

The Assembly met at 13:30.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**PRESENTING PETITIONS**

**Mr. Kwiatkowski:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan who are upset with the government's decision to transfer the surplus from the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund to the General Revenue Fund. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to refund the \$1.6 million intended for the Saskatchewan Fish and Wildlife Development Fund and discontinue its present policy of using this money for other government purposes.

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

This particular petition, Mr. Speaker, is signed by citizens of Regina, Indian Head, Pense, Raymore, Lumsden, and Watrous.

I so present.

**Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I once again have a petition on behalf of citizens concerned with overfishing at Lake of the Prairies. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to work with the federal government, First Nations representatives, and with other provincial governments to bring about a resolution in the Lake of the Prairies situation and to ensure that our natural resources as a whole are used in a responsible manner by all people in the future.

The signators, Mr. Speaker, are mostly from the community of Langenburg.

**Ms. Bakken:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of residents of Craik and Davidson and area about their health care. And the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to make the necessary steps to ensure that Davidson and Craik health centres be maintained at their current level of service at minimum, with 24-hour acute care, emergency, and doctorial services available as well as laboratory, physiotherapy, public health, home care, and long-term care services available to users from the Craik and Davidson area and beyond.

And as duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And the petition is signed by residents of Davidson, Kenaston, and Bladworth.

I so present.

**Mr. Wall:** — Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The petitions continue to roll in about the hospital issue in Swift Current. The prayer of these petitions today reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to commit its 65 per cent share of funding for a new regional hospital in Swift Current.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petitioners today are from the great city of Swift Current and the southwest Saskatchewan community of Eastend.

I so present.

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you. And, Mr. Speaker, I have a petition with citizens opposed to possible reduction of services, Davidson and Craik health centres.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Davidson and Craik health centres be maintained at their current level of service at a minimum, with 24 acute care, emergency, and doctorial services available as well as lab, physiotherapy, public health, home care, and long-term care services available to the users from the Craik and Davidson area and beyond.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens from Davidson, Craik, Girvin, Kenaston, and Bladworth.

I so present.

**Mr. Wiberg:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I have a petition from people who are opposed to the possible reduction of services to the Davidson and Craik health centres. And the petition reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Davidson and Craik health centres be maintained at their current level of services at a minimum, with 24-hour care, emergency, doctorial services available as well as laboratory, physiotherapy, public health, home care, and long-term care services available to users from the Craik and Davidson area and beyond.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition has been signed by good people from Davidson, Bladworth, Loreburn, and Eston.

I so present.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition today from citizens concerned about a reasonably priced telephone service. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to modify the exorbitant rates of telephone hookup to these cabins and provide reliable cellular telephone coverage.

And as is duty bound, your petitioners ever pray.

Signed by the citizens of Edmonton, Martensville, Saskatoon, Leask, and Dalmeny.

I so present.

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, today I have a petition of citizens concerned about getting high-speed Internet. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to provide high-speed Internet service to the community of Lanigan.

And the petitions, Mr. Speaker, are signed by citizens from Lanigan, Guernsey, and Drake.

I so present.

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of constituents who are concerned with the detrimental changes to this year's crop insurance program. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to halt its plan to take money out of the crop insurance program and hike farmers' crop insurance premium rates while reducing coverage in order to pay off the provincial government's debt to the federal government.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

The signatures to this petition, Mr. Speaker, all come from the good community of Wishart.

I so present.

### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Deputy Clerk:** — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and are hereby read and received as addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional paper nos. 11, 18, 22, 146, 147, 168, 169, and no. 174.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Osika:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to welcome once again to this Assembly a community leader with whom I have the opportunity to engage in discussions over matters of mutual concern on behalf of communities throughout this great province of ours. It's Mr. Mike Badham, the president of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, and the communications manager for SUMA, Mr. Andrew Rathwell, who are seated in your

gallery, Mr. Speaker.

I'd ask all members to welcome them.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hillson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are two guests seated in your gallery I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly. Joining us this afternoon are Bev Clark who is a former schoolteacher and now she is an art docent with the Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, explaining the significance of Aboriginal art to students.

And also joining us this afternoon is Danusia Wiazowski. Danusia is a Canadian history teacher from Montreal who is in Saskatchewan visiting friends.

I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seeing as I've been determined on Monday and Tuesday to introduce representatives from Week in Wascana summer camp, they've provided me with a little more information.

And so sitting in your gallery today are leaders and campers from the fourth annual Week in Wascana, designed for kids 8 to 11. And in addition to their visit to the Legislative Building, the campers will be spending time at Wascana Place, the Science Centre, the MacKenzie Art Gallery, the Centre of the Arts, and the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. And they're going to create a time capsule for each camper to take home and save for 20 years.

This sounds like a great way to spend one week of our precious summer holidays, Mr. Speaker, and I ask all members to join me in welcoming this group of campers and group leaders.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seated in your gallery are two guests that I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly. Seated with my constituency assistant, Ms. Carol Mellnick, is a young lady, Lindsay Weisbrod, who is working in my office for the summer, Mr. Speaker. And she has a keen interest in the political process and is here today to observe question period and the Premier's estimates that will follow.

And I'd ask all members of the Assembly to help me welcome them.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Addley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw attention to the House, a young person sitting in your gallery, Maria Kurylo, who's a legislative intern who has been of great assistance to me personally; and on behalf of the member for Regina Elphinstone, would like all members to welcome her today — also I'm sure the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood who was assigned to Maria, or Maria was assigned to him, vice versa.

I was able to meet Maria early on during the Speaker's tour in school program visits. So there couldn't be a better pioneer for the Saskatchewan legislative intern program, and I know we've learned a lot and I hope that they have as well.

