for Innovation
Minister Responsible for Trade

Hon. Herb Cox
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