

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present on behalf of residents of Saskatchewan. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to make a commitment to develop a long-term plan with respect to the Saskatchewan film library, ensuring that under no circumstances will any more films be destroyed; rather that the films be given away to schools, sold, or provided on a fee-for-service basis.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatures come from Kelvington, Wadena, Lintlaw, Fox Valley, and Richmond. I so present.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to work with aboriginal and Metis leaders in the province of Saskatchewan in an immediate effort to end the destructive and dangerous practice of night hunting in the province for everyone regardless of their heritage.

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

This petition comes from the RM (rural municipality) of Antler, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition I'd like to present to the Assembly as well. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to make a commitment to develop a long-term plan with respect to the Saskatchewan film library, ensuring that under no circumstances will any more films be destroyed; rather that the films be given away to schools, sold, or provided on a fee-for-service basis.

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

This petition is signed by individuals from the Moose Jaw area.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition to do with night hunting. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to work with aboriginal and Metis leaders in the province of Saskatchewan in an immediate effort to end the destructive and dangerous practice of night hunting in the province for

everyone regardless of their heritage.

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

The petitioners, Mr. Speaker, are from the communities of Duval and Govan. I so present.

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise to present a petition. I will read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to make a commitment to develop a long-term plan with respect to the Saskatchewan film library, ensuring that under no circumstances will any more films be destroyed; rather that the films be given away to schools, sold, or provided on a fee-for-service basis.

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

And these come from North Battleford.

Mr. Gantfoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise to present a petition on behalf of people concerned about the Saskatchewan film library. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to make a commitment to develop a long-term plan with respect to the Saskatchewan film library, ensuring that under no circumstances will any more films be destroyed; rather the films be given away to schools, sold, or provided on a fee-for-service basis.

The people that have signed their signature, Mr. Speaker, are from Saskatoon and the area around it.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have a petition to present. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to work with aboriginal and Metis leaders in the province of Saskatchewan in an immediate effort to end the destructive and dangerous practice of night hunting in this province for everyone regardless of their heritage.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

The people that have signed this petition are from Leader.

Mr. McLane: — Mr. Speaker, I have a petition today to present on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to enact legislation to completely ban the practice of night hunting in Saskatchewan.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition was signed by the residents of Lake Lenore.

Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too present a petition on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan who are concerned about the dangers of night hunting and the long-term viability of our wildlife species.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to enact legislation to completely ban the practice of night hunting in Saskatchewan.

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

And the signatures on this petition are primarily from Hague, Laird, and Saskatoon. I so present.

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also present a petition on the issue of night hunting and the dangerousness of night hunting and the survival of the species.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to enact legislation to completely ban the practice of night hunting in Saskatchewan.

And this petition, Mr. Speaker, is signed by residents of Turtleford and the Battlefords. I so present.

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present petitions on behalf of Saskatchewan residents. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to allocate adequate funding dedicated toward the double-laning of Highway No. 1, and further, that the Government of Saskatchewan direct any monies available from the federal infrastructure program toward double-laning Highway No. 1 rather than allocating these funds toward capital construction projects in the province.

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

Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed the petition are from the Shaunavon area.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to allocate adequate funding dedicated towards the double-laning of Highway No. 1, and further, that the Government of Saskatchewan direct any monies available from the federal infrastructure program towards double-laning Highway No. 1 rather than allocating these funds towards capital construction projects in the province.

As in duty bound, your petitioner will ever pray.

The people that have signed this petition, Mr. Speaker, are from Swift Current, from Shaunavon, from Climax, and some as far away as Edmonton and Lethbridge, Alberta. I so present.

Mr. Aldridge: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise to present

petitions on behalf of citizens concerned over the Highway No. 1 situation. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to allocate adequate funding dedicated toward the double-laning of Highway No. 1, and further, that the Government of Saskatchewan direct any monies available from the federal infrastructure program toward double-laning Highway No. 1 rather than allocating these funds toward capital construction projects in the province.

As in duty bound, your petitioner will every pray.

Those who have signed this petition, Mr. Speaker, are from communities of Frontier and Shaunavon. I so present.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: — According to order the following petitions received yesterday have been reviewed, and pursuant to rule 12(7) they are hereby read and received.

Of citizens petitioning the Assembly to develop a long-term plan with respect to the Saskatchewan film library;

Of citizens petitioning the government to work with aboriginal and Metis leaders in an effort to end the practice of night hunting; and

Of citizens petitioning the Assembly to enact legislation to completely ban the practice of night hunting.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to the Legislative Assembly and to the people of Saskatchewan, a number of honoured guests who are with us today. I want to begin by paying tribute to the civic officials and municipal leaders who have joined us today in the gallery, have joined us as provincial legislatures to make a statement about Canada for Saskatchewan people and for all Canadians.

I want to pay special tribute to the . . . and introduce the group of people who has, for the last number of weeks, participated in a consultation on the question of Canadian unity and the values of our Canadian country with the MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) across Saskatchewan and 160 meetings as the Co-Chairs for the MLAs, who have joined us today as we debate and pass this motion about Canada in the House today. And I will ask the individual Co-Chairs to stand as I introduce them and we will recognize them when they have all been introduced.

From the constituency of Arm River, Ross Kadlec; from the constituency of Athabasca, Nancy Morin; from the constituency of Cannington, Harold Madsen; from the constituency of Carrot River Valley, Janet Drew; from the constituency of Estevan, Bernie Collins; from the constituency of Humboldt, Robert Bandurka; from the constituency of Indian Head-Milestone, Donnett Elder; from the constituency of Kindersley, Ken Ritter;

from the constituency of Last Mountain-Touchwood, Tish Karpa; from the constituency of Meadow Lake, Dan Palsich; from the constituency of Melville, Jim Walters; from the constituencies of Moose Jaw North and Wakamow, Lyle Johnson; from the constituency of Moosomin, Rod Holowaty; the constituency of Redberry Lake, Peter Kingmill; from the constituency of Regina Centre, J. P. Ellson; from the constituency of Regina Elphinstone, Rob Deglau; from the constituency of Regina Lakeview, Harley Weston; from the constituency of Regina Northeast, Alex Taylor; from the constituency of Regina Qu'Appelle Valley, Zach Douglas; from the constituency of Regina Qu'Appelle Valley, Trisha Tyrer; from the constituency of Regina Sherwood, Francoise Stoppa; from the constituency of Regina South, Janis Stone; from the constituency of Regina Victoria, Erin Weir; from the constituency of Regina Victoria, Kathleen Antrobus; from the constituency of Regina Wascana Plains, Robert Gamble; from the constituency of Rosetown-Biggar, Brenda Slimmon; from the constituency of Saskatoon Mount Royal, Diane Horbay; from the constituency of Saskatoon Nutana, Paul Jacoby; from the constituency of Saskatoon Southeast, Lillian Fernandez; from the constituency of Swift Current, John Penner; from the constituency of Weyburn-Big Muddy, John Ferrier; and from the constituency of Wood River, Leslie Goldstein.

May we thank these and introduce them to you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to thank those Co-Chairs who could not be with us today who have also been part of this wonderful exercise of meeting with constituencies across the province, with constituents.

From Battleford-Cut Knife, Jeannette Reid; from Canora-Pelly, Ian Cooper; from Cypress Hills, Marilyn Clary; from Kelvington-Wadena, Palma Little and Chad Eggerman; from Lloydminster, Vic Juba; from Melfort-Tisdale, Rollie Zimmer and Dub Henderson; from North Battleford, Wayne Ray; from Prince Albert Carleton, Barbara Gustafson; from Prince Albert Northcote, Lyla Rogers; from Regina Coronation Park, Madame Papini; from Regina Dewdney, Rick Turchenek; from Regina Lakeview, Rosella Mitchell; from Rosthern, Milton Block; from Saltcoats, George McIvor; from Saskatchewan Rivers, Bryon McKee.

From Saskatoon Eastview, Mary Janvier and Jeanne Auramenko; from Saskatoon Fairview, Doug Cuthand; from Saskatoon Greystone, Gordon Barnhart; from Saskatoon Idylwyld, David Forbes; from Saskatoon Idylwyld, Donna Wilson; from Saskatoon Meewasin and Northwest, Gerard LeBlanc; from Saskatoon Riversdale, Maureen Strawson; from Shellbrook-Spiritwood, C.D. McIvor; from Saskatoon Sutherland, Charles Johnston; from Thunder Creek, Louis Stringer; from Watrous, Wayne Busch; from Yorkton, Merle Sherwin; from Rosetown-Biggar, Graham Mickleborough; and from Cumberland, Bob Imrie.

Let's thank all of these citizens who have made this big contribution to Canada.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce through you to the members of the legislature two additional guests who are in your gallery — my son, Alan MacKinnon, who's a first-year university student studying land use and environmental studies, and his friend, Brian Taylor, who's a first-year arts and science student. I would ask everyone to give these young men a very warm welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition, I would like to express our appreciation to those Co-Chairs who are here today — your work was invaluable. And to those who, due to other commitments who have not been able to make it, we want to express our sincere appreciation for the tremendous task that has been undertaken by them and completed. Thank you very much.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to add our voice on behalf of the Liberal caucus to thank all those people that helped us. I know personally my Co-Chair was a tremendous asset as I'm sure these other people were throughout Saskatchewan.

I would also like to recognize and welcome Mayor Cody, Mayor Boughen, and Mayor Dayday in your gallery this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, and a very special guest as well from my perspective, the Assistant Commissioner Brian Watt, who is the commanding officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for Saskatchewan, known as F division for those of us that were associated with the force. I'm very pleased that Assistant Commissioner Watt could be here today, on this day, National Unity Day, representing our national police force, which I have been very proud to have been part of.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Bradley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of the legislature, a group of students that are visiting today in the west gallery from Weyburn Comprehensive High School. There are 17 students who are accompanied by their teachers, Camille St. Amand and Crystal Jordens, and a chaperon, Albert Ernst.

I'm very pleased that they're able to be here today, because actually my Co-Chair, John Ferrier, and I, one of our consultations was done with the Weyburn Comprehensive High School. So it was really nice timing that they're able to be here today as we kind of further our discussion here in the legislature on the Calgary framework.

I wish everyone to welcome them here and to make their visit a real pleasure. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to

introduce a couple of guests in the Assembly today. Sitting immediately behind me is my predecessor and former MLA from Arm River, Mr. Gerald Muirhead.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLane: — Also in the gallery opposite, Mr. Speaker, there is another constituent of mine and an elected representative, a Reform MP (Member of Parliament) from Saskatoon-Dundurn, Mr. Allan Kerpan, and I would ask you to welcome him here today, please.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Renaud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the Assembly, I would like to introduce Mr. Dwain Drew. Dwain is the past president of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and Dwain is seated at the west gallery. Please join with me in welcoming Dwain to the Assembly today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — I would like to introduce to you and to all members of the legislature, Debbie Ward, the new president of the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, having been elected some two or three weeks ago. I'd like all members to join me in welcoming Debbie to the legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I would also like to welcome Brian Watt to the legislature, but in addition I would like to give a special welcome to the honorary Consul General for Japan, Art Wakabayashi, and the Consul for the Netherlands, Mr. Bill de Lint.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Lorje: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know that this is an historic day today and it's historic in many other ways as well. The good citizens and constituents of Saskatoon Southeast have an opportunity today to see in one room representatives from the municipal, provincial, and federal governments together.