So if all hon. members would welcome Maria here today.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, a young gentleman sitting in the west gallery who's Joe McMaster. And he is entering his final year at the College of Commerce in Saskatoon, majoring in finance, and we're very fortunate because we have him working in our office for this summer.

So I'd like all members to welcome Joe to the legislature.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

##### New Inductees to Saskatchewan Baseball Hall of Fame

**Ms. Bakken:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on August 17 in Battleford the Saskatchewan Baseball Hall of Fame will honour baseball greats from across the province.

I'd like to congratulate Larry Leflar of Bengough and the Nyhus family of Ceylon who will be two of the honourees that will be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Larry Leflar was raised in the Bengough area and he started playing baseball when he was only eight years old and played for some 50 years. Larry is well known as one of very few left-handed shortstops and is a feared left-handed hitter. In the words of his peers, Larry had a strong arm, great speed, and great hustle. Larry is still involved in promotion of baseball in his community today.

Mr. Speaker, the Nyhus baseball team from Ceylon was famous not only for their great ability on the field but also because the team consisted of nine Nyhus brothers — Ben, Albin, Otto, Ed, Harold, Alick, Hjalmer, Ted and Fritz. The Nyhus family have baseball roots that date back to 1914 when the large family moved from Minnesota to Ceylon. They played together during the 1920s and 1930s.

Again, congratulations to Larry Leflar and the Nyhus brothers and a special thank you from myself and all others across Saskatchewan who love the great game of baseball. We thank you for your contribution to the game.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

##### Saskatoon to Host Rendezvous Canada 2005

**Ms. Lorjé:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again Saskatchewan has been chosen to host a national event with international recognition. Most particularly, once again Saskatoon has been chosen to host a national event with international recognition.

This morning the Tourism Industry Association of Canada announced that they have selected Saskatoon as the host city for Rendezvous Canada 2005. This marks the first time that our great province will host Canada's signature tourism showcase.

Rendezvous Canada is an international marketplace that attracts thousands of people, including buyers from around the world, sellers from across the country, and international travel writers reporting on the event and the host venue.

Saskatchewan's tourism industry is an important and growing part of our economy, contributing nearly \$1.3 billion annually. One of every ten workers in our province are in tourism and tourism-related occupations. This event will strengthen the industry in our province and also strengthen Saskatchewan's presence as a tourism destination of choice.

We are confident that Saskatoon and Saskatchewan will be outstanding hosts for Rendezvous Canada 2005. Our province boasts a range of exciting and unique natural, cultural, and historic tourism attractions. Hosting this major event during our centennial year will be a chance to showcase to the world, tourism, products, and hospitality that are second to none.

I ask everyone to join me in congratulating Tourism Saskatchewan and especially Tourism Saskatoon for attracting such a prestigious event to our province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

(13:45)

##### 27th Annual Olde Tyme Fiddle Festival

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend the community of Govan hosted the 27th Annual Olde Tyme Fiddle Festival. Contestants ranging from ages 5 to 85 played waltzes, jigs, and reels, in pursuit of more than \$6,000 in prize money.

Fiddle fans and contestants from across Western Canada as well as from a number of northern States gathered in Govan for a weekend of fiddling, jigging, and jamming. One of the highlights of the weekend was Friday night when after a short opening ceremony, the guest performers entertained. Accomplished fiddlers from across Western Canada had the people on their feet.

Mr. Speaker, the audience was also treated to a medley of traditional Scottish and Irish selections when Paddy Duncan of Inverness, Scotland took to the stage. Paddy was one of the featured entertainers of the weekend. The evening wrapped up with a group from New Brunswick, Ivan Hicks and the Maritime Express who had the audience singing, laughing, and jigging.

As one can well imagine, Mr. Speaker, to organize and execute an event such as this the entire community of Govan was involved. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate all the people of Govan and especially those on the organizing committee for a job well done.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Regina Employment Statistics

**Mr. Yates:** — Well, well, well, Mr. Speaker. For the second month in a row Regina has had the largest job growth on the Prairies, boasting a whopping 5.3 per cent increase in employment this June.

According to a StatsCanada report released by the regional economic development authority, the employed workforce grew by 5,400 jobs, Mr. Speaker. The 5.3 per cent increase in year over year employment growth was the best among the five major Prairie cities, Mr. Speaker. And Saskatoon came in second with a 2.1 per cent growth. For job growth, for the year to date, Regina took second place with a solid 3.7 per cent increase, followed by Saskatoon at 1.9 per cent.

The president and CEO (chief executive office) of the Regina Regional Economic Development Authority said this growth was boosted by the improving provincial economy. Manufacturing led the way, Mr. Speaker, with 1,400 new jobs, followed by construction with 1,300 new jobs. And the service sector and private sector management jobs increased by 1,400, Mr. Speaker.

Our economy has returned to posting back-to-back increases in employment growth in May and June. StatsCanada reported a whopping 12,800 more people were working in the province in June, over this time last year, Mr. Speaker, while May grew by 11,000 over the previous year, Mr. Speaker. An increasing and improving pattern, Mr. Speaker, for the future.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Saskatchewan 55 Plus Summer Games

**Mr. Hillson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last evening the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation and I had the honour of opening the Saskatchewan 55 Plus Summer Games in North Battleford. A thousand people turned out to the North Battleford Civic Centre to watch the competitors being led in by the Battleford Pipe and Drum Band. There are over 700 competitors involved in the various events.

The Battlefords are enthusiastically behind the games and the local business has contributed \$10,000. Joyce Salie, Chair of the host organizing committee has assembled a volunteer team of 250 people working hard to make sure our visitors feel welcome and the games are a success.

The athletes were obviously enjoying themselves at the opening ceremonies. They provide an excellent example to all of our citizens of healthy lifestyles at all stages of life.

