



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

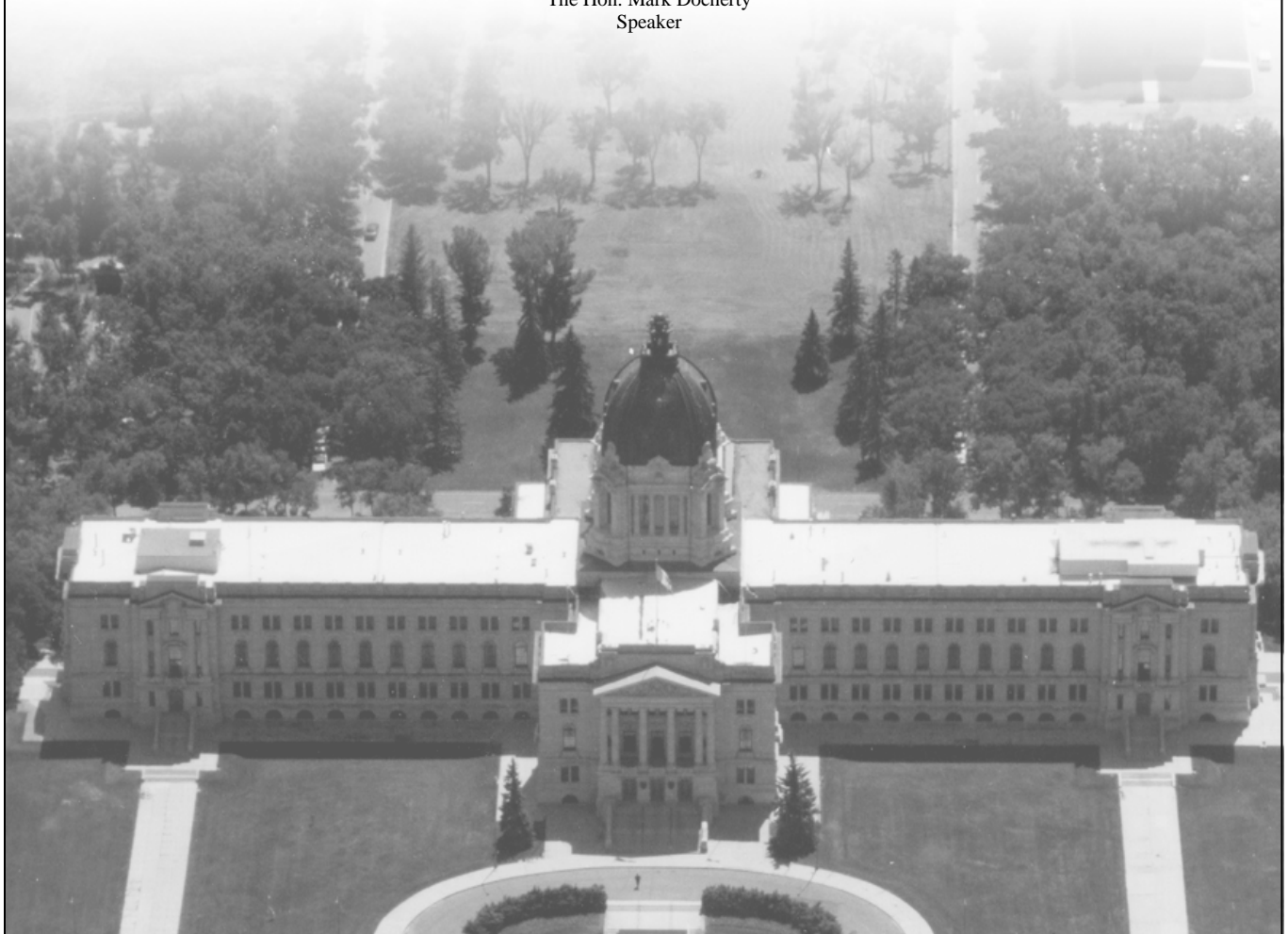
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)  
Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. Mark Docherty  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**3rd Session — 28th Legislature**

**Speaker** — Hon. Mark Docherty  
**Premier** — Hon. Scott Moe  
**Leader of the Opposition** — Ryan Meili

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<b>Lawrence</b> , Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	

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**Party Standings:** Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 48; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 13

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**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 member for Moose Jaw North.

**Mr. Michelson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the west gallery we've got 19 students from A.E. Peacock Collegiate watching the proceedings today along with Kain Petlak, the teacher. Mr. Speaker, Peacock is a wonderful school in there, and I didn't ask . . . We had a little meeting just before the Assembly. I didn't ask if any of the girls were among the girls that won the bronze medal at Hoopla this past weekend, but I'm sure there is. They're a fine bunch. We had a little meeting before. They let me have my picture with them on the staircase. And I'd like everyone to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Northeast.

**Mr. Pedersen:** — I request leave for an extended introduction.

**The Speaker:** — The member has asked leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member.

**Mr. Pedersen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery, to you and through you, I'd like to introduce a number of guests, and in order of seniority perhaps they could give a wave. These individuals are from the Regina Food Bank. And starting off we've got the new CEO [chief executive officer], John Bailey, whose seniority is at a grand total of four days. John has an impressive resumé, spending a number of years at the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association] and most recently at Harbour Landing Village, but also well known in the non-profit sector here in the city.

Next up we have Megan Sinnott who's the greenhouse operator with a couple of years of seniority, and Kimberley Wenger, also in the greenhouse. She's the greenhouse coordinator. Then we have Shelley Armbruster, the special events and volunteer coordinator with four years of service; Harla Willcox, the outreach coordinator with 10 years of service; and rounding out the group, Gerry Wagner, who has been the volunteer in charge of the warehouse and special events for 22 years.

So I would ask that all members join with me in welcoming these fine people to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the member opposite in welcoming John and his team. Congratulations on your new position, John. Some unfamiliar faces up there, Mr. Speaker. It's been a while since I've been engaged with the food bank association of

Saskatchewan and the Regina Food Bank, but I know the Saskatoon Food Bank, in my tenure there, we were able to have a great relationship with the Regina Food Bank and the Saskatchewan food bank association. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Steele:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery, I'd like to introduce Sean Checkley. He's a constituent of mine from the Southwest. He's here today for the rally that's taking place this afternoon. And Sean is a rancher, oilman, and also the mayor of the town of Fox Valley. I'd like to welcome him to his Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite, as the Municipal Affairs critic, and welcome Sean Checkley, the mayor of Fox Valley, to his Assembly. He is somebody that's very involved in his community. I've watched him in action before.

I recall going out with a couple of us, our Education critic and the member from Prince Albert, when he convened a very significant meeting in Fox Valley with respect to education. And I also remember some of the best Chinese food right across the street from the meeting. But I ask all members to welcome Sean Checkley to his Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Pasqua.

**Mr. Fiaz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you through you to all the members of this Assembly, I would like to introduce 26 students of grade 5 and 6 from the best school, Ethel Milliken School, Mr. Speaker, accompanied by their teacher, Carlie Brentnell. And I already met them downstairs, outside the building, and we're going to meet them again, having a photo session as well. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

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

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer 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 our province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Shell Lake and Spiritwood. I do so present.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today to present a petition calling for a public inquiry into the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land deal. And the folks who have signed this petition today would like to bring to the entire Assembly's attention the following: the Sask Party government has refused to come clean on the GTH land deal, a deal where Sask Party government insiders made millions flipping land and then the taxpayers of course lost those millions of dollars.

Instead of shining a light on the issue and calling a public inquiry, the Sask Party government is instead hiding behind excuses around public prosecutions in Manitoba. The Sask Party government continues to block key witnesses from providing testimony about the land deal, and as new details continue to emerge, it shows Saskatchewan people still do not have the full story behind the GTH land deal. And of course, Mr. Speaker, it is Saskatchewan people who footed the bill for the GTH land deal and deserve nothing unequivocally less than the truth.

I'll 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 stop hiding behind partisan excuses and immediately call for a judicial inquiry and a forensic audit into the GTH land deal.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people who have presented this petition today are from the city of Prince Albert. I so submit.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Westview.

##### Food and Beverage Students Showcase Their Skills

**Mr. Buckingham:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In February I had the privilege of attending a dinner catered by the students in the food and beverage class 2019 through the Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centre. The food and beverage class allows students to develop practical serving and food preparation skills, which not only helps prepare the students for the workforce but also, Mr. Speaker, makes them exceptional cooks.

The class, which had 18 students taught by Drew Schreuder, the head chef and instructor of the program, is a 10-week-long class that consists of four weeks in the classroom learning proper skills and cooking techniques followed by three weeks of kitchen and service learning. The 10-week program wrapped up with the students participating in a three-week-long practicum at different local restaurants around Saskatoon to gain real valuable experience in the food service industry.

Mr. Speaker, in 2017-18 Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centre ran 18 programs with 276 student participants. Forty-five per cent of the student demographic at the trades and skills centre were Aboriginal and 25 per cent were new Canadians.

Thank you to the students of the food and beverage class 2019 for showcasing their cooking skills and for hosting a fantastic evening. The programs at the Saskatoon Trades and Skills Centre are truly making a difference in the Saskatoon community. Keep

up the good work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

##### Sorrow and Solidarity for Bus Crash Victims

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Saturday will be the one-year anniversary of the tragic Humboldt bus crash. On April 6th, 2018, 16 lives were lost and many more were forever changed by the crash that involved the Broncos team.

In the aftermath of this tragedy we saw the best of Humboldt, the best of Saskatchewan, the best of Canada in the outpouring of support for the families of the victims and for the community. I was honoured to stand alongside members from both sides yesterday as part of recognizing Green Shirt Day, and last night to connect with hockey fans while catching some great SJHL [Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League] playoff hockey in Yorkton.

The best way, I believe, to honour the memory of those involved in the crash is to honour the wishes of the family of Logan Boulet, who have stepped forward to advocate for organ donation registration as part of his legacy, which will have an incredible impact on patients in need of transplant.

I ask all members to join me in expressing their sorrow, solidarity, and commemoration with the families and the community of Humboldt, and encourage all members and all Saskatchewan people to have conversations and look into becoming an organ donor registrant so that you too can be part of this support.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

##### Regimental Ball Raises Funds for Victim Services

**Ms. Young:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the honour of attending the Lloydminster RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] Regimental Ball on March 23rd. Thank you to the committee, which consisted of Staff Sergeant Sarah Knelsen, Tammy Twerdohlib, and Kelly Romulus.

This ball was a fundraiser for the victim services program to ensure that the best supports, tools, and practices are always readily available for those affected by crime and trauma. During the evening we learned more about how the victim services program has grown and evolved over the past decade in order to better meet the needs of the victims.

I'd like to thank my constituency assistant, Tracy Patterson, who is a volunteer advocate with the victim services support team, along with the many members of the Midwest Victim Services, as their efforts have made so many positive changes in our crime and trauma programs in my community.