So I would like to welcome Mayor Henry Dayday of Saskatoon, and Allan Kerpan of Saskatoon-Dundurn. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Legislative Assembly, a distinguished citizen of Saskatchewan, and I'm honoured to be his member of the Legislative Assembly. I would like to ask the members to join me in welcoming the former president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, Mr. Ted Turner.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and all members of the Assembly, I would like to as well

welcome some guests here this afternoon. Sitting in the east gallery is a very important representative of the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Tom Hengen, the steering committee chairperson. We want to welcome Tom here this afternoon.

Joined with him is a Reform MP, Allan Kerpan, who we would also want to extend our warm wishes and warm welcome to here this afternoon. And I'd ask all members to welcome those guests as well.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to bring to your attention and to the attention of the House, a very distinguished visitor who is here on this very significant and important day in our country. I'd like to welcome Archbishop Peter Mallon, the Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Regina, who is in the Speaker's gallery.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Goulet: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to introduce to the House my daughter, Koonu Dawn, in your gallery. Mr. Speaker, her name means Snow. She was born on a January morning a few years back. She's doing some work and travel in Europe as well as in India. She's also, I might add, Mr. Speaker, here to enjoy the Canadian unity discussions. And, Mr. Speaker, everybody might be waiting, might be waiting for snow, but we were dearly — my wife and I — are very dearly happy to see our Koonu Dawn here visiting us this Christmas.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gantefoer: — Mr. Speaker, I rise as well to introduce a very special friend of ours, Sister Michelle Blanchette, sitting in your gallery, who is the new director of the John Paul II Centre in Regina here. Before that, Sister Michelle was a director in the north-east for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Prince Albert, and more important than that, became a very dear, close friend. Please welcome her today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hillson: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce to you, and I ask all members to welcome, the Leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party, Dr. Jim Melnychuk. And seated with him in the gallery is Vic Karwacki and Mark Rogstad.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Branding of Members

Mr. Aldridge: — Mr. Speaker, I recently read the Premier's address to the 1997 NDP (New Democratic Party) convention, and I see that he's interested in getting himself a good branding iron. In the speech the Premier remarked that the member from Moosomin was quoted as saying that crossing the floor is political opportunism and he didn't want to be branded an opportunist.

Most of my constituents suggest the actions of the member

from Moosomin and his colleagues are those of self-interested politicians who are also pretty inept at picking a good opportunity.

Like many of my constituents, I am a cattleman, and so I'm pleased to offer the Premier some tips if he wants to do some figurative branding. As for a brand, I'd suggest TC for turncoat or PC for poor choice, planted firmly on the extreme right rump.

But whatever brand he chooses, I phoned Jolly's Vet Supplies here in town and a convenient, two-letter electric branding iron can be had for all of the political opportunists on your lists for just \$135.

Regardless of how you brand them, Mr. Speaker, it'll be happy trails back home to them all in 1999.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Saskatchewan's Booming Oil and Gas Industry

Mr. Ward: — Mr. Speaker, one of the main reasons our job numbers are so high and our financial picture good is the excellent performance of the Saskatchewan oil and gas industry.

Our province's energy sector employs about 18,000 people, with more being added constantly. Direct and indirect employment in the oil patch increased by 2,675 last year, an increase of more than 15 per cent.

Last year Saskatchewan exported about 2.8 million in petroleum and this year we are well on the way to breaking last year's crude production record of 131 million barrels.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, this year's petroleum and natural gas sales rights will be the third highest ever. The total rights sales for 1997 is now 131 million. In addition, more drilling licences have been issued than last year. The activity throughout the oil patch is, quite frankly, outstanding.

It is also worth noting, Mr. Speaker, that this activity is spread across the province. My area, the Weyburn-Estevan area, is receiving the most bids. But Lloydminster, Kindersley, Kerrobert, and Swift Current are all quite active.

And as you would expect, the new jobs are distributed through these areas in a similar proportion — 1,250 in my area; 512 around Kindersley; 476 around Lloydminster; and 437 around Swift Current. A quiet drive through any of these areas will give all the visual evidence necessary to show that every available rig is in use and available worker employed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Team Schmirler's Winning Ways

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again Team Schmirler has made Saskatchewan proud — first by winning yet another world curling championship last spring, and then by earning the right to represent Canada at the '98 Olympics in Japan.

Mr. Speaker, my constituency is especially proud of these accomplishments since one member of this great team, second Joan McCusker, hails from the Saltcoats community.

Mr. Speaker, far be it from me to try and horn in on some of Joan's spotlight, but I think I deserve some of the credit for her considerable curling skills. Not only did my family curl against Joan's family many times throughout the years, we also let them beat us on most of those occasions to build up her confidence and teach her how to be a winner.

As well, I've had an opportunity to curl on the same team as Joan on a few occasions, and after watching my skills and my form on the ice and doing precisely the opposite, Joan has learned to become one of the best curlers in the world.

Mr. Speaker, to all the members of the Schmirler team, we offer our congratulations and the best of luck in Japan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Probationary Driver's Program

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, there are no shortages of wise cracks and jokes about the effectiveness of committees and what they accomplish. We've all heard that the definition of a camel is a horse put together by a committee.

But I would like to bring to this Assembly's attention the work of one particular committee — one that had a very fine membership, I might add, and one, Mr. Speaker, with which I know you are well acquainted — that is, the Select Committee on Driving Safety.

In any case, this committee travelled the province three winters ago and gathered information and ideas on how to reduce motor vehicle accidents in our province. As a result, our provincial legislation on impaired driving was strengthened, and on August 1, 1996 the probationary driver's program was implemented.

A probationary driver is basically a new driver, either getting their first driver's licence or someone who is new to the province. After one year, the probationary driver's program is showing some particularly fine results. From August 1996 to July '97 there was a 20 per cent reduction in the at-fault accidents for new drivers and there were 1,740 fewer new-driver accidents than for the previous years.

Now whether or not these results are totally due to the Select Committee on Driving Safety, one thing is clear — Saskatchewan roads are becoming safer, Saskatchewan drivers are increasing their skills, and at least one committee has built a horse that looks like a horse.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

50th Wedding Anniversary

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to ask the members to extend congratulations to William

and Jean Allan, who are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary today. The Allans have farmed together in the Tisdale area since their marriage on December 16, 1947. They raised four children and are now enjoying the additional blessings of nine grandchildren.

Mr. Allan continues to be an avid curler in the senior league, and both Mr. and Mrs. Allan enjoy bowling. The Presbyterian church and community have benefited from their active participation over the years. Their 50th wedding anniversary is a milestone that has been achieved through the strength of their commitment and love for each other.

I ask you to join me in congratulating William and Jean and wishing them all the best in the future.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SARCAN Recycling

Ms. Lorje: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was very happy to participate in an announcement that will bring 12 full-time-equivalent jobs for Saskatchewan people with disabilities. These jobs will be directed towards solving a significant environmental problem.

Together, Saskatchewan's dairy industry and SARCAN recycling launched a new recycling initiative that will collect 4-litre plastic milk jugs for recycling. This program is entirely voluntary. It will be financed solely by Saskatchewan dairy processing industry.

Consumers get to demonstrate their environmental ethic with solid recycling action. They will not be charged a deposit on the jugs and no refunds will be paid when the jugs are returned to SARCAN depots for recycling.

It is estimated that at least 25 per cent of the jugs will be returned. That's about 112,000 kilograms of waste not going to our landfills. And, Mr. Speaker, this is the only province-wide recycling program for these milk containers. Customers asked for this program. I was pleased to help the initiative along by arranging a meeting last December between SARCAN and dairy representatives, and I am happy today to announce the results — jobs and environmental protection brought about through a fine example of cooperation between government as facilitator, and industry as actor. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Athabasca Road Construction

Mr. Johnson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the member from Redberry spoke about the official opening of one of Saskatchewan's busiest highways. I want to mention a road today far in the North. This road is not as busy a road, but it is important to the people of the North. Last month a sod-turning ceremony was held to start construction of a 180-kilometre winter road from Points North Landing to Black Lake serving the communities of Stony Rapids, Black Lake, Fond-du-Lac, and Camsell Portage.

This road, Mr. Speaker, on the north-east top of our province,

will replace summer river barging as the main supply source for these towns. The Athabasca Road will cost approximately 8 million, cost-shared between the province, the Department of Indian Affairs, and, in this land-locked province, the federal coastguard.

This announcement is a good news item. First the road will provide a land link to the world for this previously isolated area; and second, the construction will provide 150 much-needed jobs. Ongoing operation and maintenance will provide a number of permanent jobs following construction.

The Prince Albert Grand Council, representing first nations people in this area, have waited for this road and are happy to see their transportation needs being addressed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Call for Fall Session

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Saskatchewan legislature was recalled for what is being billed — notwithstanding the date — as a fall session. It continues to be the position of the Liberal Party that what we need is a real fall session where the government introduces Bills and then adjourns; so the people of Saskatchewan have an opportunity to consider public issues before the legislation is passed in the spring.

The Alberta NDP agrees with us that a fall session is important to holding the government accountable. Not so in Saskatchewan, where the NDP says that this House is not the appropriate forum for debating public issues and that the elected representatives of the people should instead content themselves with issuing press releases.

While the people of Guyana got a public debate and vote in their parliament on the power deal, the people of Saskatchewan got no such consideration when our government sent \$31 million to that country to invest.

Mr. Speaker, while we are in agreement with the recalling of the House this week and we are proud of the unity resolution and to be a part of this, we want to take this opportunity to again say that what we need is a real fall session of the legislature to reaffirm that this Assembly is the best of all places for the opposition, on behalf of Saskatchewan families and taxpayers, to hold the government accountable and to debate the direction of this province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Consequences of Separation

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Premier, it's unity day in Saskatchewan and you will be happy to know that all members of the Saskatchewan Party will be voting in favour of the resolution this afternoon. We are voting in favour of it because two most important issues that we heard from our constituents was included in the resolution: a province-wide

referendum was a must and so was the outlining of the consequences of a province separating from the rest of Canada.

I know you had some trouble, Mr. Premier, and so did the Liberals, about including secession results in this resolution even though the people wanted it. My question, Mr. Premier, is, are you going to push the consequences of secession with the rest of the Canadian premiers and with the federal government as the Saskatchewan people want you to? Just how far are you going to go to advance the consequences of separation?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely incorrect in his assumption that the government did not want to discuss the consequences of separation. In fact this government is only one of two provincial governments which is siding with the federal government in explaining to the court, Supreme Court of Canada, and to the people of Canada the impact of secession and the inability to secede — only one of two governments to do so.

I've, in the past, spoken about the consequences of secession from the passport, economic side, dollar side, all of the issues that affect Canadian unity and affect Canadians on day-to-day side. No problems on that whatsoever. And the resolution reflects this.

The important part to remember, however, is balance, and the balance is that when we talk about the consequences, we talk to the consequences not only to Quebec, but to Saskatchewan, to Alberta, to British Columbia. Don't throw out some sort of a threat to Quebec, because that threat exists to each and every one of us in Canada. And what this resolution speaks to is a unified and stronger Canada in a positive way. That's the way Canada should be built, positively, in the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Night Hunting

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, besides national unity, the people of the province told us they had very many other concerns in the province.

Last Friday, the minister proudly announced the government was finally ready to do at least something about the issue of night hunting. The minister said the government would ban all spotlight hunting; that aboriginal people were in favour of banning spotlight hunting, and that it would be done by February. It seems the minister was putting the cart before the horse, since the vice-chief of FSIN (Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations) said they're way off the mark on this one.

Which is it, Mr. Minister? Did you make a premature announcement just to defuse the flack you take in the Assembly, or are you dealing with this very important issue? Mr. Minister, it's a very simple question: will you or will you not ban spotlight hunting in this province in February — yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Scott: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the

opportunity to respond to the hon. member's question.

What we are dealing with is unsafe night hunting; it includes more than spotlight hunting. It can include a number of factors, including shooting from headlights of a four-wheel drive truck going through the field.