Best wishes to all competitors and volunteers in what I am confident will be the most successful 55 Plus Saskatchewan Games ever. Congratulations to all volunteers and competitors. Let the games begin.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Summer Fun in Saskatoon

**Ms. Jones:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, now that

we've just about packed up our old kit bags and can take a few days to plan our summer activities, I have a suggestion for all members and for everyone within earshot — come to Saskatoon.

As well as some of the finest restaurants, finest parks, darkest and coolest watering places, and most invigorating recreational facilities, we have a host of events to satisfy just about anyone's taste.

You've already heard how to brush up on your Shakespeare. If you want something a bit more modern and off-the-wall, you can try the member from Nutana's Fringe Festival celebrating its 10th highly successful year, July 30 to August 8. Or starting tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, the Ex, Saskatchewan's largest single event. We've got an air show on August 14 and 15. We've got the Folkfest, August 12 to 14.

And if you like our folk festival, I'm sure the member from Shellbrook would not mind if I suggest you keep on travelling up to the Ness Creek Music Festival, one of the province's best and the best kept secret.

And more, Mr. Speaker, much, much more. Saskatoon is the place to be — so come on up. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Wadena Teacher Nominated for Governor General's Medal of Excellence

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to inform the Assembly about a constituent of mine, Mr. Gary Gabel of Wadena Composite School. Some hon. members may remember Mr. Gabel as one of the teachers who participated in the social studies teachers' institute in the legislature. He has been an integral part of the Wadena School for a number of years.

This year, he has been honoured by being nominated for the Governor General's Medal of Excellence in the teaching of Canadian Studies. This is a national award, given each year to a teacher of Canadian Studies. Like the Governor General's Award for Student Proficiency, the teaching award is also for proficiency.

According to Mr. Gabel, the nomination is award by itself. He said it should be noted that no teacher is of any value without the support of excellent students and staff willing to participate in innovation and professional development.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of all the teachers in this province for their dedication to their students. Mr. Gabel exemplifies the role of the teacher. I wish him the best of luck this fall when the national award recipient will be announced.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Summer Events in Regina

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment my good friend from Saskatoon Meewasin in her statement on our sister city of Saskatoon because we all . . . we are after all

people of co-operation and sharing. So let me say this: if you can't make it all the way to the North, then we have enough right here in Regina to satisfy every need and every whim of the inquiring tourist. The summer days are long and we can fill them all.

For openers, two bits of significant Saskatchewan history. Starting tonight at the Schumiatcher Theatre in the MacKenzie Art Gallery is the . . . running from now to August 16, *The Trial of Louis Riel*, the dramatic re-creation of Canada's most famous trial. Also every other . . . every Tuesday evening at the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) Training Academy, you can see the traditional and very moving sunset ceremony.

And starting tomorrow and running through the weekend, you can Rock'N the Valley at Craven. If past history is any gauge, Mr. Speaker, you'll be joined by thousands.

At the end of the month, Buffalo Days and the Provincial Exhibition begin, followed shortly by the Regina Folk Festival downtown, and of course the Royal Red Arabian Horse Show at the Exhibition grounds.

Three events on the water take us to Labour Day, Mr. Speaker: the Lanterns on the Lake ceremony, the SaskPower Dragon Boat Festival, both in Wascana Centre, and our excellent Regina Symphony will once again be taking the classics to the outdoors with the Beethoven at Buffalo Pound concert on August 25.

It's summer — time to enjoy. We can do it here, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Public Accounts for 2001-2002

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last year the Provincial Auditor signed off on Volume 1 of the Public Accounts for 2000-2001 on June 5. These public accounts, Mr. Speaker, are the summary financial statements of the government. So presumably, the Provincial Auditor has already signed off for the 2001-2002 Public Accounts documents.

Mr. Speaker, why is the NDP (New Democratic Party) government refusing to release the Public Accounts? Is it because they show that this Premier ran a huge deficit in his first year of office?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite want to talk about a record of accountability, I want to inform the House and I want to inform the people of the province that this government has been releasing the Public Accounts earlier each year and earlier than we've released them before in history . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — And I also want to tell that member, Mr. Speaker, that this government not only started having budgets every year — something the members opposite unbelievably didn't do, Mr. Speaker — but we introduced mid-year financial reports to make it clear to the people of the province every six months how the province was doing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we're going further. We're going to be releasing quarterly financial statements about how the province's finances are.

When it comes to accountability, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor has said we have one of the finest sets of books in the country. That's our record. We're accountable. We'll be releasing the Public Accounts earlier than they ever did, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, it's very clear that the minister didn't answer the question.

The signatures on this document last year from the former deputy minister, Mr. Boothe, and Mr. Wendel, the auditor, are June of 2001.

Now it is our understanding that Volume 1 of the Public Accounts for this March 31 have been printed and are ready to be released. The summary financial statement for that current year will show a large deficit for the year 2001-2002 which is probably why the NDP haven't wanted to release this document while we're in session.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm that the Public Accounts are printed and ready to be released? And what is the size of the deficit from the summary financial statements for March 31, 2002?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — It is well-known, as was stated at the time of the budget, that on a cash basis or a summary financial basis, we will be in a deficit for the year ending March 31, 2002. That's a well-known fact, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Order. Recognize the . . . Order.

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Mr. Speaker, it is well known that we are drawing on our savings in order to balance the budget in the General Revenue Fund. That's not something that was ever hidden, Mr. Speaker.

Savings, I might add, we certainly would not have had to draw on had those members opposite had their way. Because what were they advocating a year ago, Mr. Speaker? They were advocating that every last cent of the savings of the people of Saskatchewan should be spent at that time and more so, Mr. Speaker.