It was a great evening to learn about what is being done around the growing awareness and impact that crime and trauma have on victims, as well as the work of the community response teams. The ball was well attended with many well-respected members dressed in their red serge representing Alberta, Saskatchewan, and our northern areas as well.

Mr. Speaker, I now ask all members to please join me in thanking all the volunteers, sponsors, and event planners of the RCMP Regimental Ball for such an incredible evening. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Northeast.

#### Food Bank Feeds and Educates

**Mr. Pedersen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's with mixed feelings that I rise today to talk about Regina Food Bank, which is located in the constituency of Regina Northeast. I'm happy to welcome the food bank's new CEO, John Bailey, but it's really just a shame that the Regina Food Bank needs to exist at all, Mr. Speaker.

Food is a basic necessity, but in 2018 the Regina Food Bank had almost 90,000 requests for service from families including wage earners, students, seniors on fixed income, and children. A Food Banks Canada report shows Saskatchewan had the highest rate of children using food banks in the country in 2018. The report says 44 per cent of people who used food banks in the province were children, almost 10 per cent higher than the national average.

Without an effective poverty reduction plan that addresses long-term issues, inequalities, and root causes, many children will repeat the cycle of poverty in which they grew up. Saskatchewan is the only province in Canada without an effective poverty reduction plan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Regina Food Bank distributed almost 300,000 pounds of food in 2018. Thank goodness for the good work of the Regina Food Bank and the almost 3,000 staff and volunteers who work not only to alleviate hunger, but also for the work that they do to educate and raise people out of poverty.

I ask all members to join me in welcoming John Bailey and congratulating the Regina Food Bank for the hard work that they do, and to reflect on how we could work together to make their jobs unnecessary.

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

#### First Female Legislator Shaped Saskatchewan's History

**Mr. Dennis:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday hundreds of young women descended to Parliament Hill to fill 338 seats in the House of Commons to show the power and influence women can have in politics.

[10:15]

Mr. Speaker, another strong female political influence — Sarah Ramsland, for those who are unfamiliar with her name — played a very significant role in shaping history in Saskatchewan and indeed history in this very building. She was the first woman elected to the Legislative Assembly in Saskatchewan. Sarah's husband, Max Ramsland, was elected to the Legislative Assembly in the 1917 provincial election as the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Pelly. Unfortunately Max passed away during the Spanish flu epidemic in 1918. Sarah ran and won her husband's seat resulting in the by-election of 1918. She would hold the MLA seat for Pelly until 1925.

Mr. Speaker, not known at the time, but she had just made history. Mr. Speaker, possibly her greatest etch on history was introducing a resolution on the federal divorce laws that would allow women to apply for divorce on the grounds of spousal adultery, which was unheard of at that time, once again redefining and expanding the possibilities for women throughout the province.

I encourage all members to learn more about Sarah Ramsland, a true Saskatchewan role model.

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

#### Prairie Women Ride for Breast Cancer Research

**Mr. Steele:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past February, the Prairie Women on Snowmobiles group embarked on their 19th annual mission starting in Meadow Lake and ending in P.A. [Prince Albert]. These women come together each year and ride to make a difference.

On their mission, they collected donations to go towards breast cancer research. Mr. Speaker, in the 19 years of doing this route, they have raised more than \$2.5 million towards their cause, and on their mission they have made many friends, memories, and had fun on their way. The mission was over six days, and the women covered over 1500 kilometres.

Mr. Speaker, this mission was originally created by a breast cancer survivor and her best friend, who wanted to incorporate the sport they loved and combine it with an important cause. They gathered 10 friends and mapped their first ride, and the rest is history.

Mr. Speaker, it is barely April and the ladies are already planning their 2020 ride. It will be bigger and better than ever. Mr. Speaker, I now ask the members to please join in thanking the women on the successful 19th annual mission, as well as the sponsors who make the ride and fundraiser possible. Best of luck on your ride next year.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Estevan.

#### Opposition Leader's Views on Rally

**Hon. Ms. Carr:** — Mr. Speaker, in the next hour or so, one of the largest truck convoys ever, anywhere in the world, is going to roll through Regina, right past the Tommy Douglas House actually, on its way to a rally, a rally to support our energy sector and its importance to Canada's economy, a rally to support pipelines and oppose Bill C-48 and Bill C-69, and a rally to say no to the Trudeau carbon tax. That's what this rally is about.

But all week the NDP [New Democratic Party] leader has been smearing today's rally and the people who are going to it. He's called it anti-Semitic, anti-Islamic, and anti-immigrant, and that's why he says that's why he's not going. Of course that's nonsense. The NDP leader knows that the real reason he's not going is because he supports a Trudeau carbon tax. In fact he once said he applauds the Trudeau carbon tax.

The real reason he isn't going is because he opposes pipelines. He once spoke at an anti-pipeline rally, and the real reason he

isn't going is because he doesn't want to hear from anyone who doesn't share his views.

Mr. Speaker, every day it becomes more and more apparent how out of touch the NDP leader is with Saskatchewan people, and he doesn't want to hear anyone who disagrees with him. How out of touch can one get?

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

#### Review of Child Care Subsidy

**Mr. Meili:** — I haven't stood up yet, but I'm happy to be recognized. Good guess, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you know what? The first 1,000 days in a kid's life are the most important days for their development for their future success, their future health. Last year we saw \$3 million more in this year's budget than we see this year — \$3 million less for child care in this year's budget.

The income cut-off to be able to access subsidized care hasn't been changed since 1982, Mr. Speaker, and the subsidy itself has been unchanged since 2006. Yesterday the member for Lakeview asked for a review of those subsidies. I'm wondering. We didn't get an answer from the minister. Could we get an answer from the Premier today? Will he commit to a review?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to again, as the Minister of Education said yesterday, we've invested over \$200 million in our child care subsidy. We have over 6,000 new licensed spaces, Mr. Speaker, since 2007.

But most of all, Mr. Speaker, we're looking at this as a larger issue. We've increased our income assistance rate, Mr. Speaker. We've also invested heavily in housing, Mr. Speaker. But we're also making investments in other areas, Mr. Speaker, tried to make life more affordable for those that are in need, Mr. Speaker.

Again, Mr. Speaker, within a balanced budget, we were able to increase all social services by 5.5 per cent and we're very proud of that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Child care is difficult to afford and almost impossible to find in this province. We're dead last when it comes to access to subsidized spaces. Dead last when it comes to registered licensed spaces, Mr. Speaker.

If we want to make Saskatchewan — as we should — if we want to make Saskatchewan the best place in Canada to be a kid, that means we have to start making early learning and child care, a priority. When will we see this government look beyond the next election and start looking at the next generation? When will we see a commitment to review those subsidy levels?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again what I

want to talk about is a little bit about overall what we're doing within Social Services, Mr. Speaker. And child care, it is a big part of that, but we're looking at many aspects of that. We're looking at housing. We're also looking at hard-to-house, Mr. Speaker. And most of all we have a heavy investment in our child and family services, Mr. Speaker.

Even in challenging times, Mr. Speaker, this government, year after year after year, has invested in child and family services, Mr. Speaker, to be able to make sure that the children that need us are there when we need it.

Mr. Speaker, we were also able to invest with our income assistance budget an additional \$10 million, Mr. Speaker. We're very proud of our record in working with those most vulnerable, especially the children before they get to school. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question that I asked was about a review. Yet to hear the minister go anywhere near that question, Mr. Speaker, failing to answer the question and failing kids. And failing to invest in child care holds back children and it also holds back our economy. When we make investments in child care, that increases workplace participation and it also increases the growth of our economy, increases our GDP [gross domestic product], as well as decreasing costs down the road in health, in justice, and in social services.

Mr. Speaker, when we invest, it allows families to thrive, kids to learn, and our economy to grow. Why won't this government answer that question and commit to a review of the child care subsidy today?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. And I can inform the House as I have before that we have had a huge investment in children that are experiencing poverty, Mr. Speaker, since 2007, and it's gone down from 21 per cent down to 10 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And the response that I got from the Leader of the Opposition was, who cares?

Mr. Speaker, I care. Mr. Speaker, the 10 per cent of children that are no longer in poverty, they care. The people that are here in the food bank that are seeing less children that are actually coming to the food bank, Mr. Speaker, I bet you they care. I wish that the opposition would get on board and care for the children that are most vulnerable within our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I care a great deal. And it's worth noting, it's worth noting that when that exchange happened, what I had said was the clear evidence that poverty has grown in the last year, that we're the only province that saw poverty actually increase — us and Quebec. Two provinces in the entire country saw poverty go up.

Over the last few years, we've seen social services utilization continue to rise. And for the minister today to start saying that's

an issue about the NDP's record, well I think he should take another minister's advice and live in the now and take responsibility for his own record.

I also think he should take responsibility for the failure to answer this question. Will this government commit to a review of child care subsidies, help families get back to work, and help kids get the early opportunities they deserve?

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'm sorry that it upset the Leader of the Opposition that I quoted him from *Hansard* when he said "who cares," Mr. Speaker.

Absolutely, Mr. Speaker, this government's commitment to those on poverty and those that are experiencing poverty is unwavering since 2007, Mr. Speaker. We have invested over \$250 million, additional dollars into our income assistance, Mr. Speaker. We created the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program for those. We also moved people that were off the 440 wait-list, Mr. Speaker. We were treating them with dignity. To say Social Services doesn't care about what's going on, I would point to our record, our investment that we are within the most vulnerable people, Mr. Speaker. And you know what? If he doesn't care, that's his opinion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Global Transportation Hub Land Transactions

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, that means no review. That's really a poor answer.

Mr. Speaker, all week the minister has dismissed important questions about the GTH. But these unanswered questions have dogged this government for years, and despite some lofty promises on the leadership campaign trail, we see a lack of courage from that front bench when it comes to the GTH.

Now whatever happened to the Deputy Premier's commitment to transparency from his leadership bid? And I quote:

I believe the only way to lift the cloud over the GTH is to shine a very bright — and very public — light on the entire matter. It's unacceptable to me and to the people of Saskatchewan that after all this time, there are still more questions than answers when it comes to the GTH.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if it was unacceptable then, it's unacceptable now. So will the Deputy Premier reaffirm his commitment to the truth and vote yes for a judicial inquiry today?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll tell the members what's different now than what's taken place in the last year. I'll tell them what the changes have been. We've seen the completion of the RCMP investigation. We've seen that the RCMP spent 7,500 hours on this investigation. We saw the investigation results forwarded to the Manitoba prosecutor's office. They did an

exhaustive and complete review on it. It's been reviewed now by the Provincial Auditor, by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, by the 7,500 hours of the RCMP.