We are working cooperatively with the FSIN and the Metis Nation to come up with a solution to this, and we have not got any preconceived idea. We are not saying we are banning anything at this time. Unlike some opposition members, we go to the table with no preconceived idea. We are going to work things out, and within a couple of months, we will have a solution.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, we have to wonder if the government went to the table and lost. Mr. Minister, this is a safety issue that we're talking about — a safety issue for all of Saskatchewan people.

Our Bill, the Bill we presented yesterday which was held up in Manitoba for three years with no court challenge . . . and it's ready for your support, Mr. Minister. It will deal with the night hunting issue and ensure the safety of Saskatchewan citizens.

Will you support this Bill, Mr. Minister, or will you continue to pretend to deal with night hunting in our province?

Hon. Mr. Scott: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member referred to failing. I think we've been doing that since 1964 when we received the first court ruling that aboriginal people have the right to hunt, day or night, and by any means. And this has failed in the courts when we've attempted this before, and we will not approach that; we will not use that approach.

We are very pleased that the aboriginal people also recognize the safety issue. And we are going to do something about the unsafe practices of hunting at night, particularly with the use of spotlights. And we are going to come up with a solution. Because we cannot infringe on the treaties — we have proven that time and again when we have gone to court.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SaskPowers' Investment in Guyana

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the minister in charge of CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan). Well, Minister, the election in Guyana is over and according to reports within the past hour, it looks like the present government is to be re-elected with about a 58 per cent of the vote. Mr. Minister, you said cabinet was waiting until the election was over to give the stamp of approval for \$31 million in taxpayers' money buying into the Guyana electric company.

I'm sure this has been a hot topic over the cabinet; over the last few weeks it has been on the table and you've been stalling. So, Minister, what's the decision of cabinet? Are you going to kiss \$31 million away this week? Are you going to wait until we're busy with our families for Christmas or when the Assembly

isn't sitting?

Mr. Minister, your government said you'd listen to the people about unity. Will you listen to the people about this Guyana deal and scrap it today?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — To the member opposite, I want to say the following: that he may have more current information than I have on the election results, but only to report to you that Alan Bowker from the Canadian High Commission in Georgetown, who is keeping the office informed as to the results, indicated a few moments ago, and I say a few moments ago, that the results so far, with 25 per cent of the votes in, with PPP (People's Progressive Party), which is the governing party, with 55,000 votes; the PNC (People's National Congress) with 40,000 votes, doesn't include Georgetown. So you may have to wait another day to get the final results, but we will inform you after the results get in as to where we're going.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Channel Lake Petroleum

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Now the hon. member from Moosomin has been recognized and it is his opportunity to put his question to the floor. And I'll ask all hon. members, including his own colleagues, to allow him to do that.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as well while we're discussing unity, other issues, as the Premier is aware of, are certainly on people's minds and a concern I'd like to raise with the minister responsible for CIC. Day after day we read examples of how our province's Crowns are not accountable to the people of Saskatchewan. Most recently you are asking people to just ignore the fact that SaskPower lost \$8 million through the Channel Lake Petroleum deal.

Mr. Minister, any time your political appointee, Jack Messer, fails to disclose what's going on at SaskPower is no surprise to the public. And that is a problem. You hide the losses of Crowns like NST (Network Services of Chicago) and Channel Lake deals because you want to avoid being accountable to the public.

Mr. Minister, it's time Crowns were accountable. It's time people knew the real picture. In light of the NST and Channel Lake projects, could you tell us just how many other Crowns have lost millions of dollars of taxpayers' money over the past few years that the public is not aware about?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I intend to inform the member that the Channel Lake project was a gas field purchased in 1993 by SaskPower to use the gas within the operation of the Power corporation.

As you know, the Power corporation buys gas long term, short term, medium term. The belief was they should have some

in-the-ground storage and they made the purchase for 25 million; 11 million of that was returned on the loan that was borrowed in order to make the purchase. They sold the asset for 20 million with a \$5 million deduction, which means they made \$2 million on the deal.

Now I know as a former Conservative that's a difficult concept to understand; that you would actually make money on a deal.

But in terms of accountability, I want to quote something that that member said on November 19 of '96. He said: I was elected to represent the Conservative values for this constituency and I would never just cross the floor. I would never just cross the floor, he said. If I was ever to think about a change like that I would consult the people about it first. I would want to know what the . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Next question. Next question.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary to the minister. I find it interesting, Mr. Speaker . . . Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the minister will be trying to give us a lesson in having our facts straight. We're quoting from the auditor and the auditor is pointing out this. The auditor is raising some serious questions about the loss. In fact he also points out that this deal was allowed — a \$20 million deal — to take place without tendering it properly.

Yesterday you said you didn't think \$20 million was a big enough problem to worry about, but I don't think the people of Saskatchewan agree, and certainly our party doesn't agree. Mr. Minister, I believe you need to review the way CIC tenders projects, but first you must review just what happened at the Channel Lake deal.

Why wasn't it tendered? How did a person who negotiated the sale for SaskPower end up as a director of Channel Lake shortly after? Why weren't the losses made public? These are just a few of the many questions that you have failed to answer. Mr. Minister, will you today commit to holding a review into the Channel Lake Petroleum deal; will you do that for the taxpayers of this province?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, obviously the annual report of the SaskPower Corporation will come before the Crown Investments Corporation for total review, and that member obviously is invited to come and to ask any questions. But obviously there's nothing secretive about the deal.

In fact while the sale was going on, four other companies were asked, were asked to bid on the sale of the asset. Two of them, Stampeder Explorations and Shining Bank Energy Ltd., did give firm written offers on the project. So I say to you that this was not a closed deal at all.

But getting back to credibility of that member, I want to quote again, I want to quote again but from his own newspaper, from his own newspaper, the *Moosomin Spectator*. He says, he considers crossing the floor to be a political opportunism, a political opportunism, he said Friday, and he doesn't want to be

branded as an opportunist. I say, get out the branding iron for that . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Surgery Waiting-lists

Mr. McPherson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, more than two months ago the Liberal opposition called on this government to explain why Hope Sawin, an elderly Coronach woman, was forced to wait six agonizing days for surgery to repair a broken hip. At the time the Premier indicated that he would personally get to the bottom of this situation. So, Mr. Premier, can you explain what the findings of your personal inquiry are?

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I know that the member opposite is interested in learning a bit about waiting-lists across the province, because I hear this is where he's going.

I want to share with the member opposite that in this province currently we have, in the orthopaedic side, waiting-lists that are larger than they have been in the past. And the waiting-lists are due to the fact that we've had an increase in the number of people who are requiring orthopaedic surgery in the province. That number has increased by about 6 per cent. Accordingly there has also been an increase in the cataract surgeries.

So as the member points out, in the province there is some need for us to attract additional specialists on the orthopaedic side and that will reduce the number of days of waiting that we have in the province today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McPherson: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it was the Premier that promised to get to the bottom of this case. Mr. Speaker, the truth is that two months have gone by and Hope Sawin and her family have not been contacted by the Premier, by the Health minister, or anyone else in that government. So, Mr. Premier, why the empty promises? If Hope Sawin can't take you at your word, who can?

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I will take the member's question under advisement, in the sense that I'll check out exactly what happened in this correspondence and where it sits. The minister has spoken to the issue in general terms. I'll try to get back to him before the end of the week if not earlier.

Health Care for Gravelbourg Seniors

Mr. Aldridge: — Mr. Speaker, the Legislative Assembly was called back this week to discuss the important issue of national unity and to express a show of goodwill to our francophone counterparts in Quebec.

However it appears this government is forgetting the needs of Saskatchewan's elderly French community, particularly in the Gravelbourg area. Because of a funding shortage, 10 long-term care beds may be closed at the Gravelbourg hospital and elderly residents, many of whom are of French descent, may be forced to leave their community.

Will the Premier explain why he is putting his hands out for Quebecers but is using that same hand to slap the face of French-speaking Saskatchewan residents in Gravelbourg?

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I say to the hon. member with the greatest of respect, this is really one of the longest bows that's ever been drawn in a question.

The member full well knows, and under our system of health care renewal now, the question with respect to hospitals and how acute care or other services are delivered are within the concept and the jurisdiction of the district health board, as properly they should be, as we say they should be. And to argue in this context that the decision respecting Gravelbourg is somehow inconsistent with what I hope will be a unanimous motion speaking to the issue of national unity is drawing the longest and irrelevant bow that I think I've heard in a long time in question period.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Aldridge: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Well actions do speak louder than words and our seniors in Gravelbourg want more than the Premier's empty words. NDP Health ministers, past and present, both promised no more bed closures and no more nurses would be eliminated under this government's reign.

Mr. Premier, when the Harris government in Ontario closed down the Montfort Hospital this fall, it was condemned for closing down a facility which served many French-speaking seniors. Why is your government taking the Mike Harris approach to health care? Why are you selling out our French-speaking seniors in Gravelbourg?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I said in response to the previous question that that was the longest bow. I stand corrected — this is even a longer bow and even less credible.

The hon. member obviously knows that in Ontario they do not have a system where there's been a devolution of authority on health care matters to local folks at the local level to make the decisions in their best interests.

The district health boards have been set up specifically for that purpose in mind, in order to make the adjustments within the community at large. This is an issue which is entirely different than Ontario, entirely not applicable to Saskatchewan situation.

And I want to conclude by saying to the hon. member opposite that in the province of Saskatchewan we are years ahead of reform of any other province in this country. And I would add, we are the shining example of how to do it while protecting the principles of medicare.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Aldridge: — Supplementary to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. From the closure of long-term care beds . . . was discussed at another recent public meeting in Gravelbourg. The Premier should have been there to hear his old chum and former NDP

cabinet executive director of communications, Dale Schmeichel, as South Country Health District CEO (chief executive officer). He called the good people of Gravelbourg “Scrooges” for opposing the bed closures. If Charles Dickens was going to characterize anybody as Ebenezer Scrooge, it certainly would not be the people of Gravelbourg.

Mr. Speaker, do we need intervention from the Ghosts of Christmas past, present and future? Or will the Premier and his government do what is right and provide enough money to local health care needs?

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member does not want to be portrayed as the Scrooge of Christmas or the person who . . . the Grinch that stole Christmas, then what he ought to do is speak to the federal Liberal government in Ottawa about their \$7 billion cut-back on health care — \$7 billion in health care.

Now that’s all you can do — is just pick up the phone. Pick up the phone to your friend, Mr. Ralph Goodale, pick up the phone to your friend, Jean Chrétien, pick up the phone to any federal Liberal and say, give us back a little bit of the fiscal dividend for health care.

I want to tell you that all of the premiers and the territorial leaders at their conference just concluded a couple of days ago in Ottawa, were unanimously of the view that the fiscal federal dividend should be returned back to the provinces to enhance acute care, because the federal budget was balanced at the expense of medicare and health care.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Aldridge: — Supplementary to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, all we’ve heard from this premier and his government this afternoon are nothing but broken and hollow promises. I’ve not heard anything that sounds an inkling like an apology out of the Premier here this afternoon.

I’d like to just draw the Premier’s attention to a letter in front of me from one Madeleine Tardis of Gravelbourg, who is writing the Premier — and I’ll give this to the Premier after for him to address these concerns — writing the Premier about health care concerns. And I quote:

From my own pocket I gave \$7,000 for our new nursing home and hospital. By the time I’ll be sick and very old, the facilities will be closed down at the rate you’re cutting beds.