What we did was to do some careful planning so that in difficult times when many people thought we would not be able to put a budget together, Mr. Speaker, that we would have some

reserves to draw on. That's what we've done so that we don't have to raise taxes as had been advocated by the member from Weyburn and the member from Lloydminster, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when you look at the summary financial statements that are presented by the Provincial Auditor, you will see that Roy Romanow ran seven consecutive surplus budgets. But now we have a new Premier, and in his first year of office he has plunged Saskatchewan back into debt and deficit.

Mr. Speaker, we know the figures for 2001-2002 fiscal year are now in. How large of a deficit did this Premier run in his first year of office as the Premier of Saskatchewan?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, just to demonstrate how ridiculous the opposition really is, let us think back to when Roy Romanow was premier of this province. Today they say Roy Romanow could do no wrong. When he was here, they said he could do no right. Because there's no consistency over there, Mr. Speaker.

And what I would say to the people of the province is this, Mr. Speaker. We can take the word of the Finance critic from the opposition who says we're not running the finances of the province properly, or we can believe Moody's of New York who looked at the budget and did what, Mr. Speaker? Gave the province a credit rating upgrade back to straight As. Or we can listen to the investment dealers of Canada, Mr. Speaker, who say the finances are being run in a responsible and prudent matter.

So who's right? The credit rating agencies or the investment dealers, or the critic opposite, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

(14:00)

### Investments by SaskTel

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the Minister of Finance just said that we should take the word of bond rating agencies, Mr. Speaker, that's what he just said.

My question is for the minister responsible for the Crown Investments Corporation. The Dominion Bond Rating Service, Mr. Speaker, has some real concerns about SaskTel's plan to risk 270 million tax dollars to get into cable TV and to invest another 80 million in telephony in Australia.

And according to the Dominion Bond Rating Service, SaskTel's \$270 million plan will, to quote:

... roll-out of new services ... outside of its existing territories could negatively impact profitability.

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Order, please.

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this bond rating service has looked at SaskTel's plan to invest 270 million in cable TV and in Australia. And they say, quote:

... (it'll) negatively impact (their) profitability.

Mr. Speaker, every time we've got up in this House and questioned this government, this NDP government's investment outside the province through SaskTel, that minister stood up and said, well it's to bring profits back to Saskatchewan.

So who's right, Mr. Speaker? The Dominion Bond Rating Service who say these projects will negatively impact profitability or the minister?

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Mr. Speaker, the member asks a good question: who's right?

I want to quote from news talk radio, John Gormley, where the Leader of the Opposition, the member from Rosetown says the following:

Well the challenge with crown corporations is to decide what role they play in the 21st century ... I think (in quotations) we (should) have to create a new generation of crown, it might not be quite in the shape it is now ... to release the shackle, so they can expand beyond the boundaries of the province (of Saskatchewan).

I ask the question, who's right? That member, Mr. Speaker, or that member, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, a moment ago the Minister of Finance was talking all about ...

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Order.

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a moment ago the Minister of Finance was telling this Assembly that we should take the word of bond rating services. That's what he said.

Here is what the Dominion Bond Rating Service had to say about SaskTel's plan to set up a cable television business and also to invest \$80 million in Australia. They said, not only will it drive SaskTel's profits down, Mr. Speaker, but it will drive up the debt of SaskTel ...

**The Speaker:** — Order, members. Order. The member who has the floor should not have to yell just to get above the din. So I would ask members to ... just to calm down and offer a little listening while the member who has been recognized is on his feet.

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, the Dominion Bond Rating Service says the NDP's plan will drive profits down and provincial debt up by 75 million. Here's what ... They also go on to say that SaskTel's challenges also include competing in an environment of slow economic growth, falling population, and a small private sector community, Mr. Speaker. That's what they're saying about NDP Saskatchewan.

The question to the minister is this: why has the NDP government approved a \$270 million investment in cable TV in Australia when it'll drive up debt at SaskTel and negatively impact profitability at the Crown?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite and when they were government years back said that our Crown corporations should operate in a more competitive environment; they should become competitive. Now they're competitive, Mr. Speaker, and they don't like that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that SaskTel employs over 3,600 people in our province. They offer services. They provide choices for the people of Saskatchewan. The people of Saskatchewan can choose, not from SaskTel. If they don't want to get the services from SaskTel they can get many of those services from the private sector, Mr. Speaker.

SaskTel has, I suggest — and I've said many times in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker — SaskTel has shown a very strong track record, Mr. Speaker. They have provided choice. They have provided choice for the people of Saskatchewan, and I suggest as well to the members opposite and to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that they will continue to show a strong track record here in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **Farm Land Property Tax Rebate Program**

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan farm families were extremely disappointed during this session to learn that the NDP were cancelling the provincial farm land property tax rebate program. But what they were even more disappointed to learn was that over \$5 million committed by the NDP to this program was not spent on agriculture assistance but it has been returned to the general revenue. Yet the minister confirmed last night that approximately 1,000 farm families were denied the property tax rebate for the last year of the program because their applications were received after the deadline.

Mr. Speaker, given the financial difficulties that Saskatchewan farm families are experiencing due to drought, to low commodity prices, and to trade challenges, why did the NDP not approve these applications and distribute the \$5 million that has already been committed to the program?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — It's most interesting the question that the member asked, because just two speakers before that the member from Canora stands up and says that what we should have in this House and what we should have for the people of Saskatchewan is a greater accountability.

And so what we do with the program, Mr. Speaker, with the property tax rebate program is we establish a timetable. We establish a date for which . . . in which applicants must submit their information, Mr. Speaker. Then we extend the date. We advertise it across the province so that producers would have

full knowledge of when they can apply, what their benefits might be.

And, Mr. Speaker, it conforms with the accounting practices of this province, of which the Provincial Auditor asks us to participate in and that we meet regularly on all fronts, Mr. Speaker.