And you know what they did? The RCMP came out and did a press conference and said why they weren't proceeding further, that there wasn't enough evidence even to warrant getting a search warrant. But they didn't need a search warrant because the government members had been totally forthright and provided all the information that could have been wanted. Mr. Speaker, that's what's happened in the last year and that's the status of it today.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, I guess the current minister is in disagreement with the Deputy Premier. But I wonder what the other front-benchers think. There's tens of millions of taxpayers' dollars on the line here, and the minister should be taking this seriously. It's not his money; it's the people of Saskatchewan's, and he should try to hold himself accountable to them.

The former minister of Justice and Attorney General, the one who blocked the first GTH land deal, said an inquiry was needed. And the former GTH minister, in his rather brief leadership bid, was as concerned with how Bill Boyd and his entourage assembled the land. And I'll quote: "There were very, very serious mistakes made that should never have happened." And on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we're inclined to agree.

To the Minister of Immigration and Career Training: will he stand by his position and vote yes today to get to the bottom of the very, very serious issues with land acquisition at the GTH?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, the GTH has been completed. There's roadways going through it. There's land for sale. The government has made the decision that they should not be in that business, that this is something that's better done by the private sector. The fact is, we own it. We are in the process for looking for a private property manager to market the property, to do the day-to-day operations of it. Because we don't think it's something that belongs in this Chamber, and for that matter, Mr. Speaker, it's something best done by the private sector. We've got a great, strong, vibrant private sector in this province. We have people that are capable of property management. We have people that are capable of marketing. And there's wonderful opportunities out there, Mr. Speaker.

The members opposite have gone out there, and they have a bit of a reluctant time accepting the successes that are there. And we'd like to build on those successes. We'd like to see a few hundred more acres of strong developers like Loblaw, like CP [Canadian Pacific Railway], Emterra, and some of the others that are out there, Mr. Speaker. Those members opposite would do well to go and pay another visit.

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

[10:30]

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, I was there last week. And I've checked today. Since 2013 this government has only sold 22

acres out of the GTH, Mr. Speaker, in five years, five and a half years. So I don't know what kind of record he's talking about here. They failed miserably, and now they have to account to the people of Saskatchewan.

Now in the basement of the legislature that fateful day, that minister said, "I defended the position of the government and what I'm saying here today is what that position is going to change to, if I'm premier." Well, Mr. Speaker, I guess his commitment to the truth only implied if he got his boss's chair.

And in fact, the Premier himself said that he was open to "further action with respect to ensuring transparency and accountability . . . This includes the possibility of a public inquiry." So, Mr. Speaker, what happened? Did the Premier take a closer look at the file and decide he'd rather bury the whole thing, Mr. Speaker? That's not leadership. That's letting Saskatchewan people down.

So will the Premier do what so many close to the GTH file have called for? Will he do the right thing and call a judicial inquiry into the GTH today?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite raises this issue, exactly the same issues, time and time again — issues that have been explored, reviewed, and audited and gone through a detailed, careful process. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite can ask the questions as many times as she wants; she will get exactly the same answers.

What she should do is have a careful look at the people that are out there: the 1,800 jobs that were there at the time of construction, nearly a half a billion dollars in private investment, nearly 1,000 full-time jobs that are there. And, Mr. Speaker, all she needs to do is stand there on the roads that she's complained about and look at the 4,800 trucks that move in and out of the GTH each and every week, creating jobs and prosperity for people in this province.

The members opposite may not like jobs. They may not like prosperity. But Mr. Speaker, that's what we were elected to do and that's what we are going to continue to do, whether the member opposite wants that to happen or not. That's what's going to take place, whether it's through us or whether it's through the private sector.

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

#### Requirements for Autobody Shops

**Ms. Rancourt:** — Yesterday, the Minister of SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] compared the amount SGI pays autobody shops to what other provinces pay their shops. Is the minister suggesting he wants these smaller businesses, who are already struggling in this economy, to get paid less?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hargrave:** — Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you know, the safety on our . . . Mr.

Speaker, the safety on our roads is so important, Mr. Speaker. And we recognize the good work and the important work that the autobody shops around the province do, Mr. Speaker, and the services that they provide to the people of Saskatchewan. It's important, it's important, Mr. Speaker, that any vehicle that is in an accident is repaired to the manufacturer's standards to ensure it is as safe as possible before it's back on the road.

Consultations, Mr. Speaker, have begun and SGI is holding a number of town hall meetings across the province in the next number of weeks. SGI is always reviewing policies like these ones, Mr. Speaker. But let me be clear, Mr. Speaker. There hasn't been a final decision made. That decision will be made in consultation with the autobody industry across the province. We appreciate all the feedback that we have been received so far from the industry and stakeholders, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Rancourt:** — Mr. Speaker, these autobody shops are being hit with unexpected costs that will hurt their bottom line. The changes will especially hurt smaller rural shops, harming small-town economies across Saskatchewan. If this wasn't bad enough, Mr. Speaker, these shops weren't even properly consulted before these changes were announced.

On Wednesday, when the minister faced pushback, he walked back his decision and said he would listen to the autobody shops before implementing the changes. This is becoming typical for this government. Make decisions first, consult later. Will the minister commit to proper consultation or will he ignore their concerns and continue to leave them in the ditch?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for Crown Investments.

**Hon. Mr. Hargrave:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, I appreciate all the feedback that has been received by my colleagues and from those in the industry, Mr. Speaker. We'll ensure we listen to those affected, Mr. Speaker. The autobody shops around the province and the services they provide are important to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And as I've said before, Mr. Speaker, it's very important that any vehicle that's in an accident, Mr. Speaker, is repaired to the manufacturer's standards to ensure it's safe as possible before it's back on the road, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I said before, over the next number of weeks, consultations that have been planned for a number of . . . for a fair period of time will be held with industry and stakeholders, Mr. Speaker, throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, and we look forward to hearing what the results of those consultations and the feedback that they present. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Release of Reports Regarding Village of Pinehouse

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the *StarPhoenix* has obtained a copy of the report on Pinehouse that we've been calling on the government to release, and it doesn't look good.



We now know there were actually some meetings back in 2016 between the ministry and the northern village of Pinehouse, but the pressure to comply with financial and freedom of information laws didn't really accelerate until we began asking about this matter last year.

We're glad to know there were meetings between the government and the council, a council that we know has close connections with the Sask Party. So what happened in those meetings in 2016? And will the government now agree to publicly release the Robertson report?

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

**Hon. Mr. Kaeding:** — Mr. Speaker, after careful review of Mr. Robertson's initial inspection report and on the recommendation of our Government Relations officials and Justice officials, we decided to widen the scope of the inspection into the village of Pinehouse. And what that entails is expanding Mr. Neil Robertson's authority to conduct an official inquiry to explore outstanding questions that were identified in the initial report.

We also appointed Mr. Hasan Ahktar, a public servant of five years and an expert on northern municipal matters, to provide assistance, support, and guidance to the local council. As well, we've begun a financial audit of the community.

Following this process, Mr. Robertson's report will be made to the public. While the inquiry is in progress, it would be very inappropriate to comment on the contents or recommendations of Mr. Robertson's initial inspection report.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Yes, it's an important step that the Sask Party government has elevated this inspection of Pinehouse into an inquiry and financial audit. But it took years of public pressure to get to this point. It took questions from the public, our side of the House, and finally from the Privacy Commissioner to get this government to actually do something.

Thirteen times, thirteen times the Information and Privacy Commissioner found that the village failed to follow the law. We know now, from the *StarPhoenix* coverage, that the inspection found serious violations and that not all of Robertson's recommendations have been implemented.

Saskatchewan people are very concerned about this, especially given the connections between the Sask Party and some council members. Will the minister be implementing all of the recommendations in this report?

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

**Hon. Mr. Kaeding:** — Mr. Speaker, we always work with municipalities that are out of compliance and help them get back into compliance. SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association], SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities], they also work with municipalities that struggle with compliance, and often those municipalities struggle with capacity issues. We've heard from the members from Athabasca

and Cumberland talking about this on a number of occasions where northern communities have capacity issues.

We received a report from the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner on November 19th. It was clear from that report and comments by the mayor that the village was not interested in compliance, so we took action. We appointed Mr. Robertson to do an initial inspection. As we've indicated before, that once the final report has been provided by Mr. Robertson, we will release both reports to the public.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Mr. Speaker, this is an investigation that was only launched after very serious allegations were made by an independent officer of the legislature. The independent Information and Privacy Commissioner wrote that this was a sustained, a sustained campaign of obstruction. And we learned only months ago, shortly before this inspection was announced, that the current Finance minister had accepted personal gifts from the village of Pinehouse, claiming that she thought her trip was actually paid for by one of the village councillors the inspector is now recommending be removed.

Given her close personal friendships and the slow pace of the investigation on her watch, will the Minister of Finance commit today to recuse herself from any cabinet discussions about Pinehouse, as she should have done in 2016?

**The Speaker:** — I've ruled in the past on that particular issue that that's a personal matter. I recognize the member for Regina Lakeview.

### Funding for Education

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, this budget's \$14 million bump still doesn't undo the government's devastating \$54 million hit to education in 2017. This again leaves school boards across the province doing the math and coming up short.

Southeast Cornerstone School Division, for example, is getting less than they were last year. Chief Financial Officer Shelley Toth said, "It certainly won't be enough to bring us to a balanced budget." The division is already putting off making infrastructure investments.

If school divisions are still left in a position where they can't meet the needs of their schools and their students, this government has again failed to deliver on their promise to the education sector. When will the education sector be treated like the investment it is, and when will divisions get enough to make ends meet?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, I've mentioned in this House on a number of occasions, this is the largest operating grant to school divisions in the province's history, Mr. Speaker. We're very proud of that: \$30 million investment last year, Mr. Speaker; \$26.2 million investment this year, Mr. Speaker.

Now the member opposite is a former trustee and she knows how the formula works, Mr. Speaker. It's heavily weighted to enrolment, Mr. Speaker, and those school divisions that have flat

enrolments, Mr. Speaker, certainly don't benefit, certainly don't benefit, Mr. Speaker, from increases in the operating grant as school divisions which have larger and growing enrolments, Mr. Speaker.

We know that there's challenges in the school divisions, Mr. Speaker, as I go out and talk to teachers, as I go out and talk to trustees. We're well aware of this, Mr. Speaker, and that's one of the reasons in this year's budget we have a \$500,000 fund, Mr. Speaker, to start talking about innovation. We talked about this last night in estimates in terms of how we can move forward with innovating how we deliver education, Mr. Speaker, perhaps how we can innovate in the delivery of funding, Mr. Speaker.

These are all conversations we have to have, because we want to make sure that the children in Saskatchewan get the best possible opportunities when it comes to their educational opportunities.

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

### Support for Survivors of Domestic Violence

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, for over two years this government has not listened to the calls to introduce paid leave for survivors of domestic violence. When survivors are faced with domestic violence, they're often unable to take the time off they need to meet with police, find a new place to stay, or meet with a lawyer because they can't afford to miss a shift.