Well, Mr. Premier, I wonder if, given that you haven’t undertaken any attempt to make contact with Ruth Sawin, this afternoon would you undertake to call Madeleine Tardis and apologize to her for having referred to her and other residents of Gravelbourg as Scrooges?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, with the greatest of respect, I don’t think the hon. member knows what he’s talking about, because I sure don’t know what he’s talking about.

I can say to the hon. member before and I’ll say again, if he’s interested in health care, if the Liberal Party is interested in health care, which of course no one in this province believes that it is — it has fought medicare since 1962, it and the Tory Party sitting over there fought medicare in 1962. The two of you people, Keep Our Doctors committee, you remember how they did that. They did it. How the doctors were out there on strike, fighting medicare.

And now you have the audacity to stand up in this legislature and pretend that you are the defender of medicare. Not in a long shot will the people ever believe the Liberals or the Tories of this province being defenders of medicare. Forget about it; you won’t get that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Crown Corporations Accountability

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary coming back to the minister responsible for CIC. The minister made a comment about raising concerns in Crown Corporations. The minister is quite well aware of the fact that when you deal in Crown Corporations, Crown Corporations doesn’t necessarily give you an opportunity to disclose information for the public. And that’s why we raise questions like this on the floor.

And coming back to the Channel Lake deal. When the Provincial Auditor disclosed the over \$8 million loss on Channel Lake, the response to why it wasn’t released to the public was interesting, coming from SaskPower.

SaskPower said they didn’t want to talk about the loss because of a confidentiality agreement. Well, Mr. Minister, I think the confidentiality agreement is between cabinet members. If a Crown makes money on a deal, stand up, pat yourselves on the back. If a Crown loses money, keep it confidential to just cabinet.

Mr. Minister, I think it’s time to stop hiding information from the public. Will you put a mechanism in place to support all losses in the Crowns, so we don’t have to talk about losses which come from leaks from the States and everywhere else? Will you do that, Mr. Minister?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the member opposite, who was part of a government that I totally understand why he would in the dark of night cross the floor and try to pretend something else, having been part of the Grant Devine Conservative government, and I want to tell you, in terms of openness of government as compared to the kind of government that you were involved in for a number of years, this government is fully open. We’ve worked with the auditor. We’ve worked with the auditor in every way possible.

Our Crown Corporation Committee gives that member and any member the opportunity to come and ask questions about Channel Lake, about Guyana. We have a process of a 90-day declaration and disclosure on the circumstances that are considered to be of significant importance, and we allow that.

So for you to say . . . The member opposite, the former Conservative from Moosomin, once a Tory, always a Tory — you're branded as a Tory. So don't pretend that somehow you come here with an openness about government after what you were involved in for nine years as a Conservative.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker — a supplementary to the minister. It appears the minister certainly feels quite proud in where he's coming from today and he feels quite confident in his responses. He's leaving us with the impression that this government has done everything right.

And, Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, maybe he forgot — maybe he's not reading the papers very carefully — maybe he's forgot about some of the comments the auditor is making. The auditor brought up, raised this point. The auditor brought it to the public's attention. In fact just the other day, Mr. Speaker, if I'm not . . . if I remember correctly, it was his members who are now refusing to give the auditor more funds so that he can indeed do a good job of perusing the budgets of the government.

Mr. Minister, will you indeed show to the people of this province that you are putting a mechanism in place that they can be confident in, that the Crown corporations are all working equally and are totally accountable to the taxpayers of this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1430)

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — I say very honestly to the member opposite that I'm confident that the systems we have in place for reviewing the operation of our Crowns are as open as any other system in Canada. Not that we can't make them better; I agree with you that you can always improve the systems.

But let me tell you why there isn't enough money for the auditor and many other things that we would like to have money for in this province, whether it's roads or health care or many other areas. When you understand that we still owe \$12 billion, the largest part of it as a result of your mismanagement, ask the auditor. Ask the auditor what he thinks . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Order, order, order. I will ask hon. members to allow the answer to be heard without calling from both sides of the House. Order. And I'll . . . Order. And I'll recognize the minister if he wants to conclude his remarks.

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — I just want to conclude my remarks today, Mr. Speaker, by saying to the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, who complains about the lack of money for the auditor to have available to him, just ask the auditor what he thinks of the mismanagement and the rise in debt between the period of 1982 to 1991. We will be paying for that — we will, our children, and our grandchildren — for 50 years to come, based on the mismanagement of your administration.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, in what is becoming a tradition of this government to be open, accountable, and responsible, I am pleased to table the answer to this question.

The Speaker: — The response is tabled.

SPECIAL ORDER

GOVERNMENT MOTION

Canadian Unity

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. At the end of my remarks, I will be making a motion seconded by my colleague, the Leader of the Official Opposition.

I want to begin by thanking everyone who has made this day possible, and especially to thank and recognize everyone in this Assembly: the members of the Legislative Assembly, both on the government side, the opposition side, including independent members, and those who are with us as, I would call, special guests — the citizen Co-Chairs who, I think, were involved with MLAs in what has proven to be a very unique and I think a very worthwhile exercise in consultative, participatory democracy about an issue which is so important to all of us in Saskatchewan — namely, Canadian unity.

I want to say that to our guests, a special thanks for being here today. You were instrumental in playing the role as citizen Co-Chairs, and the fact that you've taken time off from your busy commitments at home to come and be with us today in such good numbers and to listen for the last hour of question period and statements — by the way, a testament to the great democracy and to the great state of Canada as it is today — is again proof positive of your love of this great province and this great country.

I think I can say safely on behalf of every one of us in this House, thank you for a job well done and welcome to the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I might be a little bit grandiose in my next statement, but perhaps not. I want to also say that we welcome those who may be watching this debate on television. Grandiose because I know sometimes MLAs say that nobody watches the channel of the legislative proceedings.

But I have to tell you frankly, Mr. Speaker, I do recall one occasion when in opposition — it's one of the rare occasions that I can remember during my period in opposition since the rest is a blank — filibustering a particular matter which the government of the day introduced.

And at 2 o'clock in the morning, one of our MLAs got up and said, if you protest what the government's doing, please phone this number. It was 2 o'clock in the morning — everybody said, nobody watches the legislative channel — and I was surprised

the flood of phone calls that came in at 2 o'clock. It's an absolutely true story.

So maybe it isn't so grandiose to say to everybody who is watching this debate, thank you for tuning in. I know that you are, and by tuning in, you too are participating and demonstrating your commitment and your love for this province and for this great country called Canada.

I want to return to the MLAs for one moment to say on a personal note that thanks have to be extended to all of you, to all of us, for taking time off at what normally is a very important period of the year — our holiday season, our Christmas period — away from family, from constituents. You've deferred that important function because you have believed that there are even more important functions, that serious duties demand our attention here today, the serious duty of doing our part in keeping this great country together.

You know, as we sit in this session in these circumstances, I'm reminded of a story of a wife and her husband, which wife and husband shall go unnamed, but who had to make an emergency trip to the dentist. No names will be given but perhaps you'll have a . . . I can say this much, that I have some personal knowledge with the facts involved.

The wife told the husband that a tooth needed to be pulled. And because there was a hurry, she said, I don't want any Novocain, to the dentist, I don't want any anaesthetic, just pull the tooth and we're going to be on our way. The dentist looked up and, very impressed with the wife's courage, asked her which tooth she wanted pulled. And she said, oh no, Roy, show the man your tooth.

Well most of the time, getting agreement in this Chamber is like pulling a tooth. But on this occasion and for this cause, we were able to do so. And for this occasion and for this cause, we should all be heartened that we introduced this resolution on national unity which, as has been indicated in various places, will receive the support of all the members of the House and all of the members of this Legislative Assembly.

I want to thank in particular the Leader of the Official Opposition. I want to thank in particular the Leader of the Third Party, Dr. Jim Melenchuk, and their advisers, for their cooperation. And I also want to extend my thanks to the independent members who also played their part in constructively suggesting changes and cooperating to having the session take place.

Mr. Speaker, Canadian unity is an issue that has taken us all on a long, arduous, difficult journey; one that isn't over yet, unfortunately, and one that I frankly have to admit has from time to time tested the resolve and the patience of all Canadians.

However, it reminds me of John Steven Akwari of Tanzania. Akwari was the last runner to finish the Olympic marathon, the last runner to finish the Olympic marathon in 1968, hours after the rest of the runners had crossed the finish line, hours after the medals had long since been presented and the stadium was all but empty. And there was Akwari staggering into the stadium and struggling around the track for the last lap, hobbling badly

towards the finish on a leg, or legs, that were badly bruised. And when he crossed the line he was asked why in the world had he kept on running.

And his answer was this, quote: "My country didn't send me this far just to start the race. My country sent me this far to finish the race."

And now our country and our province. taking that sentiment of Akwari, have sent us to finish the race, to build an even stronger and even more unified, a more compassionate, civilized country — as they say, the best nation in the entire world in which to live — to finish the race.

And we step out onto that track with the good wishes of the Saskatchewan people who gave us the benefit of their wisdom, their criticisms and suggestions, through extensive public consultations at meetings right across the province in this unique experiment of MLAs and citizen Co-Chairs, which experiment we might very well want to consider in other areas. They gave us all of their thoughts at these meetings, and they gave us their thoughts by telephone and by e-mail and the 1-800 line and by questionnaires sent to every home in the province of Saskatchewan.

We asked them, we asked you, for your opinion, for your advice, and for your support. And the response was there. It was heartening, Mr. Speaker. The people did speak up in substantial numbers with great passion; we know that. I attended several of the meetings where that passion was exhibited about the future of our great nation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to stress this — I want to underline this clearly and loudly for the people of this province and this country and I hope for all the members of this Assembly — I want to stress that jobs, education, health care, highways, fiscal responsibility, environmental matters, and a whole host of similar issues are the priorities of Saskatchewan; they are the priorities of Canada, and they will remain our priorities — pure and simple.

But let's also be clear. The breakup, if that should ever come about — I don't think it will, and this resolution is going to help to prevent that — but let's be clear that the breakup of Canada would make it infinitely more difficult, if not impossible, for us to move forward in this province on these priorities. We would face the issues of passport, and currency, and the issue of the division of the debt, and issues of how to divide the passage and usage of the St. Lawrence Seaway, and what to do with the military, and just the pure mechanics of dividing the military establishment, let alone other issues of international and internal trade — and on and on it goes — which would bog this country down in an interminable period of uncertainty and perhaps even antipathies and perhaps even hostilities of a sense. I don't think ever in the case of physical hostilities — but animosities which would only debilitate and destroy this great nation.

This is not said as a threat to Quebec. This is a concern for Saskatchewan people whether they live in Sturgis, whether they live in Kindersley, whether they live in Saskatoon Riversdale, whether they live in Regina — this is an issue for all Canadians to contemplate — that the task of jobs and health and education, our priorities, our day-to-day concerns, the task of making it a

better life, would be greatly impaired in that eventuality. And that's why the people of this province told us that they want this House, they want this province, to play a positive role in the preservation, enhancement, of the unity of this great country. Our people told us clearly during the consultations this fall this message.

And in passing this motion today, this legislature will be following up on the clearly expressed desire on the part of our people to do our bit for Canada. They have told us that the question we must answer is not can we do this, but how best can we do this, because we must.

Well how then do we do this? How do we enhance national unity? Mr. Speaker, for me, I know that often the national unity issue is considered by the media and some pundits and some academics and others in the framing of this debate, in the dry bones and dust of the constitution, the black letter of the constitution.

In fact it reminds of me of that old joke of the British student and the American student and the Canadian student, each of which was asked to write an essay on the topic of the elephant. And so the British student said, and chose as her topic, the elephant and the role of the elephant in building the great British Empire. And the American student chose as his topic, the elephant: how to get a bigger and better elephant for fun and for profit. And the Canadian student chose the topic, the elephant: is it a federal or provincial responsibility?