So I say to the member opposite, if she supports the accounting practices and principles that the member from Canora-Pelly speaks about, then she should also support the practices that we've established for the property tax rebate program.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, last night the minister said that they had to follow a specific timeline and that the program had to end according to that timeline. But I find it kind of amazing, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP Finance minister certainly wasn't concerned about following timelines to pass the interim supply Bill in June.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Harpauer:** — He explained to this House, Mr. Speaker, that it simply wasn't a big deal that the school boards might have to go borrow money to meet their commitments. And yet, the farm families are cut off much needed assistance this year due to some timeline that the Minister of Agriculture has dreamed up.

It's also funny, Mr. Speaker, that in the first year of the program the timeline was extended considerably; yet this year farm families are being told that they're out of luck, we can't possibly extend the timeline. Now \$5 million that was committed to the property tax rebate program will not go to those farm families who were counting on it.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP has cut crop insurance this year. They've cut agriculture spending in total. Why are they also cutting the farm families out of the property tax rebate that they have committed to?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — What Saskatchewan people and rural Saskatchewan people and farmers in this province are amazed and, as my colleague from Regina says, are dazed about is that we have an opposition party now — it's been around — a mix and match of a combination of men and women, Mr. Speaker, from three various different or four various different parties who over the last three and a half years who say they represent Saskatchewan rural communities haven't come up with one suggestion, one idea as it respects rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Not one idea or one plan. Not one scrap of paper today that talks about what we should be doing in rural Saskatchewan today.

Saskatchewan people and rural Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, are amazed and dazed all right because they have an opposition party and a rural group of men and women today who are totally disconnected from what's happening in rural Saskatchewan today — totally disconnected, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms. Harpauer:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, that Minister of Agriculture has come up with excuse after excuse after excuse, even though they have cut the Agriculture budget, they increased the premiums to the crop insurance, they cut the spot loss hail. They have totally ignored the livestock producers of this province when they've been pleading desperately that they need help.

So it is time for that minister to stand up in this House and announce something for the producers of this province. It's time to do what the member from Regina Qu'Appelle said, let's do the right thing.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — Mr. Speaker, you just need to read and look at what the people of Saskatchewan and the media have been printing now for the better part of a year and a half. The people who have been working for Saskatchewan producers, the people who have been working for Saskatchewan farmers, the people who have been leading the parade on the agricultural file, Mr. Speaker, has been this Premier.

This Premier's been leading the campaign for agricultural policy in Saskatchewan and across Canada. And what do we hear from the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker? Not one word from the Leader of the Opposition.

The man who represents rural Saskatchewan today and the team of men and women who say they represent rural Saskatchewan today have been absolutely mute, Mr. Speaker. The only guy who said anything about agricultural policy in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, was Mr. Boyd, and he's gone back to his farm, Mr. Speaker, preparing to be the next leader of the Saskatchewan Party in the next little while, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Progress Made During Session

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NDP isn't getting much right these days. In fact this session is going to be remembered for what the NDP didn't do.

They didn't balance the budget. They didn't get the Crown corporations under control. They didn't address the farm crisis. They didn't even get that ethanol deal put together. They didn't hire the 500 nurses. They didn't hire the 200 police officers, and they didn't stop the loss of population out of the province of Saskatchewan. Most of all, Mr. Speaker, the NDP government under this Premier did not provide any clear leadership for the province of Saskatchewan.

Why hasn't the Premier and the NDP done something in this session? Why is it such a failure? Why have they failed to show leadership for the province of Saskatchewan?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Thank you very much. I tell you what we didn't get, we didn't get in this speak . . . in this session, Mr.

Speaker, I'll tell you what we didn't get. We didn't get one new idea from the opposition . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you what we didn't get done in this province, we didn't get one clear position on current issues out of the opposition, not one. And it's becoming very clear today that what we didn't get was a clear understanding on who was actually leading the opposition.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Now is it the member from Swift Current? Is it the former member from Kindersley? Or is it the member from Rosetown? It's not clear who's in charge. Or is it the member . . . no, it's not the member from Wood Mountain.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know the members of the opposition . . . I'm sure that the members of the opposition want to hear what did get accomplished for the people of Saskatchewan and this province. Mr. Speaker, I'll be very pleased to stand up in my next answer and talk about the things that made this a good session for the people of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would say to the Premier everything is fine on this side. What we're concerned about is the fact that his power has been usurped by Frank Hart, the president of CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan).

Mr. Speaker, we looked at the things that the NDP didn't do. But let's look at what they were preoccupied with, what they did do.

Mr. Speaker, they attacked the farmers of Saskatchewan by cutting crop insurance, and by cancelling the property tax rebate. They attacked seniors by trying to impose horrendous long-term care fees on them. Mr. Speaker, we forced them to back down on that . . . (inaudible) . . . Mr. Speaker, the Premier and his Finance Minister have plunged the province of Saskatchewan back into deficit and debt.

Mr. Speaker, during this session the government has been investigating, at taxpayers' expense, their own incompetence. Mr. Speaker, they were forced to investigate an harassment scandal. They were forced to investigate why one of their ministers misinformed the House. And for the first time in 20 years history in Saskatchewan, they were in charge when the population of this province went below 1 million people. That's what they did do.