Providing paid leave for survivors of domestic violence has already been done in many other provinces and it's well past time that this government heeded the concern from transition houses, women's organizations, and workers, and introduce paid leave.

I would hope the Sask Party would not let the voice of a few business groups prevent the passage of something that could save lives. And I say a few business groups because I know many businesses support this move.

When can we expect the minister to get on board with our bill and support paid leave for survivors of domestic violence?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I think it's something that all members can agree on, that a family member that's involved in violence or a bad situation at home needs every help and every support that they can. The average victim of domestic violence usually leaves seven times before they're able to make a final break, and I think as a government we want to do everything we can to support that.

We passed legislation last year to enable victims of domestic violence to break leases. We've checked with the Office of Residential Tenancies. We understand there are very few applications that have come forward, and I said, why is that if we're not advertising it publicly? They say that the landlords are just doing it voluntarily.

The same thing is probably happening in the workplace, but I think we want to check and make sure that it is in fact happening in the workplace where it's supposed to. And, Mr. Speaker,

we've undertaken some additional consultation and that's under way now, Mr. Speaker, and we'll carry on with that. Thank you.

[10:45]

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill No. 170 — *The Mineral Taxation Amendment Act, 2019*

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

**Hon. Ms. Eyre:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 170, *The Mineral Taxation Amendment Act, 2019* be now introduced and read for the first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the minister that the bill be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Principal Clerk:** — First reading of this bill.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be read a second time? I recognize the minister.

**Hon. Ms. Eyre:** — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Westview.

#### Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program

**Mr. Buckingham:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today for the 75-minute debate on immigration and the importance and success of a strong Saskatchewan immigrant nomination program. This is something that I am so proud to talk about and so proud of our government's commitment and investments to provide an effective and positive immigration plan for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, our Premier and our government have said on numerous occasions that there is no room for racism, hate, or discrimination in this province. Saskatchewan's strength is in our diversity. Saskatchewan is a province that welcomes immigrants and their valuable skills, culture, and investment. New Canadians are and have always been so important to this province. If we look back to when Saskatchewan became a province, we quickly realize that it was also the time when our province grew in vast numbers. Saskatchewan is growing faster now than it has in over 70 years.

Mr. Speaker, recently I had the opportunity to attend an indoor cricket tournament in Saskatoon, a tournament that saw teams

from across Saskatchewan compete in a sport that has not been readily available to watch. And this is just one example of how new cultures in our province expand our horizons and bring diversity across the spectrum in our province. Mr. Speaker, honestly, I'm not sure I could live without butter chicken, which is now more readily available now in Saskatchewan thanks to immigration.

Mr. Speaker, over the last few years I have been able to connect with so many different immigrant communities, and they are always so happy to call Saskatchewan home. It is nice to hear their perspective on moving to Saskatchewan. The simple things that we take for granted, Mr. Speaker, are not necessarily readily available in their home countries. We are blessed with safety and security, and that is not always the case in other countries around the world.

Since forming government, Mr. Speaker, in 2007, we have welcomed over 108,000 new Canadians to our province. Not just new Canadians, Mr. Speaker, but people that wanted to move to this province and make Saskatchewan their home. Mr. Speaker, I think probably for the same reasons as 100 years ago, they come now. They come for the safety and security, but also so often for the opportunity to start a business, build a career, or raise a family.

Our population has now grown to over 1,168,423 people, and that's according to the latest statistics. And it continues to grow each and every day, and in fact has grown for 51 consecutive quarters. In the future, I anticipate that new Canadians will continue to call Saskatchewan home and our government will be there to continue to welcome them.

Mr. Speaker, immigration is so important to this province that we will continue to work with the national government to increase the amount of people that they will let us nominate to the Saskatchewan immigrant nomination program, or SINP [Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program]. This number has grown very quickly due to the successful implementation of the program.

Mr. Speaker, I must say it is frustrating though when people tell the new Canadian groups that we have cut or are going to scale back or are cancelling the program. That could not be further from the truth, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, why would we cut back on SINP? Because of our immigration program, we are growing at a pace that we haven't seen since the '20s. And so I say to those new Canadian groups, if someone is telling you that we are cutting back, they are straight-up lying to you.

Let's look at the numbers, Mr. Speaker. Under this government on this side of the House, 108,000 new Canadians have come to Saskatchewan since 2007 and our population has grown by more than 160,000 people. Mr. Speaker, under the NDP, Saskatchewan's population dropped by 22,000 people from '97 to 2006. And from '97 to 2006, only 18,737 people arrived here in Saskatchewan as permanent residents. Mr. Speaker, in 2002 alone, under an NDP government, only 25 nominees were processed. That is a terrible number and one that only they would be able to answer to.

Let us contrast to today though. You know how many are processed now? Well because of our government's strong

position on immigration, we are seeing 500 per month — 500 people that are contributing to our economy and to the culture and bringing their skills and investment to Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, in the last decade, immigration landings grew by 480 per cent. And these people are contributing to our economy in a large way. The employment rate for new Canadians was 79 per cent in Saskatchewan compared to 71 per cent nationally.

You know we might be able to shed some light on why they had such a poor record on immigration, Mr. Speaker. And I think number one would be a weak economy. Another would be a lousy tax policy, raising taxes 21 times in 16 years. And yet maybe another would be closing 176 schools and 52 hospitals. You know, with a weak government, weak policies, and a weak economy due to their priorities, why would anyone move here?

Mr. Speaker, our province's motto is "from many peoples, strength," and it could not be more suited to our province. Mr. Speaker, my constituency that I represent in Saskatoon is called Saskatoon Westview, and it is very diverse in almost every demographic. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party government's openness to immigration has enriched its culture, expanded economic opportunity, and enhanced its influence in the world.

Saskatchewan is a land of immigrants, and that is not a cliché but a simple fact. Many of the Saskatchewanians today have either immigrated themselves or descended from immigrants. Mr. Speaker, immigrants strengthen our economy by filling key jobs in important industries. They start businesses. They file patents. They create new products and are keeping Saskatchewan's demographic much younger. Immigrants boost our economic growth and raise the general productivity of our workers by providing much-needed skills. Immigrant workers also allow important sectors of the economy to expand, attracting investment and creating employment opportunities.

A recent study by the International Monetary Fund concluded, "... immigration significantly increases GDP per capita in advanced economies." Mr. Speaker, immigrants fuel entrepreneurship. Immigrants are more likely to start a business, whether it's a corner shop or a high-tech start-up. Immigrants generate new products and bring their skills to help enhance our economy.

On the economy front, Mr. Speaker, there are some encouraging numbers also supporting immigration and job creation. In January 2019, wholesale trade increased by 8.4 per cent compared to January 2018, and is ranked second among the provinces in terms of percentage change. In January 2019, Saskatchewan's investment in building construction increased by 15.3 per cent compared to December 2018, and it is ranked first in terms of percentage change among the provinces. Mr. Speaker, in January 2019, Saskatchewan led Western Canada in manufacturing sales, seeing an increase of 6.7 per cent compared to January 2018.

Again I repeat, Mr. Speaker: these strong numbers also support new jobs for a strong SINP program. Mr. Speaker, in 2018 alone, 15,500 new residents arrived to communities around our province. These new immigrants come from over 190 countries and have settled in at least 320 communities in our province. The Saskatchewan immigrant nomination program has seen

incredible success and growth, and this has resulted in the program being allocated 6,000 nominations for 2019. The reason that the number allocated increases each year is due to the success of the program here in Saskatchewan. I think it is also important to point out that for every person that is approved under the SINP program, the multiplier for family members is 2.1 per cent, bringing a lot more Canadians here to Canada.

The SINP program is a very important program for our immigration, and it should be noted that 7 out of 10 immigrants to Saskatchewan come here via the SINP program. Mr. Speaker, I cannot state it enough that immigration plays a significant role in our economy and helps keep our economy on track by providing their skill sets and investment. Mr. Speaker, that is why we continue to invest in the Ministry of Immigration and Career Training.

In 2012, Mr. Speaker, the family reunification category was removed from the SINP program due to the national government's requiring that provinces better connect the skills of the workers with the needs of the economy by attaching nominations to jobs. Again I repeat, Mr. Speaker, the family reunification was changed as a result of changes required by the national government. And I think it's important to remember that the federal government required that we change that policy.

Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to support SINP program and keep building the economy to create more jobs for people hoping to immigrate to Saskatchewan. And the numbers are encouraging, as Saskatchewan has seen strong job growth for seven consecutive months. February of 2019 saw Saskatchewan having 9,000 more jobs than in February of 2018.

Mr. Speaker, a balanced budget presented on March 20th will further support a strong immigration policy in Saskatchewan. A balanced budget in Saskatchewan will create optimism and investment into our economy. Key investments across our province will create more opportunity for all of Saskatchewan's residents. Another indicator that Saskatchewan's economy is on track is The Conference Board of Canada's prediction that Saskatchewan's economy will grow by 2.2 per cent, ranking it fourth in Canada. In January 2019, Saskatchewan had the highest average weekly earnings increase compared to December 2018.

Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to build our strong economy that has created over 71,000 new jobs since forming government in 2007. Saskatchewan's strong economy will drive even more immigrants to Saskatchewan looking for an opportunity for a career, a business opportunity, or just a great place to raise a family.

I want to share a letter that I received from a new Canadian about his thoughts about moving to Saskatchewan from India:

Saskatchewan has surged in population and economic growth over the recent years. With a vibrant economy supported by potash, minerals, and gas, Saskatchewan has more to offer than a flat prairie land and cold winters. It offers a plethora of employment opportunities, favourable government policies, and a fast-paced economic growth.

Saskatchewan has one of the lowest unemployment rates in Canada. With many companies and businesses set up, the

employment rate will even go higher. Immigration policies are favourable for the newcomers. Provincial nominee program attracts migrants with work experience and skills to Saskatchewan. Also, graduate retention program refunds up to 20,000 of tuition fees if post-graduates live in the province for seven years or more after graduation.

As an immigrant, the most lovable thing I have found in Saskatchewan is that people and the weather are so warm and happy. I experienced the most happening climate here, as the extreme cold in winters, and the other side is the most pleasant summers. People here are friendly. They greet each other with a smile on their faces. Furthermore, Saskatchewan has people from over 180 nations of the world. The cultural diversity and heritage give us a chance to meet new people and make new friends.

That's from my good friend Sunny Kals.

[11:00]

Consider for a moment the difference in circumstances though that immigrants have seen, you know, since they arrived . . . or under the NDP. Under a Sask Party government, we have a growing population of 1,162,000 people. And under an NDP government in 2006, 992,000 people. We've opened schools. They've closed schools. We've built hospitals and they have closed hospitals. I think it's pretty obvious who . . . Our policy on immigration is good.