(1445)

The dryness, as important as it may be, of the black letter law of the constitution. But that's not what the federalist premiers had in mind when we met in Calgary. No. When we met in Calgary this year earlier and then later in Winnipeg with the aboriginal organizations and leadership of this country, we said that the most important part of the national unity issue is not the constitution.

Instead, we described and attached ourselves to what has now become known as the 80/20 solution — 80 per cent of those things which do not require one comma's change, one word's change, one period's change to the constitution; 80 per cent of governments working on a day-to-day basis, demonstrating on a day-to-day basis that we can speak to the needs of ordinary people on their day-to-day basis and daily lives.

In other words, translated another way, 80 per cent of unifying this country is common sense government — governments working together, dealing effectively, day-to-day on the nuts and bolts issues which affect all Canadians. And the public consultation process recognized this and recognized this simple truth: all levels of government must work together to create what the French author, great author, Victor Hugo wrote, "in creating social prosperity." Which Hugo then said would mean that people are happy: "the citizen is free and the nation is great." Social prosperity.

Or put another way — that while Ottawa and the provinces and the territories must respect our individual constitutional jurisdictions as the constitution mandates, we must never, ever lose sight of our reason for being here. We must never, ever

lose sight of the fact that the constitution is the framework, but it is the political spirit and the will which forces us, dictates to us, mandates to us, indeed I would say voluntarily impulses us, to deal with the issues of fair taxation, quality health care, excellent public education, jobs, roads, highways, and democratic debate as we've experienced today in this Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan.

All levels of government must renew their partnerships so that our federation remains effective, remains flexible, creates a more prosperous, more generous, more compassionate, more unified Canada; a Canada which is cooperative, a Canada which works in a cooperative federalist way, efficiently, in delivering that more caring and more compassionate society. Or in the words of Hugo: where the people are happy, the citizen is free and the nation is great.

Mr. Speaker, there's a concrete example only just a few days ago — last week. The premiers, the territorial leaders, and the Prime Minister, we all gathered in Ottawa at the invitation of the Prime Minister — each with our individual provincial, federal, and territorial responsibilities — to address some of these important issues. And I want to say a few words about that meeting because they describe in a different way what I'm talking about when I talk about the 80 per cent solution.

This meeting was a continuation of Calgary and a continuation of Winnipeg, and it was designed to show that Canada works for ordinary working men and women in Canada. The meeting sought a national strategy on three important issues — although there are others, but three that I want to identify — one, child poverty; two, youth unemployment; three, the preservation and strengthening of medicare or health care.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, and all my colleagues of the House, in my judgement, we made substantial progress and I want to give this House a brief report to highlight how this 80 per cent of the solution of unity can work without one change of comma or period to the constitution.

First, child poverty. Our task is now to complete the implementation of the National Child Benefit Program. What was this program all about, Mr. Speaker? When the Conference of Catholic Bishops got together several months ago and reviewed the situation in Canada and concluded that one child in five — one in five — in Canada lives in poverty, they said that this was, quote, "a damning indictment in one of the richest societies in the entire world." Catholic bishops said it was a damning indictment and they are right. It's too high in Saskatchewan. It's too high in Canada.

And so the National Child Benefit is a program to assist kids and families who are working, but families working very often remain at or near the poverty level, where the temptation is so easy to slip off working and into the welfare rolls. And it's designed to make sure that those kids are properly fed and clothed and housed and educated, so they get a chance in the 21st century of Canada and the world tomorrow.

By February, the ministers will clarify the National Child Benefit plan, and by July 1, 1998, to the credit of the Prime Minister of this country, to the credit of all the premiers and the territorial leaders, we shall have the first phase of our attack on

the problem of children in poverty. By July 1, 1998, the first new social program in Canada in over 25 years. Canada works without one constitutional amendment or one change.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — And a collateral piece of work, of course, is the National Children's Agenda. This is something different, working to build up programs related to child care, nutrition, recreation, the problems of kids living in the inner-core cities and other areas. Well, Mr. Speaker, I have made my point I think, on the first issue of poverty and children.

We are going to work together to improve the lives of Canadian children and that's what good government is all about. And that's what unity is all about because it demonstrates this nation works.

Secondly, youth unemployment. What another great challenge. Mr. Speaker, two times — it's double, youth unemployment — the rate of the unemployment level for the rest of the population. Double. Our future, young men and women without opportunities. This has got to be put on the national agenda, and we agreed to put it on the national agenda.

And now, two years after we put kids in poverty on the agenda, at least the youth unemployment one is on this radar scope. And I'm confident — I hope it doesn't take two years — we are going to be able to have a focused environment where young men and women and Canadians can get a job for the 21st century, again demonstrating that Canada works. Part of the 80 per cent solution.

And finally, a word about Canada's medicare or health care system, something especially close to everybody in this House. After all, medicare is Saskatchewan's invention to Canada, and I say it's Saskatchewan's gift to Canada, and medicare is great for what it is. But it's also great because it defines Canada to Canadians and Canada to the world. It is now the new highway which unites us; it's the new railway which unites us.

And we had agreements there, encouraging words from Ottawa that the fiscal dividend may be now expanded to health care, the question of the principles of medicare to be jointly interpreted by governments on a cooperative basis. Again, Mr. Speaker, we demonstrated that we can work together to preserve health care. That's good government, and again I say that proves that Canada works.

Child poverty, youth employment or unemployment, medicare — governments working together because it's the sensible thing to do, and that is exactly what the people of our country want us to do. Now, Mr. Speaker, that's 80 per cent of the solution. But we're 20 per cent short — 80 and 20 per cent equals 100 per cent united Canada. And that is going to require constitutional change sometime sooner or later.

Now as it happens it was 134 years ago today, on December 16, 1863, that the philosopher and writer, Santayana, was born and said — not on birth, but later — those who fail to learn the lessons of history are doomed to repeat those lessons.

Well I think we've learned the lessons of our constitutional history. Past efforts have failed. Amendments at Meech and Charlottetown failed because consultation with the public did not take place, and this is, after all, the country of the people not of the politicians. We learned. That's what the Co-Chairs and the MLAs went out to hear and to consult.

And we've learned. And this consultation and the advice has been very, very good. They've recognized, the people have I think, the different characteristics in our provinces. Those differences have not weakened us, but they've strengthened us. Our nation is graced by a diversity, a tolerance and a compassion, and an equality of opportunity that is unrivalled in this world.

Mr. Speaker, I should add that our democratic tradition is a model, I think also, of the other countries of the world where, if we think about it, there is violence and conflict and enmity and suspicion — countries being ripped apart by religion, differences of creed, and ethnic differences as well. We don't have that in Canada. We don't babble over our differences; we celebrate our differences. We recognize that those differences are like facets of a gem: each one irreplaceable, each one contributing, however, to the lustre and brilliance called Canada. That is the reality that we are in.

And what marvellous differences there are — a nation of two official languages, and yet dozens more languages thriving in our shops, our playgrounds, our homes. A nation of uncountable ethnic backgrounds and cultures. A nation built by our first nations people, the aboriginals, joined by new immigrants from every corner of the globe.

Together we have built a great country in a spirit of tolerance and diversity, one which can recognize the unique character which is Quebec. But one which can also say, because it is unique because of its French-speaking majority, its culture, its tradition of civil law, one that says also it's entitled to protect that uniqueness through its Legislative Assembly; and one country which recognizes at the same time that while they are unique, the principle of equality of people and provinces — a fundamental principle of democracy — must also be recognized and kept intact; equality of people and provinces while recognizing unique character.

When I say equality, I don't say that we are all the same. That's not equality. But equality before the law; equal in the eyes of the law — that's what the people have told us and reminded us. And that's what this resolution says.

And so if there's any change to the laws conferring powers on any province, our resolution says those powers must be available to all provinces. No special deals for any one province, Mr. Speaker, but a fair deal for all provinces, a good deal for all Canadians. A new deal for a strong and unified Canada built on the question of respect, and I may say this, built on this principle which the false prophets of sovereignty and independence in Quebec have tried to propagate.

It is not built on the notion, as they would have us believe, that it's a choice between Quebec or Canada, that it's a choice between Saskatchewan or Canada. But this motion and this exercise is based on the principle that you can be both a good

Canadian and a good Quebecer, a good Canadian and a good Saskatchewanian, a good Canadian no matter where you live, both, and inclusive in all of our cultures and our differences and our traditions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — So, Mr. Speaker, at the same time we also have learned that we must not derogate from any existing treaty rights, respect the diversity of our first nations people and their cultures. We have much work to do here but Winnipeg was a success in this process as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing, today we have come to the conclusion of this consultation and with the cooperation of all 58 MLAs — and I salute each and every one of you on all sides — and the citizen Co-Chairs and everybody out there. We are now able to pass a resolution through our House to send that message loud and clear to the people of Quebec and to all the people of Canada.

There can be no better time to send that message because twice Quebecers have voted for Canada. Let us speak out in support to their call that they want to remain in Canada. For though we assemble in an arena of difference, we can put it aside for the sake of a higher common cause, building that just society, that nobler society that Hugo talks about. With one voice we can speak of that united Canada and continue that race to building the stronger unified nation that we have.

And, Mr. Speaker, I close by saying this. I think Canadians are watching us today in this Legislative Assembly, and Canadians have watched Saskatchewan before, whether it's medicare or child benefit or whether we send the top women's curling rink to take on the world — as we have, and they'll beat the rest of the competition there. They're watching us. They're seeing whether we're gathered here to work in protecting and preserving this brilliant gem called Canada. A great nation it is.

Mr. Speaker, we are here on a very important mission and cause and we have begun the finish of this race with the passage of this motion.

And so, Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure and pride of my years in this House to move, seconded by the Leader of the Official Opposition, both in French and in English — and with the consent of the members of the House, I will limit this to reading it in English; I would like to say in the interests of time but also because my French is not as good as it should be to read to this motion, which I hereby now move on behalf of the members of the House.

Be it resolved that:

All members of this legislature, working in partnership with citizen Co-Chairs, having consulted the people of Saskatchewan about a framework for discussion on Canadian unity, agreed by Canada's federalist Premiers and territorial leaders in Calgary on September 14, 1997, and

The people of Saskatchewan having affirmed that Canada is worth preserving because ours is one of the world's

oldest and most stable democracies which continues to build a prosperous economy, continues to build on well established social programs and continues to be built by citizens from all regions and backgrounds working together, and

Nothing in the Calgary Framework for discussion being intended to derogate from any existing aboriginal or treaty right recognized by law, and

The people of Saskatchewan being committed to finding common ground on the unity of our country because Canada is worth preserving and because the consequences of failure would be severe for all Canadians — the separation of a province would mean years of discord over vital interests like citizenship, currency, the national debt, borders, trade, the make-up of the federal government, and even the ability of the rest of the country to stay together; and

Because unity therefore affects all of us — the people of Saskatchewan, Quebecers, and all Canadians — and we all have a direct interest in coming together to preserve it.

Therefore the legislature of Saskatchewan, on behalf of the citizens of our province, endorses the Calgary Framework for Discussion as follows:

All Canadians are equal and have rights preserved by law;

All provinces, while diverse in their characteristics, have equality of status;

Canada is graced by a diversity, tolerance, compassion and equality of opportunity that is without rival in the world;

Canada's diversity includes aboriginal peoples and cultures, the vitality of the English and French Languages, and a multicultural citizenry drawn from all parts of the world;

In Canada's federal system, where respect for diversity and equality underlies unity, the unique character of Quebec society, including its French-speaking majority, its culture and its tradition of civil law, is fundamental to the well-being of Canada. Consequently, the legislature and Government of Quebec have a role to protect and develop the unique character of Quebec society within Canada;

If any future constitutional amendment confers powers on one province, these powers must be available to all provinces; and

Canada is a federal system where federal, provincial, and territorial governments work in partnership while respecting each other's jurisdictions. Canadians want their governments to work cooperatively and with flexibility to ensure the efficiency and the effectiveness of the federation. Canadians want their governments to work together particularly in the delivery of their social programs. Provinces and territories renew their commitment to work in partnership with the Government of Canada to best serve the needs of Canadians.