Mr. Speaker, what kind of a record is that? Why did the Premier spend the entire session doing those sorts of terrible things?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

(14:15)

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — I know the . . . I know that the Leader of the Opposition and members of the opposition are very anxious



to hear what I'm about to say. Mr. Speaker, the top 10 list on why this has been a good session for the people of Saskatchewan. Number one, dramatic turnaround in jobs in Saskatchewan . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — . . . 12,800 in June. Number two, stood up . . . stood up for Saskatchewan farm families and producers in . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Number three, stood up for working people in the . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. Order.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Four . . . Just at two. Number three, we're standing up for working people in this province on minimum wage increase, renovations to the Workers' Compensation Board and labour standards.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Number four . . . Number four, leading in innovation. The most progressive ethanol strategy in the nation of Canada, in the continent of the United States.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, we're building the highways. We're fixing the roads.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, we're building a province that's safer for our children on the city streets of Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, we're investing in education. Record levels . . . (inaudible) . . . education and health.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Record levels of expenditure in health. Number nine, new partnership with municipalities, a brand new . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Number ten, a balanced budget and the 10th consecutive credit upgrade from Moody's of New York.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, I could go to the top 20, but let me just go to number 11, Mr. Speaker. And in addition to all this good news, our Roughriders beat the Calgary Stampeders.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've talked about what the NDP didn't do — they should have but they didn't. I've talked about what the NDP did do — that was a disaster.

Now I want to talk about what the NDP should do. They should end the incompetence. They should end the mismanagement. They should call an election in the province of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, it is time for a government in this province that offers hope instead of despair. A government that offers a plan for growth instead of a plan for decline. A government that has vision rather than incompetence. Mr. Speaker, it is time for the Saskatchewan Party instead of the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP has run out of gas. They have no vision. They have no plan and they have no mandate.

Will the Premier stand up in this House and call an election so the people of Saskatchewan can elect a new government?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. Order.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've been in this session now 78 days. By my quick calculations, Mr. Speaker, that means we have spent 1,950 minutes in question periods. That totals to 32.5 hours in question periods.

Mr. Speaker, if you average 12 to 15 questions a question period, that results in 936 to 1,170 questions answered by this government. Mr. Speaker, not one question from that opposition pertaining to highways and transportation in Saskatchewan. Not one question.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what does that tell you about this opposition? Well I know what it tells me about the opposition. They're so out of touch with the very people they would pretend to represent that they don't want an election because the half of them won't be back here.

Mr. Speaker, speaking of the highways of this province which are now being fixed, I very much look forward in the next several days and weeks with my colleagues boarding a bus, Mr. Speaker, to visit the communities of this province. And I want to tell the members opposite, I am coming to your town . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Why is the member from Canora-Pelly on his feet?

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day I would request leave to make a personal statement.

Leave granted.

## STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

### Heimlich Manoeuvre Used in Legislature

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much. And I want to thank the colleagues opposite in that when you hear what I have to say this afternoon you'll understand why we need to acknowledge what occurred today in this Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, it's a good news story. It's a very good news story. And I want to talk about an incident that happened in the cafeteria downstairs during noon hour.

I am privileged to stand and acknowledge two people, Mr. Speaker. The one person is Ruth Balaski from the financial services who was very quick to understand the problem that was being encountered by one of the employees here in this building while enjoying lunch. And the other person, Mr. Speaker, is a colleague on our side of the House, the member for Lloydminster.

Ms. Balaski understood that the person was choking and went to Mr. Wakefield and brought this to his attention. And as a result of knowing what to do when someone was choking, he took matters into his own hands, including the person who was choking, and applied a manoeuvre to the person, causing the food that was causing her to choke to be dislodged and as a result may have saved her life or at least saved a very, very dangerous situation from developing.

So I think on behalf of all members, I want to thank Ruth Balaski and especially I want to thank the member for Lloydminster for reacting the way he did and doing this very heroic deed.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased to stand today on behalf of the government and table written responses to questions 445 and 446.

**The Speaker:** — Responses to 445 and 446 have been tabled.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

#### General Revenue Fund Executive Council Vote 10

#### Subvote (EX01)

**The Chair:** — I would invite the Premier to introduce his officials.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, the same group of officials that served us yesterday: Mr. Dan Perrins, deputy minister to the Premier; Ms. Bonita Cairns, director of administration and

information services; and Mr. Jim Nichol, who is the acting director of senior management services and executive assistant to the deputy minister.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to welcome the Premier and his officials here today.

Mr. Premier, during the last decade and before that, the NDP while in opposition were always calling for timely by-elections. In fact, you were part of a government, Mr. Premier, that brought forward legislation to make sure that by-elections were done in a timely manner; that they were done within a, supposedly, a six-month period of time.

Now, Mr. Premier, we've had a resignation from this Assembly on April 3, and from what I understand from The Executive Council Act it says in there that the by-elections . . . a by-election to fill a vacancy in the Assembly shall be held within six months after the seat becomes vacant.

I wonder if you can explain to us, because there does seem to be some question around this issue, Mr. Premier, what is your interpretation of that section. When does it mean the election has to be called? When does it mean the actual voting day has to be held? Is it held six months . . . within six months of the date of resignation? Is it called within six months of the date of resignation? When does this election actually have to take place?

(14:30)

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, I appreciate the observation made by the member from Cannington that it was in fact our government that put in place the legislation to ensure timely by-elections. And I think he will recall when his party was in government that we would go for a period of years when by-elections were outstanding.

And I think in fact it was a Kindersley by-election that has the longest record for not being called. So I appreciate his observation that we have put this right by putting it into legislation.

My understanding, Mr. Chair, is that the election must be held, must be held within the six months as prescribed by the legislation. Therefore the election must be called, the by-election must be called at such a timely date to ensure that the by-election is completed before the end of six months from the resignation of the member.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier. So that means that the election has to be held on or before October 3 this coming year for the Kindersley by-election, based on the resignation on October 3 — April 3, sorry, excuse me.

Mr. Premier, just one point of clarification on your statement. It wasn't this party that didn't call the elections, the by-elections, Mr. Premier; it was the previous administration to your own that failed to do that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Premier, does that mean, since this is already July, that we may very well be having another election during harvest time in this province? I would have thought that perhaps your party

would have learned what happens when you hold elections during the harvest time from the '99 general election, Mr. Premier.

So are you going to be calling the election so that it's held during harvest again? Because if you call it in September for even October 3, it's harvest time, Mr. Premier. Are you going to call it before then?