I want to make this motion, Mr. Speaker:

That this Assembly acknowledges the growth and success of the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program in welcoming newcomers to our province.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member for Saskatoon Westview:

That this Assembly acknowledges the growth and success of the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program in welcoming newcomers to our province.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I have to say this is a bit of an odd day for me because this is an opportunity to get up and speak to a motion that I fully agree with. I think this is a really good motion, and I want to congratulate the member from Saskatoon Northwest who brought it forward. I think it's very, very important to talk about the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program. And as opposition critic for Immigration, I had a very good session last night with the minister and we talked a lot about the SINP and its importance to the province of Saskatchewan.

One of the things that was mentioned last night, Mr. Speaker, is that the SINP is now celebrating its 20th year. It was started in 1999. And if you'll recall, Mr. Speaker, that was when the NDP government was in place and they were the ones who brought it

forward. So this morning we checked in with Pat Atkinson who was the minister responsible for SINP, and we asked her what she thought about the program itself because she was one of the people who really drove it forward in the 2000s. And fortunately that's a program that this government has continued to grow and work on.

Pat's actually in the Ukraine right now, Mr. Speaker. She's doing some development work over there, and she's been actually very busy for the last few years doing some development work in other countries. So this is what Pat had to say about her recollection of the SINP, and I'll quote her:

The SINP had been a very small program. We had to negotiate hard with the feds to increase the number of people we could nominate under the program and it took a lot of information and work. The program was part of our population growth strategy. We had a five-point program, including SaskJobs, where employers could post jobs without incurring an expense. I sent thousands of letters to employers and we had over 11,000 jobs needing workers. We then used these numbers to make our case for an increase in the nominee numbers from the federal government, as they control immigration.

Our strategy also included more funding for training the First Nations workers. We made the decision to direct funding to on-reserve adult basic education, even though on-reserve comes under the jurisdiction of the federal government. We also increased funding to SIIT. We also brought in the family class category under the SINP, which allowed families to apply to get their brother, sister, niece, nephews, aunts, uncles here. It was a huge part of the program.

Of course the Sask Party killed that part of the program at Jason Kenney's request. Our belief was that immigrants would stay in the province if they had extended family here. It worked, as immigrants from other parts of Canada moved to Saskatchewan for this purpose. So yes, the Sask Party inherited our strategy. It took a while to get the office staffed up and functioning. By the time the Sask Party was elected, we were going like gangbusters.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think the immigrant nominee program has been an incredible success. I know the minister spoke last night about the difficulties dealing with the federal government and how difficult it is to — especially the current Liberal government — to get them to make the progress that we need for immigrants coming in.

And last night we actually talked about a couple from Saskatoon, Mr. Deputy Speaker. One is a retinologist. He's a retinal ophthalmologist. Boy, that's a hard word. He's a retinal ophthalmologist and his wife is a pediatric ophthalmologist. They're very, very critical to the health care system here in Saskatchewan. In fact, she is one of two pediatric ophthalmologists.

They came here, Mr. Speaker. They were headhunted in the early 2000s, I think 2002, 2003 with the assurance and the promise that they could get their parents here. They're from India, and as you know, Mr. Speaker, intergenerational responsibilities are

incredibly important, as for all of us, but they certainly wanted to have their family here with them. And unfortunately with the changes to the federal program, they have been unable to get any success through either the lottery program or the current program, which is first-come, first-served.

The problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that they may have to move back to India, and the loss to our health care system will be significant. And so I asked the minister last night, and I hope he will be able to do this, and his officials, is to work hard with the current Liberal government. We know the Harper government was the one who pulled the family program in the first place, but this government hasn't done much to make it any better. So we're pleading with this minister to ensure that people like these doctors can stay in Saskatchewan with their family.

And, Mr. Speaker, it reminds me of my family's journey to Canada. My grandmother, her last name was Harrison, so there is some possibility I'm related to the member from Meadow Lake.

**An Hon. Member:** — That's going to fire him up.

**Ms. Sproule:** — Yes. I don't know if he knew that or not, and maybe we should check our family tree. But when the Harrisons came to Canada, they were living in northern England. And at the time the Nova Scotia land had just been vacated actually by my mother's ancestors who were the Acadians. So the British had kicked them out. But my father's mother's family came from northern England on the promise of land.

And I think that's the story of many people who come to Canada, is the promise of a better life. Now Luke Harrison was the one who arrived in 1771. He's my, I think, five-times great-grandfather. He didn't come alone, Mr. Speaker. He came with his parents. He came with his children. He came with his brothers, and they came as a family unit because family unit meant that was survival at that time.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's just as important right now . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . So thank the member from Indian Head-Milestone for reading the clock for me. That's really appreciated. Thankful that he's hanging on every word that I say. It's really, really impressive, Mr. Speaker.

So that's what happened to the Harrisons. And I don't know if the minister, current Minister for Immigration is part of that story, but the important thing is that we continue to seek out opportunities to get families reunited because that's so critically important. And I think that the two ophthalmologists that I'm talking about want to stay in Canada. They want to make their life here but they can't do it without their parents. It's just simply not on. So we need to be making a much bigger noise about this and a bigger pitch to the federal government to fix this problem. It's a serious problem.

Mr. Speaker, as critic I've had the opportunity to travel around the province a little bit and meet with some of the settlement agencies that are doing really good work here in the province of Saskatchewan. I was fortunate to spend some time in Prince Albert with the YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] there, which has an incredible immigrant settlement program that they're working on. People come from so many countries to

make their home here in Canada and in Saskatchewan. And the work they're doing to get those folks settled, finding a home, dealing with language issues — all of those things are so important.

I also have met with the Open Door Society in Saskatoon. They have 230 staff working in the Open Door Society in Saskatoon alone. They work in the schools. They work with Social Services. They work with all the government agencies and all the non-government organizations that are so dedicated to ensuring that these new Canadians get a good start here in Canada and make a home here and a life here, Mr. Speaker.

Some of the issues that we talked about last night in committee were around refugees, Mr. Speaker. And I got the sense from the committee discussion that the Ministry of Immigration in Saskatchewan is not really part of refugee settlement, which is interesting. As you know, government-assisted refugees are sustained for one year through the federal government funding, and it is a federal responsibility and they determine the numbers that we get. But the welcome for refugees in Saskatchewan, government-assisted and privately supported, seems to end when the federal funding ends, Mr. Speaker. And we were told last night about half of the government-assisted refugees in Saskatchewan have to rely on some sort of government programming after their year is up, and so they become the responsibility of our social safety net here in Saskatchewan.

And that is, I guess, part of the humanitarian response to the situation these refugees find themselves in, and I would look to this government for leadership in that area, for welcome for those refugees who are living the most horrible life situation that we can't even imagine. Many of them arrive with post-traumatic stress disorders and all sorts of mental health issues, Mr. Speaker, and of course many of them have never even heard the English language before.

So I think that's a focus that I'd like to see this government put more energy into, to be that humanitarian welcoming place that my father's family found in the 1770s. And of course when my grandpa moved out from Nova Scotia to Saskatchewan in the early 1900s, he brought his mom and dad with him. He brought his kids with him; like it was a family effort, Mr. Speaker. So we look to this government. We support the motion. It's an important motion. It's an important program. And we support the motion and we encourage the government to do more on the refugee side.

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

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will be again speaking in support of this motion. Now I'd like to correct a few misconceptions that were put forward by the opposition; however, I must thank her for coming up and supporting this motion.

This motion is in regards to the SINP program. It is not in regards to refugees. So I think that we should probably focus in on the good work that this program is doing. I'd like to just maybe quickly go over some of the very important statistics that we have in regards to the real success of the SINP program. Over 180,300 immigrants have arrived in Saskatchewan since 2007. In 2018, approximately 15,500 new residents arrived to communities

across this province. The employment rate for new immigrants is 79 per cent in Saskatchewan, compared to 71 per cent nationally. Newcomers from over 190 countries have settled in over 320 communities; now that means across our whole province.

The SINP program has seen incredible growth. In 2012 the family reunification category was removed from the SINP program due to the federal government requiring that provinces better connect the skills of the worker with the needs of the economy by attaching this to nomination for jobs.

Mr. Speaker, people from across the world have come to Saskatchewan. People from the Philippines, from India, from China, Pakistan, Ukraine, Nigeria, Bangladesh, United Kingdom, the United States, Vietnam, Syria, Korea, South Africa, Iraq, Iran — those are just some of the countries that people have left and immigrated to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the value that these new Canadians bring to our province, to our communities, it is incredible. I've had the opportunity to interact with so many of our new Canadians and these immigrants. And when they come here, they come here with our Saskatchewan motto in mind: "from many peoples, strength." And it would not ring true without the welcoming environment provided by people who go out of their way to help make Saskatchewan's newcomers their home. In the last 10 years the province's growth has greatly been due to immigration.

[11:15]

Now, Mr. Speaker, I can proudly stand in the House today. My dad, Emil Masurat, was an immigrant. He was an immigrant from Lithuania, so I'm a proud first generation who had the opportunity to live in this wonderful province but also to share in the opportunity with my neighbours and my family of the support that new immigrants receive. When my dad came here he spoke four languages but not one of them was English. But yet he was welcomed and he chose to make Saskatchewan his home. So one of the things . . . My dad was from Germanic background and his line to us as kids was "arbeiten, arbeiten, arbeiten," which means work, work, work.

And, you know, when I talk to our new immigrants that come here under the SINP program, they may not speak German, but guess what? They all have that philosophy. They come here; they come here for a reason. They've left a country that they fully believe, that they probably love and, you know, feel bad about leaving what they would consider their homeland. But coming here, they come here for a reason. They come here because they know that they will have an opportunity to raise a family. They have an opportunity for education, for health care, for a better life for their families, and that's why they choose Canada, but specifically a lot of them choose Saskatchewan because of the welcoming environment.

I know my dad, when he immigrated here, like I said he didn't have family. He immigrated here on his own when he was 16 years old. And he came, he met people that were welcoming and helped him out. But as my dad worked, he also brought different family members who also gained gainful employment. And so he worked very hard to create a very positive life for all of us.

And that's what I find when I have an opportunity to talk to our new Canadians. As I've been out door knocking in my constituency of Regina Rochdale, I have the opportunity to sit down and have a cup of tea or have a cup of coffee with a lot of our new Canadians, and they really appreciate the work that our government has undertaken. They talk about how when they first came, or in 2007 when we first formed government, the amount of concerns and complaints that came into my constituency office was a lot higher than as it is today, and a lot of it had to do with the growing pains of the SINP program. But we've worked through a lot of the problems and issues that the program had, and today it processes seamlessly people through this program.

So we should be very proud of the work that our government has undertaken to ensure that the new Canadians that come here, they come here for a reason: to create a life for themselves and their families. But they also come here to add to our economy, and so they are a positive influence. Never should it be said that our government is not welcoming or that we're racist, but in fact we have implemented a program that welcomes people from around the world with open arms. They have the ability to come here, to share their talents, to create a life for themselves and their families, to ensure that they add to the province of Saskatchewan. And so this is the importance of having well-thought-out, well-planned government programs such as the SINP program which ensures that people that are coming here have the opportunity to create a life and to add to the economy of our province.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I'm so pleased that my colleague has brought forward this motion, that we have the opportunity to discuss this in such a meaningful way, and that we put aside our differences, that we put aside claims of racism or hate. Mr. Speaker, there is no room in this House, there is no room in this province for hate or hate speech to be tolerated.