Further, the people of Saskatchewan have told this Assembly, and it is the view of this Assembly, that any future constitutional amendment requiring this Assembly's consent, shall be approved by the people of Saskatchewan in a binding province-wide, or national referendum.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to move, seconded by the Leader of the Official Opposition, this motion on national unity.

Thank you very much, sir.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to speak to this resolution on behalf of all of my colleagues in my caucus. I want to begin by taking this opportunity to belatedly welcome all members and legislative staff back to the House this week for what I am sure will continue to be full of interesting discussion and debate over the issues that are of concern to the people of Saskatchewan.

I hope this rare fall sitting is the start of a trend in Saskatchewan. We welcome the opportunity this week to discuss many of the issues facing the province. But today our focus is on the unity of our great nation.

Mr. Speaker, the question of unity and the question of Quebec has been with us for as long as I can remember. Over the years we've been witness to several initiatives regarding the Canadian Constitution. We saw the Victoria conference in the early 1970s end in failure. We saw the repatriation of the constitution 10 years later — an effort that, in some people's eyes, has led to many of the problems we face today.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, we saw the Meech Lake accord, first hailed as a great triumph, but ultimately rejected at the hand of a couple of provinces. Next we saw the Charlottetown accord rejected outright by the people of Canada. And in between all those constitutional initiatives, Mr. Speaker, we've seen the PQ (Parti Québécois) elected twice in Quebec; we've seen the rise of the Bloc in Ottawa; and we've lived through two referendums in Quebec, the last being disconcertingly close in outcome.

Now we have the Calgary Declaration. The declaration is of course different than the other initiatives we've seen come and go because this is simply a statement by the rest of Canada to Quebec. It is not a full-fledged constitutional package. Really it's simply a statement of good intentions from Canadians outside of Quebec to Canadians inside of Quebec — a statement of goodwill, a framework on which to negotiate with Quebec when the time comes.

I think it's important that we take this kind of tactic, Mr. Speaker, because, as we all know, a full constitutional package is absolutely impossible to achieve while the separatists are in power in Quebec. They're not interested — and never will be interested — in coming to any sort of agreement because they are bound and determined to break up this country.

But, Mr. Speaker, that doesn't mean we can bury our head in the sand. We have to talk directly to the people of Quebec. We have to recognize that Lucien Bouchard does not speak for all Quebecers. Most people in Quebec are like most people in Saskatchewan. They are tired of this constant wrangling over the constitution by their leaders. They are more concerned with the real problems in their lives — problems such as taxes and jobs.

It is those Quebecers, the average citizens, that the Calgary Declaration is for. They must be shown that we care whether they leave or not. It is in everyone's best interests that our country stay together. Those people who say we in Saskatchewan would be better off if Quebec were to separate had better think twice about such rash statements. Because if this country does come apart, it will have a detrimental impact on Saskatchewan, just as it will have a very negative impact on the people of Quebec. You cannot simply say losing a quarter of a nation's population wouldn't impact on us all very heavily, especially in today's global economy.

Mr. Speaker, all members of this House have spent a good deal of the last two months listening to residents in Saskatchewan talk about the Calgary Declaration and what should be included in any resolution brought before this House regarding that declaration.

Just two short years ago we came perilously close to seeing the breakup of this country, which would have been the end of this complicated and wonderful entity we call Canada. And that would have been tragic. It would have been tragic for the people of Quebec and it would have been tragic for all Canadians outside of Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to resolve this issue once and for all, this debate must be conducted with complete openness and honesty. All the facts must be laid on the table, both by federalists who are trying to keep the country together and by separatists who are trying to rip Canada apart.

Mr. Speaker, we may not be able to do much to ensure the honesty and openness of the likes of Lucien Bouchard, or Gilles Douceppe, or any of the other separatists. But we can do much in having the federalists lay out all the facts for all the people of Quebec and all the people of Canada.

We can no longer shy away from the hard, cold realities of this question. We did that in 1995 and nearly lost the country. We cannot be afraid to tell the people of Quebec, and all Canadians, the harsh truth — and it is a harsh truth, Mr. Speaker.

Two years ago, our federalist leaders absolutely refused to discuss these realities. As a result, there were some voters in Quebec convinced that if they voted "yes" to separation, there would be no serious consequences. Many thought they would retain their Canadian citizenship, they would retain their passports, they would retain their right to elect representatives to the Canadian parliament, and nothing was done to dispel this myth. Certainly the separatists weren't going to do it for us. And this decision nearly resulted in the end of Canada as we know it. It's a mistake that cannot be repeated.

And in the meetings we've held around this province, Mr.

Speaker, people told us that. And I can only assume that's what all MLAs heard as well. The people who spoke to us said the consequences of separation must be clearly laid out for the people of Quebec and for all of Canadians. This has come to be known as plan B.

Mr. Speaker, there are two reasons why my caucus insisted that there had to be acknowledgement of plan B in the resolution we have before us today. And as I've already stated, this is something that Quebecers and all Canadians have to hear.

But, Mr. Speaker, another reason we insisted that plan B be mentioned in this resolution is because a majority of Saskatchewan residents said it should be in there. After all, Mr. Speaker, what was the purpose of this consultation process if we as politicians were simply able to weed out those things we did not agree with. It would have been a meaningless PR(public relations) campaign and nothing more.

That's why it came as quite a surprise to us in the Saskatchewan Party caucus that the other parties were very hesitant to make any references at all to plan B. And we couldn't figure out that hesitancy, since this is what many people in Saskatchewan told us to do. And it's very important we listen to them if this process is to have legitimacy in their eyes.

Mr. Speaker, I was glad to see the Prime Minister of Canada recently move toward this view as well. The federal government cannot be afraid to spell out the truths of separation to Quebec. It was afraid to do so in 1995 and we saw the result — near disaster. We cannot risk the country like that again. If you truly love this country and want to ensure it continues to hang together, the last thing you should do is ignore the consequences of separation.

If you truly love this country, you will deal with this issue from a position of complete honesty. Until very recently, most politicians in English Canada were not willing to do that. Now, hopefully, they are.

With both Meech Lake and Charlottetown, the people felt they weren't consulted properly in the formulation of the packages and they were rejected. So now how are we supposed to tell them that while they wanted plan B, the politicians didn't.

Mr. Speaker, we couldn't and we didn't. Though some would probably like to see the references to plan B and the consequences of separation spelled out in even stronger language, I believe the resolution we have before us today adequately expresses the viewpoints of the people of Saskatchewan when it comes to plan B. Like Canada itself, it is a compromise — a compromise between those who didn't want to even acknowledge the negative consequences of a divided Canada and those who want to spell it out in clear, excruciating detail.

As it now stands, this portion of the resolution states that the separation of any province of Canada would mean years of discord over vital interests such as citizenship, currency, the national debt, borders, trade, and the make up of the federal government.

(1515)

I can't see how anyone can object to this because it's simply the truth. And that's precisely what the people of Quebec have to be told. They have to know that we want them to stay, but if they do vote to leave, it will be a legal and political struggle that will last for years. It won't be simply a matter of a pen stroke.

Mr. Speaker, some may consider this as a steel fist in a velvet glove. I think that's a completely wrong outlook on plan B, because plan B is not based on threats. It's not meant to coerce the people of Quebec or any province. It simply outlines what we fear will happen in the event of a vote for separation.

Mr. Speaker, plan B is based on realities that must be legitimately communicated to all Canadians — in and out of Quebec. And it's part of the message that the people of Saskatchewan want to send to the people of Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, aside from plan B, the people of Saskatchewan told us two other things in overwhelming numbers during our consultations. And the first thing they told us was that they wanted it expressly stated that in the eyes of the federal government and in the eyes of the constitution, all the provinces are equal and all Canadians are equal.

We were told that there could be no preferences, no special powers granted to one province. And I believe the Calgary framework acknowledges this. In fact this tenet is included in the declaration's first two points. It states that all Canadians are equal and have rights protected by law and that all provinces, while diverse in their characteristics, have equality of status. I believe these two points go a long way in alleviating some of the concerns we heard that Quebec was going to be given special status over and above other provinces.

The sixth point further illustrates this by stating that any additional powers given to a province or provinces must be offered to all provinces. And this is very important, Mr. Speaker, if we are to gain support for a future constitutional amendment throughout Canada.

Mr. Speaker, it should be acknowledged that the fifth point in the Calgary framework is troubling for some in our province. Just as was the case with the term "distinct society," some are fearful that the term "unique", as it applies to Quebec, may mean more down the road than it appears to today.

However I'm hopeful that with the inclusion of the three points I've already spoken about, which make it clear all provinces are equal, fears over the term "unique" can be alleviated. Because let's face it, Quebec does have characteristics within our federation that are unquestionably unique. It is the only province where the majority does not speak English. It is also the only province which uses the civil code instead of common law.

And I believe the people of Saskatchewan recognize this very basic fact. All they are asking is for assurances that in this case unique simply means different. This they can accept. But they cannot accept unique if it means special, or even worse, if it means better. They need this assurance. And once again I think other portions of the Calgary Declaration go a long way in addressing these concerns.

Mr. Speaker, the second thing the people of Saskatchewan have told us in overwhelming numbers is that any future constitutional package must be put to a vote, either in a provincial referendum or a nation-wide vote. They want a direct say on the issue. And they should have a direct say. It is their country, after all, and the people should decide its future.

The resolution we are debating today speaks to that as well. It states very explicitly that such a vote will be held, and we were very glad to be part of the process that saw this portion included.

Mr. Speaker, the Calgary Declaration also speaks to the wide diversity in Canada itself. We are no longer simply the people of the two founding nations. Each of our backgrounds is filled with ancestry from many cultures and nations. That of course includes our aboriginal population, whose ancestors have been here the longest. And there are the first generation Canadians who have come from around the world to enjoy the freedom and prosperity we enjoy in Canada. For this reason we have to ensure future agreements also recognize this basic fact of Canada.

I'm glad to say the Calgary Declaration does recognize this diversity in our country. It's absolutely vital that everyone in Canada feels they are part of any future constitutional package. And if a deal is reached among the provinces that is based on the principles as outlined in the Calgary Declaration, I believe it will stand a very good chance of being ratified by the people of Saskatchewan and in all provinces.

Mr. Speaker, by passing this resolution today, hopefully we'll take a small step in resolving this ongoing debate that has fatigued the people of Canada. But again we have to be realistic. It's a very small step.

Until Quebec is willing to talk, we will obviously not have a deal. Because of this, a final resolution of this problem is still a long way down the road. And in the intervening years we may very well be faced with another referendum in Quebec. And if that's the case, Canadians who want to keep this country together must be able to match the separatists in the debate step for step. That didn't happen last time. It must happen the next time.

Those who are committed to Canada have to be able to match Lucien Bouchard's rhetoric and passion. The Calgary Declaration is a good first step but there is much work left to do.

Mr. Speaker, I'm certain every member of this House, every guest in the gallery today, the vast majority of Saskatchewan people, want to see Canada stand together strongly as we head towards the new millennium. It's time to take charge of our destiny. We can no longer let events unfold around us. Proud Canadians in all 10 provinces and the 2 territories must stand together and say no to the separatists at the same time as we say yes to the majority of Quebecers, who will choose Canada if they have all the facts before them and if the question they are asked to vote on in the future is clear.