You've had the opportunity to make that decision. You could have called the by-election for in June. You could have called it for in July. So Mr. Premier, are we having another fall by-election in rural Saskatchewan?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, obviously the timing of this by-election was not completely in control of the government. It was the member opposite who chose to resign, opening the opportunity.

Now the member opposite, I guess, has been lobbying me to call this by-election throughout the session; he and his colleagues have been lobbying me throughout the session. I found it very interesting that members of the Saskatchewan Party were calling on me to call a by-election in Kindersley right in the middle of seeding. Now I found that an interesting observation.

Now we can . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well but I'm pointing out to the member from Canora that in fact his members were calling upon me to call the by-election in the middle of seeding, and he can't deny it.

Now the fact of the matter is that we're going to be as sensitive as we possibly can in calling this by-election to avoid the situation around harvest. It would appear, Mr. Chair, particularly in the west side of the province, particularly given some of the drought conditions, that we may in fact be into a very early harvest season on that side of the province.

The timing requires that the . . . it requires that the election will be held prior to early October.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well, Mr. Premier, you just mentioned that in the Kindersley area, quite often, they have an early harvest. Well, Mr. Premier, that translates into early seeding.

They were done seeding in the Kindersley area before May 15. You . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, they were; yes, they were. You could have called the election at that time and had a June election, Mr. Premier. You chose not to. That was your decision.

So it's your decision then to have this by-election in harvest again. Mr. Premier, I'm sure the results will be equal to the results in 1999 when your party was decimated across rural Saskatchewan because you held the election in harvest time.

Mr. Premier, I hear that there is rumours of a number of other seats that may become vacant. If that happens, Mr. Premier, if the seats . . . And I'll mention some of those that are rumoured: Saskatoon Eastview, Saskatoon Southeast, Regina Sherwood, Saskatoon Nutana, even Melville, Mr. Premier, and Saskatoon Fairview as well.

Now, Mr. Premier, if those seats become available, will you be calling the by-elections together or will you have staggered by-elections all the way throughout the winter, Mr. Premier?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, I am not so worried about having to call by-elections for the seats that the member just mentioned. I'm more worried about having to call a by-election in Weyburn, perhaps in Lloydminster, Shellbrook.

Now the fact of the matter is we're not going to deal here in speculation. We're not going to deal in speculation. The facts of the matter are these: the member of Kindersley resigned his seat; within six months of the date of his resignation, a by-election will be held in Kindersley.

I understand how much the party opposite misses the member from Kindersley. It's obvious almost on a daily basis to this side of the House how they miss the member from Kindersley.

I've just been handed, Mr. Chair . . . And I'm sure some of . . . some of those who view these proceedings would be interested in this, given the discussion about by-elections. When the member from Cannington and some of his colleagues were supportive and a part of the former Devine administration, there was a by-election needed to be held in Souris-Cannington. The seat was vacant 15 months.

There was a by-election necessary in Turtleford when Colin Maxwell resigned his seat there. That was . . . seat was vacant for almost 16 months.

Now Mr. Graham Taylor resigned his seat in Indian Head-Wolseley. That seat was left vacant by that political party in government for 21 months.

And in the constituency of which we speak, the constituency of Kindersley, when Bob Andrew resigned his seat, that seat was left vacant 22 months.

Now that's the kind of respect this group of men and women, when they supported that former government or were part of that former government, had for the electoral process. I repeat the facts — from the date that the member from Kindersley resigned, we have six months to call an election. It will be called and held within six months.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Premier, I raised the issue and we happen to support that very Bill, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Committee Member, Mr. Premier. When that Bill passed, we supported it in the House . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — You had no choice.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Yes we had a . . . the member from Athabasca said you didn't . . . we didn't have a choice.

Mr. Chairman, every member in this House has a choice. Whenever they stand on their feet, whenever they vote in this House, they are making a choice. They may choose, as that member does, to follow the party line every time. But they make that choice, Mr. Chairman, every time they stand in this

House and every time they stand on their feet and speak in this House. And in fact is, Mr. Chairman, they make a choice when they fail to rise to their feet and say something in this House. They choose to be silent and not speak out on behalf of their constituents, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Premier, we support that legislation and we believe that it needs to be followed the way it was laid out in determination. But also consideration needs to be given to the timing of by-elections, on how they impact in those local constituencies. Calling a by-election during harvest time does not allow the maximum number of constituents to participate in democracy. You stifle their expression by calling it at that kind of a time — just as, Mr. Premier, you stifle it by calling it in seeding time as well.

There are other times in which people have more opportunity to participate. If you were to call a by-election in Regina, Saskatoon, or indeed any place across this province in July, for let's say somewhere around the end of July, the long weekend in August, you're going to diminish the number of people that have an opportunity to participate. And so when you're calling by-elections, Mr. Premier, you need to be aware of the circumstances in those constituencies and take it into account.

On another issue, though, Mr. Premier, I've noticed that in a recent order in council, no. 418/2002, that you granted a three-month extension to the Constituency Boundaries Commission. Mr. Premier, what was the reason for this extension? You've already said that you've given direction to the boundary commission that their determinations would be made based on 58 ridings that are currently held in this province and so it's a matter of making adjustments to the boundaries of each of those to reflect the population changes. It's not like you're going in and completely redrawing the whole map of Saskatchewan. So what was the reasons that the commission needed the three-month extension?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, the answer here is very simple. In fact no reasons were provided. A request was made by the Electoral Boundaries Commission for an extension. When the request is made, we have no option — nor would I desire an option — to turn that request down. The request was granted. It was a simple request for an extension without reason given.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier. It seems kind of odd though that they would just simply come to you and say, we need three months more. They provided no explanations whatsoever. Odd.