And each and every one of us can be proud and can stand up and proudly say, welcome. You as a new Canadian are welcome to our province. You have the opportunity to create a life here, to add to our communities, to our economy, and to ensure that your life here is going to be better.

So thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for allowing me the opportunity to participate in this very worthwhile motion because, Mr. Speaker, this is something that needed to be discussed. We had some awful accusations that were thrown across the floor in the House this week. It absolutely broke my heart to think that someone here would accuse members on this side of the House of being racist. It's unacceptable.

And I do hope that this motion, in fact, is an opportunity for all of us to share, to be able to put a real positive spin on our new Canadians and how Saskatchewan people welcome them into their homes, into our communities, and into our province. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was just going to say let's vote it right now. Let's vote it right now, but . . . Not to dangle these things out and then pull them back. But I should probably give my speech first, Mr. Speaker.

And then we'll see if we can proceed to a vote on this.

But certainly, Mr. Speaker, I find myself in the rare position of, you know, reading the member's motion:

That this Assembly acknowledges the growth and success of the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program in welcoming newcomers to our province.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the motion. I think it's a finely stated motion. But as with everything with the Sask Party, you get into the fine print or you get into the speeches, Mr. Speaker, and then it sort of moves off the page and into something else, Mr. Speaker.

And you know, there's always two sort of dominant themes with Sask Party initiatives. Like one is where, you know, why aren't you congratulating us enough? You know, why aren't you happier for us? Why do you demand, you know, we do better? Isn't what we're doing enough, Mr. Speaker? And then I wonder, like were some of those folks weaned on a pickle, you know, coming up, Mr. Speaker? What happened? Why are they so sour and why are they so seemingly love starved, Mr. Speaker? I don't know what it is.

Then the other sort of theme of course, Mr. Speaker, is that they've got to blame the NDP. You know, because of course it's not enough to put forward their own sort of plans and say, you know, isn't this the best in the world or the greatest in the universe or those kinds of things, Mr. Speaker. It's like, well we've got to blame the NDP into the bargain. You know, it's pathological, Mr. Speaker. It's always the way it goes.

So you get a nice motion like this here today where it's lined up with the very motto of our province, "from many peoples, strength." You know, we're all immigrants here in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, one stripe or another. But you know, that's not enough. You've got to get into the speeches and you've got to start slanging the NDP and you've got to start saying, you know, aren't we the greatest? Aren't we the, you know, the special beings in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker? And then, you know, you kind of get away from the warm feeling that you get when you read the motion.

So, Mr. Speaker, I guess it will be worth giving a speech because of course, you know, I've been around. I've seen a thing or two, Mr. Speaker. And in terms of this government wanting to throw themselves . . . You know, in the speeches — not in the motion but it's certainly in the speeches; that's shining right through, Mr. Speaker — the sort of never-ending drive to have the self-congratulation festivities break out, Mr. Speaker. That's where it gets a little much, a little much.

But, Mr. Speaker, so as I've said, I'm certainly from immigrant stock. The McCalls come in the late 1870s. And as for my colleague from Nutana talking about the family class — or I think the member from Westview had briefly touched on that, Mr. Speaker — they came as . . . My great-great-grandfather was a stonemason and he came with five boys and, together with the Hutsons, they built a lot of stone houses out through the Moffat district. And my colleague, the member from Moosomin, is nodding knowingly because he's well familiar with those houses.

And it was a real pleasure earlier this year, Mr. Speaker, to see Kay Parley speak and talk about the history of the stone houses out in the district of Moffat. And the great pride I had to go with my 84-year-old father and for him to, you know, go through various of the things, the McCall homestead where he was born in 1934, Mr. Speaker, to be able to point the window of the room on the second floor of the McCall homestead which, you know, was Barry and Diane McCall's stomping grounds out in the RM [rural municipality] of Montmartre, to point out the window where he was born, where he was brought into this world by a midwife, Mr. Speaker.

And in terms of the other houses that the McCalls and the Hutsons and Taylors were able to . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And now I've got my friend, the colleague from Cannington, talking about the cabbage patch. I'm not sure what he's trying to get at there, but I can only hope it has to do with cabbage rolls, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, the great pride that we have as a family in terms of the way that the McCalls come from Scotland and then, you know, with the Wilsons and the way that they came for a better life and built a better life here in this province for all of us, and the way that we stand on their shoulders to this day, Mr. Speaker.

And in representing the constituency that I represent, I see that pride and that drive for a better life played out in so many different ways, be it, you know, immigrants, be it refugee communities. It's a wonderful thing, Mr. Speaker. As I've said many times in this House, I have the privilege to represent a constituency that is tremendously diverse, you know, in terms of the waves of immigration that have come through the province historically, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I represent the heritage community which once upon a time was known as Germantown, was known as the Garlic Flats, Mr. Speaker, because of course that's where many people came from the former Austro-Hungarian Empire to settle. And the Scottish immigrants, or the people that come in off the farm to make a better life. Or indigenous people that came into a community like my home community, North Central, Mr. Speaker, because that's where housing was affordable.

Or I think about . . . I had the great privilege of talking about the Tran family just the other day in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and the way that they came out with nothing but the clothes on their back and the desire for a better life, and the way that the Tran family and so many others throughout the Vietnamese community came to not just Saskatchewan, but to the great constituency of Regina Elphinstone-Centre and made a better life for themselves.

And again, Mr. Speaker, I know that there have been a lot of things change. There's been some jurisdictional wrangling that's gone on over the past couple of decades, where powers that were previously the preserve of the federal government have been devolved to the provincial government. And the way that I know that the province of Manitoba . . . Having had the privilege of being part of that government, we looked at what was happening in Manitoba and thought, you know, we'd better pick up our socks here, Mr. Speaker. And that was certainly something that was urged on by members of both sides. And I know that you'll remember that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because you were here for those debates as well.

But certainly, Mr. Speaker, there are ways that this program has ramped up over time. There are ways that it came into being. And the continual negotiation that goes back and forth with the federal government, Mr. Speaker, I know my friend the member from Meadow Lake was talking about that with my colleague and friend from Nutana last night in committee, the way that that jurisdictional wrangling continues with the federal government. And, Mr. Speaker, if they want to blame us for the actions of the federal government of the day, I would submit that again that has more to do with their desire to, you know, throw themselves a party every time something good happens in this province and then blame somebody else, you know, usually the NDP, when something challenging happens, Mr. Speaker.

[11:30]

So in terms of what happens with the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program, it's been a huge success. There have been some bumps, some significant bumps along that road, Mr. Speaker.

Again I think about what happened with the McCall family where, you know, great-great-Grandpa McCall come out with his family, and the way that they made a life together, Mr. Speaker. And the way that the change that was brought in around the family class, Mr. Speaker, in that program, the way that that dashed a lot of dreams and a lot of hopes for making a life in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and the way that that work has got to continue because that was a smart approach to immigration policy, Mr. Speaker, in terms of it's not just individuals settling. It's families settling.

You've got to have that thriving economy, Mr. Speaker. You've got to have those jobs to draw people in, but if you can't make a life with your family, you're going to see those people leave the province. You're going to see those people leave the province and not make a life here that goes for generations, like we've seen in so many impressive ways throughout this province.

So, Mr. Speaker, again I'm glad to participate in this debate. I'm glad to, you know, reflect favourably upon the motion. I've got some differences with some of the speeches, some of the speechifying that's been done so far. But I know others are to come and I look forward to those remarks. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

**Mr. Bonk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to speak in support of the motion put forward by my colleague from Saskatoon Westview. And before I begin, I'd like to just comment briefly on the member from Regina Elphinstone's speech. He actually referenced a lot of the people that I know that are in my constituency, and I spent my childhood and still see those stone houses quite often in my area

And I just want a couple of points of clarification from him, later maybe. I wasn't sure if he really meant it that his father was born in a window, but we'll find out after. And I always thought McCall was a Ukrainian name, but he'll have to correct me on that later.

But I'll start with some introductory remarks. Our province is a



place of diversity. Saskatchewan's motto, "from many peoples, strength," would not ring true without the welcoming environment provided by people who go out of their way to help make Saskatchewan someone's new home. In the last ten years, the province's population growth has largely been due to immigration, with 65 per cent of growth the result of net international migration. Immigration has played an important role in our growth. More than 108,300 people immigrated to Saskatchewan since 2007. These newcomers have come from over 190 countries and have settled in more than 320 communities in all corners of our province.

One important way we've been able to attract newcomers to this province has been through the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program, commonly known as SINP. This program remains the largest source of immigration to the province, responsible for about 7 out of 10 newcomers. Since its creation, the province has helped to address labour market needs caused by a growing economy.

Newcomers have a lot to offer, bringing diverse cultures, knowledge, and skills that help grow our economy. We recognize that the retention of immigrants is critical for the long-term growth of Saskatchewan and the communities in which they settle. By working together, we are able to advocate our shared priorities for the successful settlement and retention of newcomers. Our collective efforts to help immigrants settle and integrate in the province have contributed to some of the strongest outcomes for newcomers in Canada. Thanks to all these efforts, Saskatchewan's retention rate for provincial nominees is over 80 per cent.

I am proud to see that immigrants are coming to Saskatchewan, staying in Saskatchewan, and working in Saskatchewan. We all have a role to play in our growing province, and by working together we can achieve improved quality of life for all people in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I think that's a very good synopsis of how I feel about this motion today.

I think it's something that, like the member just mentioned in the previous speech, that we can all support. We think that Saskatchewan is a province that's been built on immigrants. And I know in my own experience, myself personally, I've been an immigrant twice in two different countries. I've had to . . . For my work, I've lived in two different places and was an immigrant there and I can relate a little bit, slightly, to the challenges and excitement that a lot of the new immigrants who are coming into Saskatchewan face.

I can think also of my own family where I'm a first generation Canadian on my mother's side, and on my father's side I think back to my great-grandmother, Grandmother Rusnik. She was from Poland and she followed her husband from Poland to Saskatchewan and he came a year ahead of her. And while he was here, there was an accident and he passed away. And she didn't know this at the time, so she was on her way with three little children to Canada. When she got here she found out her husband had passed away. She spent the first winter in Canada in a hole dug in the ground with a wagon flipped over it covered by dirt. The strength and determination of these immigrants that we had in Saskatchewan, it's just amazing to me. And I think that's today why we have such strong, hardy people in Saskatchewan.