The Calgary Declaration is but the foundation on which to build Canada's future. Now that the building has begun, let us all

hope it continues until this uncertainty about our nation no longer hangs over our heads.

Mr. Speaker, although not the final answer, this resolution is one piece in the unity puzzle. Let's now put the other pieces together. It is my pleasure to second the motion made by the Premier. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party caucus does support the Calgary Declaration, and with the changes we worked hard to get, we will be supporting this resolution. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I welcome to speak to this resolution, in support of it, on behalf of the Liberal caucus, and I feel honoured to be able to do so in this Assembly, and to speak on this very important issue of national unity.

During the recent past, we criss-crossed this province consulting with grass-root people as to their feelings, their thoughts, and their beliefs about national unity. From Ile-a-la-Crosse in the North to Estevan in the South, from Lloydminster in the West to Hudson Bay in the East, people responded by phone, by fax, by mail, and by Internet. We crossed all constituencies — political, rural, urban, geographic, and cultural. And today in this legislature we will debate a topic that everyone agrees is so important that it is nearly beyond description.

We must realize however, that no matter how cleverly we orate, no matter how well we put forth our arguments, no matter how eloquent the rhetoric, in the end we will only be judged by the impact that our deliberations have on the hearts and minds of our neighbours in Quebec. I only hope that our contribution will emphasize the advantages of a future that includes Quebec, rather than the negativity around what a separation might or might not mean for all of us here in Canada.

When we consider the areas of the world that are torn apart by war caused by prejudice, bigotry, and sheer lack of will to understand, we must realize that such feelings must not be allowed to be part of this country. Canada should lead the world as a model example of how people of many varied backgrounds can live and work together.

It may not always be easy for you or me to fully accept change, to fully accept that people can live and work and worship in a way that we believe to be different. Who told us that it was going to be easy? Who told us that because we grew up according to a certain style and custom that we were right?

I believe we are starting to send an important message, not only to the people of Saskatchewan, but also to the people of all of Canada — that we can put aside our partisan political views. We can put aside our differences and we can show people that we can work together for a common goal, a common vision, and a common dream. That dream is for a strong, vibrant, and most importantly, a united Canada.

You need only travel outside of our country to begin to truly appreciate the great wealth we have here. If you watch the news or travel to places like Zimbabwe or to Mozambique or to

Bosnia or to Cyprus or to the Middle East, you will quickly see how different a life people live in those countries. Not only do parents worry about how they will pay their bills and put food on the table, but they have an all-pervading fear for their personal safety as well, on a daily basis. Mothers wonder whether their children, after they leave for school, will I see them home safely tonight. There is fear of terrorism, of car bombs, of drive-by shootings.

Mozambique is the third most land-mined country in the world. When children out there go to play, they are not at all concerned over whether they are wearing Reeboks or Nikes. Instead they are concerned perhaps about losing a foot or a leg on a forgotten land-mine.

We are truly blessed to live a sheltered life here in Canada. We have trouble even comprehending what civil war and strife people live with day in and day out. When people say that we are well off, they are not only referring to our standard of living. They are referring to our quality of life in terms of peace and the security that we enjoy. That peace and security we have attained here in Canada is perhaps what most people mean when they say Canada is a wealthy country. It is wealth not only of natural resources but a wealth of diversity amongst our cultures, a wealth of diversity within those cultures, and a wealth of tolerance between those cultures. Our wealth is our people and our ability to work in harmony with one another.

Canada is highly respected by other countries around the world. They are impressed that we welcome 200,000 immigrants every year and that we remain a country of openness and acceptance. They are extremely impressed to hear the prediction that Canada will record the highest growth of all the G-7 countries over the next several years. They are impressed that the United Nations declared Canada the number one country in terms of the quality of life that it affords its people.

To most of the world, Canada is the land of dreams. The point that I really want to make here, Mr. Speaker, is that it is Canada that people are looking at, not just Saskatchewan and not just British Columbia and not just Quebec or Nova Scotia. They are looking at all of us, the entire Canada. We have become a success in our great country because we have cooperatively drawn the best from each province, each territory, each population, and each culture. We understand that equality does not necessarily mean uniformity. Equality means that we are all equal. We still have the freedom to celebrate our diversity. It is through that diversity we have learned to respect others and have respect for ourselves. It has helped us to more closely listen to our aboriginal people, the first inhabitants of this great country.

The learning of our tolerance has better prepared us to accept those who came here from every corner of the globe. Canada leads the world in human rights standards. We have recognized in our constitution the equality of all people, regardless of their race, colour, religion, or language. We also recognize the right of all people to freedom of association, freedom of speech, freedom of political expression.

Another area where Canada leads is in freedom from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment. In Canada we have a right to a fair trial and to be judged by a jury of our peers. Here in

Saskatchewan we have the Human Rights Commission, whose mandate is to protect those basic rights. It is there to help those who face racism and discrimination from people who are narrow-minded in their views.

(1530)

We are fortunate to live in this province and in this great country, because here those who would try to divide our population along racial lines, those who do not understand the damaging effects of systemic discrimination, represent only a small minority. We recognize the people of aboriginal descent, people who are physically challenged, people of visible minorities, and women. All these people have tremendous gifts and talents to offer our society.

We have in this province a number of organizations who are looking to the future, who recognize that the demographics of our future workforce will be far different that they are today. We have people who recognize that a diverse workforce is a stronger workforce. It will be a workforce that builds on everyone's unique strength. Those organizations can see the future; are acting now through fair hiring and employment equity programs to tap into the future of human resources of this province. These groups must become our next middle class, and in their own way contribute to our economy.

Mr. Speaker, my parents came here in the early 1920s from war-torn Europe to find warmth, welcome, compassion, and sharing. They had a dream; they had hopes. They wanted to live in a land that was free from war, free from racism, and free from intolerance.

My parents spoke very little English when they arrived here, yet they were welcomed. People accepted them and helped them to assimilate. Being welcomed here brought them a feeling of acceptance and opportunity for who they were and who they represented. They made a life in this great country. They raised a family, helped their community to grow, and they built a future here for themselves and their children. They had a great deal of pride not only in their own culture, but in the pride of now being accepted and becoming Canadians.

I believe it is because of so many of our immigrants, that they came from lands of strife and war-torn countries, that we as Canadians want to help those people in that kind of trouble. But what we need of course, is more courage and faith and love. We need the courage and faith of our fathers and our grandfathers. We need the faith and love of our mothers and our grandmothers, because courage and faith and love can and does work miracles.

Ingrained in our history is the philosophy of those who were determined to lead by example, to show that a country can work as a whole; to show that people can work together and that we should try and share that experience throughout the world.

Canada has a tremendous tradition of peacekeeping in the world. In fact, Mr. Speaker, our prime minister, Lester B. Pearson, won the Nobel Peace Prize for his accomplishments in helping to bring peace in the Middle East.

Wherever there is conflict in the world, we see Canadian

peacekeeping forces ready to step in and help. Our forces have distinguished themselves in many countries around the globe as Canadian forces. They are not the Ontario armed forces or the Quebec armed forces or the Alberta armed forces — they are the Canadian Armed Forces.

They have also distinguished themselves in fighting in major wars as well, representing our country. When Canadian forces take to the field and their blood is given in the fight, it is not the blood of any one province; it is blood given on behalf of Canada.

Last November 10 there was a military funeral for the crew of Halifax LW 682, a Canadian bomber shot down over Belgium in the Second World War and recovered from the swamp on September 6, 1997.

I would, just for the record, Mr. Speaker, like to share with you the names and the provinces of the crew who were all killed that fateful night.

Wilbur Bentz of Penticton, British Columbia; Fred Roach, Leamington, Ontario; John Summerhayes of Brantford, Ontario; Joseph Arbour, Montreal, Quebec; Jack McIntyre, Biggar, Saskatchewan; Clifford Phillips, Tisdale, Saskatchewan; Thomas Taylor, Chisolm Mills, Alberta; and Roy Eilerslie, from England.

From British Columbia to Quebec, those men went overseas as Canadians. They flew as a team, they fought as a team, and they died as a team.

It was the Canadians who liberated Belgium in the Second World War. And to this day, Mr. Speaker, to this very day, Canadians are very highly respected by the Belgian people. What we did as a country will never be forgotten in many parts of our globe.

Our caucus chief-of-staff, Richard Phillips, was fortunate enough to participate in these very special Remembrance Day ceremonies in Europe because he was related to one of these brave men — Clifford Phillips.

Richard told me that while he was in Belgium, he learned the school children there are each given the responsibility for looking after one war grave. On November 10 at the funeral for the bomber crew, some of the bomber crew families, including Richard, had the opportunity to meet some of the children who will look after the graves of these men. One of the grandchildren said, I will look after your uncle's grave. I will take good care of it because he came over from Canada and gave his life for us.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm told that there was not a dry eye in the group on that particular day. They do that, Mr. Speaker. They do not forget their history and they do not forget the people that gave them the freedom. So that they will not forget it was Canada who as a country reached out to help them. It was not any one province; it was all of us.

We too have a rich history in our country. As Canadians we have led the world in many areas of sport, recreation, of fine arts, science, and space technology, the Canadarm being a good

example. We have achieved that world renown not as individual provinces, but as working together and sharing our resources within our country. We have achieved it as Canadians.

Throughout our history, we have a reputation of openness. Whether it was the slaves who came to us through the underground railroad, or the Irish who came to escape the famine, or the settlers who came to open our West, or the refugees who come to us to escape persecution, Canada is a land of acceptance, a safe haven. Our acceptance is a trait that sets us apart in the world, where we see so much conflict, so much war and devastating ethnic cleansing and intolerance. Believe me, we are the envy of many.

If we want to take on the 21st century, if we want to take on the challenges of the global world where competition will be fierce, and if we really want the challenge of a turbulent global economy, then we need now more than ever before to be united. Stability means strength — strength for our currency, strength for our business, strength for our social programs, strength for our economy, and most importantly, strength for the Canadian people.

There has been devolution of power from the British parliament to the Scottish people in recent times. The Scots have now some limited powers on some of their affairs, but limited powers.

Mr. Speaker, there is no country anywhere in the Commonwealth, and probably anywhere in the world, where a federal government has shared as much power with its member states as we have here in Canada. We are already highly devolved.

At this point in time, we in Saskatchewan perhaps will start to become concerned if this trend continues. I do not believe it is in Saskatchewan's interest to end national standards or to limit federal spending powers. What may be good for the larger provinces, may not be good for Saskatchewan or Manitoba or Newfoundland. We feel that we are getting close to the point where further erosion of federal responsibilities may start to weaken and not strengthen our entire union.

I believe our best opportunity to guarantee the freedom we now enjoy is an inherent federal state — a state in which the powers of government are divided so that a nation as large and as complex as Canada can find a logical pattern to govern itself.

The answer to these complex challenges may not be easily found. They may come in time through dialogue and understanding. But the answers will come if you and I do our part as citizens of this great country. We may not find all the answers in a complex constitution, but rather in the give and take of everyday political life.

At the end of the day, I urge everyone to continue the dialogue that we have started a few months ago. You will hear different views from many of your friends and neighbours, and quite frankly, some of those will be harsh words. But history has repeatedly shown us that words of rejection, words of betrayal, words of hatred or words of denial, are not effective. They have the effect of further dividing people. They further entrench people into their own isolated camps.

I do not want to win this argument with Quebec separatists if it means that they will have to lay down their emotional and intellectual arms and surrender. We must celebrate our Canadian union, not just tolerate it. Winning the argument for a Canada including Quebec, cannot mean that their ideas and their contributions to Canada are somehow diminished or demeaned or discarded. It would not be a victory if it meant people of Quebec were to lose their language or culture. It will only be a victory if they too understand the strength and value of being a part of this great country we call Canada.

Will sharp words help them to understand? I don't believe so.

I and my colleagues urge everyone to continue to listen, to continue to share with others a vision of a strong and united Canada. Let people know that we are prepared in a very positive way to solidify and secure the future of our nation, a nation that includes Quebec. Do it not only for ourselves, but for our future generations.

I want a society and a country where a son can choose to practise medicine in the belle province of Quebec, where a niece can teach French in the cities of northern Alberta, and where my neighbour can retire in Nova Scotia, and a country where people from Toronto can play hockey in La Pas, Manitoba, a country where my aunt can choose to be buried in her beloved Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, we support this resolution and I say to everyone today, merci, vive le Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a privilege for me to be able to speak to this motion this afternoon.

This year, Newfoundland celebrated its 500th birthday and I asked a friend the other day if he were surprised by the fact that Canada's youngest province has an active history dating back before the time of Columbus and he gave me a blank stare. What do you mean? he asked. Newfoundland started to count in 1949 when it joined Confederation. Before that, who'd ever heard of it?

Well that's a really very telling retort, Mr. Speaker. This man is a bright individual, quite well educated, has travelled abroad and yet had equally disconcerting lapses and views about other information related to his country of birth. He knew nothing of the challenges of the Acadians and how they came to settle in New Brunswick, somewhat more about the opening of the West and why decisions were made to divide Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta into three separate provinces rather than leave one region that could compete with Ontario and Quebec. He drew a blank on British Columbia altogether.

And even though he had strong dogmatic comments about Quebec, he had no knowledge of the reasons why la belle province had such reservations about joining with Ontario, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick to form the nation of Canada in the first place. He had no knowledge of what the final agreement included to bring it inside or how the Quiet Revolution came to be or what preceded the formation of the

Parti Québécois; and had no clue who Pierre Vallières is, the contents of Vallières book, *White Niggers of America*, and the subsequent repercussions of this publication and the changing of the face of an innocent young country to one that had come to terms with its first time in its history with terrorism with the advent of the FLQ (Front de Libération du Québec).

Yes, it became quite apparent in short order that my friend had little understanding of how this vast country of Canada, the second largest nation in the world, came to be, with all of her magnificent and glorious history, her diverse and curious inhabitants, and her fascinating foibles.

(1545)

Unfortunately I fear, he is more representative of the average Canadian than not. Perhaps it is this lack of knowledge and awareness of how we came to be. Perhaps it is our lack of knowledge and awareness about what makes each region feel proud. Perhaps it is our lack of knowledge and awareness about what makes each region feel vulnerable. Perhaps it is our inability to truly speak to one another that has brought us to the confusion and the ongoing debate about Canadian unity.

The time most certainly has come to discuss fundamental values to which we all can aspire as citizens of this great nation. The Calgary Declaration is one more step on a path in search of drawing Quebec into constitutional reconciliation. It wisely presents seven principles instead of suggesting changes to the constitution. And I say wisely because some attempts to change our constitution have met with failure and greater disharmony.

This has been evident since 1964 and was catapulted to prominence in 1982 with the Constitution Act which came into force, agreed to by the prime minister, the premiers of the country, except for the Premier of Quebec. And it was because of these and many other historical realities that the premiers and territorial leaders, except Premier Bouchard, met in Calgary on September 14 of this year and unanimously agreed on a framework for public consultations on ways to strengthen our Canadian federation. They are to be commended for demonstrating true leadership — true leadership on this extraordinary issue — and I wish to publicly thank them for doing so.

Having been involved in the meetings in Ottawa during the Charlottetown accord, this most recent undertaking is far more practical an approach — practical because it deals simply with principles; practical because the Charlottetown accord was everything but the kitchen sink; and practical because if we cannot agree to what we think we should be, in broad-reaching terms, how will we ever be able to address ourselves in detail?

While some Canadians say that they are tired of this ongoing process, and some say that all of this has been too expensive. Well we all know that everything worthwhile takes energy and attention. And in response to those who feel that too much money has been wasted on the issue of national unity, the words of my very wise and highly-competent Co-Chair, Gordon Barnhart, are the best: how much is a country worth?

At this time I'd like to thank Gordon for the eagerness of his acceptance to be my Co-Chair, his major contribution, and let

everyone know that it is indeed appropriate and reassuring at this moment that he's applying his talents in assisting Russia in developing its democracy.

Saskatchewan citizens should be very proud of the way that they've participated. One of the most enjoyable aspects of this process was watching how participants really learned from one another. When one person stated that Canadians really aren't as tolerant as we should be, another told how he had lived under six regimes and that Canadians most certainly are tolerant. One only need to live abroad to learn what tolerance truly means.

And children were extraordinary. They were so enthusiastic. In fact days following the closure of the public consultations, I had parents and young people calling my home and my constituency office wondering if they could give more input. And one child, the age of 10, exclaimed the following that it was about time that children were consulted because you grown-ups think that this unity issue is all about you when it's really about us.

Now this brings us to the issue of politics over patriotism. And there are those who would be willing to lose a country for the sake of political points. This does not belie that I believe for one moment that we should simply roll over and play dead for the Jacques Parizeaus of the world.

However, the best people to deliver a strong message to Quebecers — a strong federalist message to Quebecers — are those whose words cannot be misconstrued. The message should not come from those of us who may have our words construed any way that a sovereigntist media chooses.

Stephane Dion and other young Quebecers with thoughtful views provide the best means of sending the federalist message. And it is a fact that those who voted overwhelmingly for separation came from areas of Quebec that speak only French.

It is a fact that a majority of French-speaking media support the separatist cause. It is a fact that many members of the national media do not understand French and provide equally skewed information to English-speaking Canadians.

It is crucial that Canadians inside and outside Quebec have an opportunity to hear all sides of the unity issue. And I submit that the federalist message is best delivered by those who fully understand the nuances and have the potential of being heard.

Now in closing, Canadians are often seen as lacking in passion. This exercise has demonstrated to me that while we are not boisterously patriotic, we most certainly love our home and native land. We stand on guard in a different way. Not with weapons or oppression, but with dialogue and more dialogue and more dialogue. And I say, good for us.

We are held in high esteem throughout the world because we deserve to be. It is becoming apparent, however, that we must dedicate ourselves to learning more about each other and ensure that our young people get to be with one another. Then with glowing hearts we shall see her rise, the true North strong and free.

It is not only God's job to keep our land glorious and free, Mr. Speaker, it depends upon 10 of the most important two-letter

words in our language — if it is to be, it is up to me. It is with great pride that I support the resolution before this Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, one could hardly pass up the opportunity to say even a few words in such a special occasion as this. I will remember the important words that were once told to me and that is that, of course, the more the speakers, the more appreciated are the ones that speak very briefly. So I want to say that there are . . . Most things here that have been said today, that everyone of us can agree with, but there are still a couple of points I think that are important to be made.

I want to go back to the beginning just for a second, because of course it's important to remember that when we went out and started to discuss this program we were met with quite a different approach than what we saw at the end. People, quite frankly, were tired of hearing about division, they were tired of hearing about separation, and they, quite frankly, were sick and tired of hearing about Quebec wanting more.

But of course once we gained their attention and they realized that we were serious and that our Premier was serious and that we were genuinely going to take another shot at this issue, they quickly said, yes, we want to save this country. We believe in it. We're just tired of all of the talking.

And so, Mr. Premier, I guess we could safely say, as we stand here, that we've heard all of you people speak — we've heard you speak; we've heard all of the other speakers — and I could say ditto. Ditto to all of that on behalf of my constituents and I think a lot of the people.

But we want to point out to you that there a couple of things that surprised me in this process that I don't think were mentioned here today. The first is that there is no urban/rural split. Finally, in this province, we found something that everybody agrees on. There are just as many people in the city and just as many people in the country that don't care. But the most of them do, and they care quite passionately. And I was quite surprised at this.

I was quite surprised by our veterans, and of course they're a little older now, those that fought in the wars, and so they take no problem at all in saying exactly what they mean and what they think. And once they say that, of course, then the others fall into place along as well.

And I found that our recent immigrants agreed most fully with those people, and of course they said straight out that if this country breaks up, there'll be big trouble. The trouble will be of course that we will have economic chaos and economic chaos will lead to civil war. And instead of us having a country where people from around the world view this nation as a place where you can come to as an immigrant, where the streets are paved in gold, they will run in blood.

And quite frankly that tells me, Mr. Premier, that this issue is so important that we must now go out on this adventure sending the very best people that we can possibly have to do whatever has to be done.

And that, Mr. Premier, leads me to another point that I want to make. And that point, I believe, is very simply that the people from El Salvador and the people from Bosnia are right when they say it could happen here, it could happen here. And so we must send the best person to negotiate for us.

We, Mr. Speaker, are very fortunate in this province in that we have a Premier who has already been chosen to lead this initiative on behalf of the nation. All of the premiers have decided that and agreed. We're very fortunate that we have this very distinguished gentleman among us — the Premier of our province — a man who has distinguished himself in the eyes not only of the people of Saskatchewan, but in the eyes of the people of this nation through the precedence of the work of the past that he has done. And that precedence of work, of course, being his work on the repatriation of the constitution, on the repatriation of the constitution, and his work on human works, and his work of course recently on the dissemination of power through a cooperation program that he's just set up.

We're very proud of you, Mr. Premier, and we believe that if anybody can do the job, you can. And quite frankly, I believe that if you do fail — I don't think you will — but if you do, then the job couldn't be done by anyone. You are the best person at this time in history to do this job.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Goohsen: — Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I simply want to say on behalf of the constituents from the Cyprus Hills and I'm sure of all the people of Saskatchewan, good luck, Mr. Premier, and Godspeed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The division bells rang from 3:58 p.m. until 3:59 p.m.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas — 56

Romanow	Flavel	Van Mulligen
Wiens	MacKinnon	Lingenfelter
Shillington	Mitchell	Atkinson
Tchorzewski	Johnson	Whitmore
Goulet	Lautermilch	Upshall
Kowalsky	Crofford	Calvert
Teichrob	Pringle	Koenker
Trew	Renaud	Lorje
Bradley	Scott	Nilson
Cline	Serby	Hamilton
Stanger	Sonntag	Wall
Kasperski	Ward	Jess
Langford	Murrell	Thomson
Krawetz	Bjornerud	Toth
D'Autremont	Boyd	Draude
Gantefoer	Heppner	Osika
Hillson	McPherson	Aldridge
Belanger	McLane	Haverstock
Julé	Goohsen	

Nays — Nil

The Speaker: — The motion is carried unanimously.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Why is the Premier on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, I would like to move this motion, and I hope it would be seconded by the Leader of the Opposition and in spirit by all of us, and I'll read it and then see if I can get unanimous consent.

That the resolution just passed, together with a transcript of the debate be transmitted to the Legislatures of the provinces, the territories, the House of Commons and the Senate on behalf of this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan, by Mr. Speaker.

I seek leave for that.

Leave granted.

(1600)

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I so move this motion.

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker: — Why is the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Wiens: — Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, to ask for the participation of the House in singing *O Canada* on this historic occasion.

Leave granted.

The Speaker: — Hon. members, if you please stand. And I would also acknowledge that it is unusual and not usually permitted in this House that those who are visitors participate in the proceedings of the House, but would leave be granted to allow visitors to participate?

Leave granted.

The Speaker: — Please stand for the national anthem.

(*O Canada*)

The Assembly adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

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