I think back to my own childhood growing up in Saskatchewan, in rural Saskatchewan. We didn't have very many visible minorities, I'll say, in my community. We had David Lee, and he was the son of the owner of the Chinese cafe in Glenavon, and he came from Hong Kong actually. And when I think back now, I look at Wolseley. We have an Indian restaurant, we have a Chinese restaurant, we have a Lebanese restaurant, a French restaurant, and we at one time had Le Parisien, which was run by a Swiss man who came here from Switzerland, which was the third-best restaurant in Canada at that time. And this is just due to the immigrants that come here that bring their culture, that bring their way of life, that add so much to this province.

I think of my own daughter. My daughter is an immigrant. My daughter was born in Austria and she came here when she was quite young, so she's an immigrant brand new to Saskatchewan. So she's adding to our numbers and I hope everyone will welcome her here as part of our society.

But I look at my daughter's school, my daughter's school. There's students from India, from Philippines, from Nigeria. Actually she has a teacher from Nigeria. There's students from Congo, Ukraine, South Africa, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Mexico. And this is just in the Wolseley school.

I look at in the town of Moosomin. They say that there's somewhere around 800 people from the Philippines who live and work around Moosomin. And Moosomin's a town of about 3,700 people, so it shows you that they're filling a very important need. Without these people we just couldn't fill the amount of jobs that are available in that area, especially in the service industries.

I think back also, when I was quite young . . . Actually, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was in your constituency. I was at the Motherwell historic homestead and they were doing some work on the beautiful old barn there. They were having the foundation . . . The stone foundation was not in the best shape and they wanted to repair it, but it's a listed heritage building. And they had Croatian stonemasons come over because they were trained specially to find out exactly what was in the original mortar that was used to put that stone foundation together. They took apart every stone piece by piece and labelled them and put it back together just exactly like it was when it was built originally.

And this is the kind of skills and trades that we need in Saskatchewan, that maybe we're lacking, that immigrants and newcomers can fill for us. And I think it's very important that we do all we can to make sure that we get the right people who can match up to the right jobs at the right time to fill the labour market needs that we have in this province.

One thing I'd like to mention to you, Mr. Speaker, is . . . And I was briefly the minister of Immigration, or minister responsible for Immigration, so I spent a lot of time working with the integrity of this program, and it's something I think is very important. And I'll just go through some items on that.

The immigration agenda is a government-wide commitment. All Saskatchewan benefits from the contribution of immigrant newcomers to our workplaces, schools, and communities. This is why all of government plays a role in the efforts to attract, settle, and retain newcomers to our province. Safe, welcoming communities and access to high quality education, health care,

and factors that immigrants and Canadians consider when they are deciding where to establish their careers and build their futures.

This year's budget reflects a balanced commitment to these government-wide priorities. We know that people who want to immigrate can be vulnerable to mistreatment and that there are individuals who misrepresent themselves when they apply to immigrate.

The Government of Saskatchewan takes the integrity of our immigration system very seriously. Saskatchewan was one of the very first provinces in Canada to create a program integrity unit and introduced legislation to investigate and protect against immigration fraud and misrepresentation. *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act* was proclaimed in 2013 to protect foreign nationals from mistreatment and exploitation by recruiters, immigration consultants, and employers while being recruited. Under this legislation, recruiters must be licensed with the province, and employers must acquire a certificate of registration in order to recruit foreign workers through any federal and provincial immigration plan.

Mr. Speaker, I think this speaks to the seriousness of which we take the integrity of this program because we do think this is one of the best programs in all of Canada and the results show for themselves. And I think that it's incumbent on us in this Chamber to do all we can to grow this province, to help it to prosper, and help everyone that lives in this province to succeed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it is my pleasure today to rise and enter into this discussion. I'm loath to call it a debate. I think at this point, Mr. Speaker, I think we have a lot of agreement on both sides of the Assembly with regard to the motion that was moved by the member from Saskatoon Westview:

That this Assembly acknowledge the growth and success of the Saskatchewan nominee program in welcoming newcomers to this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think you've heard both speakers on this side, previous to my comments, expressed a great deal of agreement or full agreement with that motion, and I am not going to depart from that pattern that they have set.

In fact looking at our province over the last number of years going back to the late '90s, we've seen nothing but an increase of immigration to our province and diversity in our province. I had opportunity recently to be at an assembly at The Crescents School in Regina Lakeview and the diversity there that has changed over just the last number of years is remarkable and that's certainly something that we see in schools right across this province.

As has been discussed by members on both sides, we are largely a province of immigrants. Aside from those who count themselves, can trace their ancestry or belong to the First Peoples of this province, we all are those who have come from away. And

I think everyone up to this point has given a little bit of their backstory and their immigration story, so I guess I will join in with that. My mother's father came by himself as a young person from Germany. My father's mother's side of the family came up to Ontario as United Empire Loyalists many years ago. And the Beck family came up from South Dakota for land to homestead where our farm, the home quarter, still is, just west of Lang.

So I have that in common with those who have spoken before. We all come or many of us come . . . can trace our ancestry back to immigration. We all have those stories. And newcomers do enrich our province just as then, as now. This is the story of our province and is the subject of our motto, as has been alluded to, "from many peoples, strength."

[11:45]

So I suspect that there is a reason that we're seeing this motion come forward today. There has been a lot of talk this week about concerns about welcoming anti-immigrant sentiments that have happened in the province. The member from Regina Rosemont and I had an opportunity a couple of weeks ago to meet with the representatives from the national Islamic association and at that time talked about the number of hate crimes in Canada, the number of hate groups, the identifiable hate groups in the country having spiked, having had a marked increase over the last number of years, I believe from 100 up to 300 identifiable groups.

So I do think it is very important that we send a very clear message from this Assembly today about where we stand with regard to hate, that we are a province that welcomes newcomers be they through the SINP program or be they as refugees, and that this is a place where all people can come to feel welcome, to feel safe, to enrol their children in schools, and find the services that they need here, because it is true that there is great benefit when we welcome newcomers to this province.

And this government, you know, talks a lot about the numbers of people who have come into the province, and that certainly . . . You know, that is true. One of the things that . . . I remember the first time I heard about the SINP, and I was working as a social worker at the hospital, working with a family. And the father mentioned to me, asked me if I'd ever heard of the program, and I had to agree that I hadn't. And he noted, well you just wait, because of this family class program in the province you are going to see so many newcomers come to the province. And certainly that was the case fairly shortly after that.

What we also found was we were a little bit slow to keep up with that pace of immigration and the changing needs, for example translation services within the hospital. It became readily apparent that we were not in a position, that the health region was not in a position to deal with the demand of this growth. We saw a huge spike in the numbers of babies being born on the mother-baby unit and the NICU [neonatal intensive care unit]. And again found ourselves in a position of not being prepared for that type of growth.

So I guess all of that to say, and I'm going to go into some more examples, is it is great and important that we invite and welcome people to our province. It is also important that we fund the growth, that we ensure that services are available, that we have a

plan for housing, that we have a plan for expansion of schools, and services within hospitals. My experience is that that has not been the case, that the increase in services has not met the demands associated with the level of growth.

Another place where I found that this was the case was at the shelter. Of course when women come into shelter, sometimes they needed translation services and it was very, very difficult to access those services. So if you imagine a vulnerable population already, women who are fleeing abuse, and then you imagine having a translation need on top of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't think it takes much imagination to understand how important that is in order for those women to be safe and to be heard. And that wasn't always readily available.

And again I think that was perhaps having a focus on one goal but not having a plan for how to deal with some of the needs that would also be associated with that growth. And that, if I have to have a point of departure with the members opposite, it is there. It is around the actual funding for growth. But of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, no where is this more apparent than within our school system.

The growth of students in our province . . . Back in 2016, for every 100 . . . the growth of every 100 children in the province, it was estimated that 44 of those children were children from newcomer families. We have simply not seen the pace of funding for education, keep pace with the needs, just in straight across terms.

But it becomes even more concerning when you look at numbers. For example, the number of EAL [English as an Additional Language] teachers in the province has actually dropped over the last number of years. Back in 2014-15 that number was, in terms of FTEs [full-time equivalent], 159; this last year, 147.3.

So it's great for the growth. We're thankful. We welcome all newcomers, but let's make sure that we are providing proper funding and proper supports for those who come and enjoy this place with us. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The time for debate has expired. Questions. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The UN [United Nations] compact on global migration is basically a benign and positive document about treating newcomers with dignity. So I would like to ask the member from Regina Rochdale whether she believes that treating newcomers with dignity is a positive thing to do.

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

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to focus in on what the debate is to be about. It is about the positive impact about the SINP program and how here in Saskatchewan, we are making a big difference. We are making a difference in that we have implemented a program that allows people with a certain skill set to be able to come, immigrate here, create a life for themselves, and add to our economy. So, Mr. Speaker, that is the focus of our debate, and I really think it's important that we really hone in on what's important to people in

Saskatchewan. It's programs that are created and implemented here, right here in this province of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Fiaz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are very proud and humbled that so many immigrants have chosen to call Saskatchewan home over the past 11 years. We currently have an average of 500 applicants of permanent residents being processed each month. However, Mr. Speaker, back in 2002 only 25 nominees were processed.

Mr. Speaker, my question is from the member Regina Lakeview, who can see many immigrant students in the Sheldon Collegiate. In the member's opinion, what went wrong in their immigration strategy?

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question and I thank the NDP, our predecessors, for having the foresight to start the provincial nominee program and ensure that it got . . . which was by the time that they were voted out, or changed places in this Assembly, was what the . . . the program was well under way and successful.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much again, Mr. Speaker. To the member from Rochdale, it shouldn't be very hard to say that the principles with the UN compact on immigration are acceptable. Why is that so hard for these people, Mr. Speaker? Why can't she, you know, take the opportunity to say that those are acceptable and supportable? And while she's at it, Mr. Speaker, will she take the opportunity to denounce the yellow vests?

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

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And thank the colleague across for asking me another question in that, as I said earlier, I think we need to focus on what's really important to people here in Saskatchewan. What really matters to people in Saskatchewan is encouraging our economy. We have members opposite who have now said they are refusing to attend a rally today which is here, right here in this capital city. We have people from across this province that are coming together to rally in support of our economy, to rally in support of pipelines, and yet the members opposite refuse to participate and support people here, right here in our province of Saskatchewan.

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

**Hon. Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Over the past two weeks we've heard some very hateful and some very harmful words come from the Leader of the Opposition. And we knew that he wanted to do politics differently, but no one expected him to dip so low.

We are standing up for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and many will be attending today the rally alongside the hard-working men and women in our oil, manufacturing, transport, and agriculture sectors here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, my question is the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre. Does the member agree with the leader of the NDP on calling attendees of the rallies anti-Semitic and anti-Islamic? Thank you.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the member opposite . . . I've got in front of me the global compact for migration. It's, you know, it's an intergovernmentally negotiated, agreed outcome, 13 July of 2018. It's a very straightforward, benign set of principles, but again it's become this sort of far-right *cause célèbre* in terms of, you know, these people wanting to fight globalists or the like, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, can the member perhaps tell me, why is it so hard for these individuals to say that yes, the global compact for migration is acceptable, and why can't they denounce the yellow jackets, Mr. Speaker? Why is that so hard?

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My question is simple and straightforward. Does the member from Moosomin believe that the UN migration compact is an attack on Canadian sovereignty?

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

**Mr. Bonk:** — I think that's a question I can't answer because I haven't read the compact. I don't think I can give an informed opinion on it. I can say though that this side of the House, no one here stands for any form of bigotry, of racism, of sexism. We completely denounce that. And I think we're a side, on this side of the House, that we believe in tolerance. And I think I can just look no further to, I hope, my own example where I'm very, I think, quite good friends with many of the members opposite, which shows a huge amount of tolerance.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

**Mr. Francis:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today's rally will focus on the needs of the people of Saskatchewan. It will show the Trudeau government that our oil, manufacturing, transportation, and ag sectors are strong, united, and resilient, and that we will not allow this job-killing carbon tax to go forward without a fight.

Instead of joining our lead and standing up for Saskatchewan, their leader opposite has done nothing but attempt to link these hard-working people together as anti-Semites and anti-Islamics. My question is for the member from Saskatoon Nutana. Does the member agree with her leader?

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for his question. It's really passing strange, Mr. Speaker, that these folks opposite are so reluctant to acknowledge that treating newcomers with dignity is . . . not a good thing. Mr. Speaker, they have lots of words and they talk a lot. They don't bother reading the compact, so they don't even really, some of them don't even have an opinion on it.

But, Mr. Speaker, if we can't stand up for the principle of treating newcomers with dignity by standing up for that compact — all of the immigrants that come to this province under the SINP are newcomers — if these folks across the way can't say it's a good thing to treat them with dignity, I'm ashamed of who they are.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Before I recognize the next member asking a question, I would remind members that the business, the item before the Assembly, is the motion moved by the member from Saskatoon Westview. And I will read it for the benefit of the members, and I would ask that questions pertain to the motion:

That this Assembly acknowledges the growth and success of the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program in welcoming newcomers to our province.

And I would ask members to have their questions pertaining to this motion. I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone.

[12:00]

**Mr. McCall:** — Thanks. Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I've had the opportunity to forward a copy of the global compact on migration to the member from Moosomin. It's been a hot topic out there in right wing circles for reasons we're not quite sure, Mr. Speaker. But could he, you know, with . . . I know he's a quick study, Mr. Speaker. I know he's a quick read. Can he tell us if he agrees with the global compact on migration? Yes or no?

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

**Mr. Bonk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I mentioned in my previous answer, I really can't give a very informed opinion or answer on something I haven't read.

So to that, Mr. Speaker, I was just wondering how many members on the opposite side have read this compact on migration as well. Because if this is something that you're going to be asking members on this side, I hope that the members on that side are very well informed as well.

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

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

#### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

**Motion No. 2 — Inquiry Into the GTH Land Acquisition**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Ms. Sproule.]

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Members, it is my duty pursuant to rule no. 27 to advise the Assembly that this item of business has been previously adjourned three times and cannot be further adjourned. At conclusion of the debate or at the normal time of adjournment, whichever is reached first, every question necessary to dispose of this motion shall be put.

I recognize the member from Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I stand in my place today to lend support to the call for an inquiry into the GTH scandal and scam, Mr. Speaker, I do so on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, the many taxpayers who have paid a lot of money to continue putting money into the GTH sinkhole. And over the years, Mr. Speaker, more and more of the trouble around the GTH will come to light.

So what are we doing today, Mr. Speaker, as a result of this motion? We're having a vote today in the Assembly. And the intent of the opposition is to see exactly where the current government stands as it pertains to our call for a full inquiry into what happened with the Global Transportation Hub in relation to the Regina bypass.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have steadfastly asked in this Assembly on a continual basis, every single member of the opposition has asked the questions, will you allow a full, bright light to be shone onto the GTH matters so the people of Saskatchewan finally realize what happened on the Global Transportation Hub and then how the Sask Party has bungled the Regina bypass that of course is part of the GTH matter? Now, Mr. Speaker, they have steadfastly refused.

And we know that Sask Party government insiders made millions off the taxpayers, flipping land and, again as I pointed out, the taxpayers are paying that bill. So, Mr. Speaker, instead of the call for the official opposition to have a full-scale inquiry into this matter, the Sask Party continues hiding behind excuses. And, Mr. Speaker, they have done this on numerous occasions.

As I sit here and listen to them talk about the SNC-Lavalin affair in Ottawa, we understand that there had been occasions when the federal Liberal government have blocked key witnesses from testifying on the SNC-Lavalin. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, the total times that they have blocked those witnesses are five times, Mr. Speaker, if not six in total.

Well, Mr. Speaker, how many times did the Sask Party use their majority to block key witnesses from coming to the committee to answer some very specific questions on their role to the GTH? Eleven times, Mr. Speaker, eleven times that the Sask Party have denied key witnesses to be called forward to the committee to ask some very specific questions around the GTH. Eleven times they blocked those witnesses, and yet today they stand in the Assembly and they talk about the SNC-Lavalin affair. And, Mr. Speaker, very hollow words, very hollow words.

So as we see new details coming forward on the GTH land deal,

these details are ugly, Mr. Speaker. There's stories that are continuing to emerge and people want to know what happened at the GTH. Now, Mr. Speaker, today when I listened to the critic for the GTH matter, she has indicated time and time again that the GTH itself is \$40 million in debt, \$40 million in debt. And over the last five and a half years, Mr. Speaker, they have sold a grand total of 22 acres. Twenty-two acres and they continue losing money. There's 700 acres left, Mr. Speaker, that no one has any interest in buying.

So the fundamental question we ask is, how was this deal structured? How was this deal structured, Mr. Speaker? Who was involved? Who paid what? Who knew what, when, where, and how? And a full-scale inquiry is the only way we're going to get to the bottom of the answers around the GTH, Mr. Speaker. That's the only way. That's the only way.

And the fundamental question we ask today is, why was Bill Boyd fired from this caucus? Why was he unceremoniously tossed out of the Sask Party caucus, Mr. Speaker? Because at one time he was referred to as the DNA of the Sask Party caucus, Mr. Speaker, and he was unceremoniously dumped. Why is that, Mr. Speaker? We also know that the past minister of Justice intervened in a cabinet decision-making process where he had to intervene from the Justice perspective, saying, you can't sell land to a numbered company; that's not allowed. We needed to know who that numbered company was, but the cabinet and the Sask Party were going to do it anyway and the Minister of Justice had to intervene to tell them you can't do it that way.

So, Mr. Speaker, as they talked — and I know a couple of the Sask Party candidates are not going to endorse, hoping to become a next Conservative MP [Member of Parliament], Mr. Speaker — if you're going to talk about the SNC-Lavalin affair, you better talk about the GTH affair as well. On every doorstep you talk about SNC, you talk about the GTH as well. And despite what they assure to us in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, despite what they assure to us in the Assembly that the police report came back inconclusive and that there's no charges laid, that report exonerated no one, Mr. Speaker — absolutely no one, Mr. Speaker.

So the only way the people of Saskatchewan can see what happened at the GTH level, Mr. Speaker, on the GTH affair, Mr. Speaker, is a full-scale inquiry. Let the committee do its work. Let us go in there and see exactly what happened, Mr. Speaker, because every single member of the Sask Party that ran to be their leader talked about that and committed to that. And the moment they got into the Premier's office, Mr. Speaker, all of a sudden they're quiet.

So our argument, Mr. Speaker, from the opposition perspective is this: we want to know what happened at the GTH. We want a full, bright light on how this whole project transpired, Mr. Speaker. Who made what money, Mr. Speaker, and how was it handled? And that's the bottom line. So before the Sask Party starts yapping about the SNC-Lavalin affair in Ottawa, they've got their own huge mess to clean up here in Saskatchewan.

So today, as we take a vote on the request and the call for an inquiry into this matter, I'm going to tell the Sask Party members one simple message: do you have the courage of your convictions, as you've rattled on about the SNC-Lavalin affair,

do you have the courage of your convictions to stand up and vote for this call for an inquiry? And if you do not vote in support of this motion to shine a light on how this all transpired, Mr. Speaker, if you do not have the courage of your conviction, Mr. Speaker, then I would suggest that's hypocritical of them.

So, Mr. Speaker, the important point is today: either you stand and vote for the motion or you continue being defensive and block it, any effort to find out what happened at the GTH, Mr. Speaker. The truth will set you free. The truth will set you free, Mr. Speaker. So let us shine a light on that to see exactly what happened. And that's why today, Mr. Speaker, we made this motion. And for those people that are watching the Assembly today, you're going to be watching the Assembly today and you're going to see how the Sask Party members vote. And when they vote to not shine a bright light on this project, to me, Mr. Speaker, that constitutes guilt.

And I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that nowhere in Saskatchewan are people going to believe the Sask Party members anymore if they do not have a full-scale judicial and thorough inquiry onto the matters and history of the GTH. That is the only way they can leave a legacy of trust. And, Mr. Speaker, today is evidence, if they're willing to do that.

We're going to tell the people of Saskatchewan this is the opportunity for the Sask Party to stand on their feet, do the right thing, vote for the inquiry, and let's get that bright light needed on what happened on the history behind the GTH.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The item before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member from Saskatoon Nutana:

That this Assembly calls upon the Sask Party government to immediately launch a judicial inquiry into the land deals associated with the assemblage of land at the Global Transportation Hub.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — All those in favour say aye.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Aye.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — All those opposed say no.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I believe the nos have it. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:11 until 12:13.]

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member from Saskatoon Nutana:

That this Assembly calls upon the Sask Party government to immediately launch a judicial inquiry into the land deals associated with the assemblage of land for the Global Transportation Hub.

All those members in favour of the motion, please rise.

[Yeas — 10]

Meili	Wotherspoon	Beck
Sproule	Forbes	Belanger
Sarauer	McCall	Pedersen
Rancourt		

[12:15]

**The Deputy Speaker:** — All those members opposed, please rise.

[Nays — 36]

Beaudry-Mellor	Merriman	Ottenbreit
Reiter	Wyant	Morgan
Duncan	Hargrave	

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Members, we're in the middle of a vote. This is an important issue. I'd ask the members to come to order.

D'Autremont	Heppner	Kaeding
Makowsky	Tell	Eyre
Brkich	Harrison	Carr
Cheveldayoff	Kirsch	Bradshaw
Olauson	Weekes	Lambert
Ross	Wilson	McMorris
Bonk	Doke	Steinley
Buckingham	Young	Dennis
Steele	Tochor	Fiaz
Francis		

**Principal Clerk:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, those who favour the motion, 10; those opposed, 36.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The motion is lost. I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Brkich:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:18.]

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