Well, Mr. Premier, once the commission tables its final report with the new boundaries map, what is the procedures after that? When does it become public information? When do the members, current MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly), those who seek to be MLAs in the future, when do they find out when the map is available, what the boundaries will be, where all the seats are?

When does . . . What happens after they release their final report and when does that map become the official document that the election will be run on?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, we'll get the exact, precise wording from legislation, and the timelines, but I'll speak to my understanding.

The commission had an initial three-month period to do their work, during which they have the option to request an extension which they have requested which offers to the work another three months. However they are not obliged to use the entire three months. Therefore the commission can provide to the public and this legislature their initial report when they have it prepared and are ready to do so.

Once that initial report is available, there is a period of time in which the public is given to react to their . . . to the report. They will, I expect, have some process of public hearings or opportunity for the political parties and constituency organizations and the public to speak to the proposed changes. They then will, as a result of that, draft their final report, which is then provided to us as legislators.

Without the Act in front of me, I can't quote the exact wording of the Act, but the Act then requires that once that final report is delivered to the legislators, at the first available opportunity in the legislature, we are to bring this before the legislature and pass it into law or defeat or amend it as the legislature would see fit.

That timetable would suggest to me that we may have the potential . . . we may see the report over the course of the summer — again I don't know — but potentially we could see the report over the course of the summer. Potentially then the public process could carry on, and potentially we could have a final report available to us sometime this fall, which then would open the door if it seemed appropriate to recall the legislature and deal with that Act later this fall.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Now, Mr. Premier, perhaps we can deal with the fall issue in a bit here.

But you say that the opportunity will be available to individuals to make presentations to the Boundary Commission. Are there any limits? Is this any organization, any individual, municipalities? What about MLAs? Can they make . . . can MLAs make presentations to the Boundary Commission before the determination is done? Because that legislation will in fact be coming back for consideration by those MLAs in this House. How long does that process take, Mr. Premier, and who can make presentations?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, we're going to get a copy of the Act so we can quote directly from the legislation.

My understanding is that it's a three-month period for . . . that is available to the commission. Again, I don't think they're required to take the entire three months, but it's a three-month period available to the commission.

In terms of the access to their public hearing process, I'm not certain that that's described in legislation. I expect it will be determined somewhat by the commission and by the justice who leads the commission.

If memory serves, through the last process there was quite a

wide availability to the public. Whether it would be individuals, political parties, municipalities, community organizations, I think the public hearings, as I recall them, were quite wide open to the public.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Premier, you talked about possibilities of a fall session. What are the timelines for the commission's report coming back that would facilitate the . . . a fall session? Obviously, the official opposition, the Saskatchewan Party, has been calling for fall sessions for the last three years. We would certainly applaud the fact of having a fall session.

(14:45)

What are the timelines involved in your mind that would allow for a fall session to happen? What kind of timelines for the report from the Boundaries Commission would be need to facilitate that? If the Boundaries Commission is allowed three months, they've just got a three-month extension, so that takes them . . . what? Into July, August, September. So when after . . . That was three months extension for their current work. Then they can take three months, I'm gathering from your comments, to do the public review process. Well that would take them into the end of the year. Obviously that's not going to work for a fall session.

So what kind of a time frame, in your mind, would the commission have to provide; when is that final report presented that would allow for or facilitate a fall session?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, I have before me now The Constituency Boundaries Act. And I'll try and quote from it for the member, and I think this may help us all to clarify the timelines and the issues.

In terms of the hearing process, the legislation indicates that:

A commission may hold hearings at the times and places that it considers appropriate to conduct its business.

A commission shall notify Saskatchewan residents of the time and place of each of its hearings by advertising in a newspaper having general circulation in that part of Saskatchewan where the hearing will be held at least 30 days before the hearing.

And to include — I won't bother reading this part — but they're required to include in their advertisement a map and the detail of the constituencies in that area.

You asked some questions about who can or could be invited to make a presentation to the hearings. The legislation reads as follows:

Every person who wishes to make a presentation to the commission at a hearing pursuant to section 17 or 20 shall notify the secretary to the commission in writing of the following:

- (a) the name and address of the person . . .
- (b) the concise summary of the presentation;

(c) the political, financial or other interest of the person making the presentation.

And so it would appear from the legislation that it's a very wide open, it's a very wide-open process.

Now as indicated by the legislation, as I indicated earlier, the commission is obliged to provide an interim report three months after the date of the commission's establishment unless an extension is requested — which extension has been requested — and therefore provides for another three months. However, again I repeat that it's not necessary for the commission to take the whole three months.

After the interim report is completed, the legislation indicates that a final report must be completed, which final report should be completed six months after the date of establishment of the commission.

Again, again, there is provision for extension. Then the legislation requires . . . once the final report is completed, there are two situations. One is that the Assembly is in session, or one, the Assembly is not in session.

Presuming that the Legislative Assembly is not in session when this report's finished, it is submitted to the Speaker, the Speaker submits it to the Clerk of the legislature within 15 days, it's then delivered to each member of the Legislative Assembly, and then must be adopted by the legislature at its earliest opportunity.

When I look at the timelines involved here, when we talk about the fall session, I think we all understand that could describe a session that even takes us into the month of December.

If — and this is if, we're working here in hypotheticals — but if the commission were to finish its interim work and provide that work let's say by the end of July, undertake then a three-month period of hearings, August, September, October, and then shortly thereafter finish its final work, that potentially could have available to the members of the legislature, the final report, late in October, even early November, which I believe then would give us the opportunity to do what we would describe as a fall session. At least a potential to do that before Christmas.

If in the alternative the commission takes its entire three-month extension, that would put their interim report I think into September. And then with the necessary public hearing time, that would push us well down into November or December, which would likely therefore not offer us the opportunity in a fall session to put the boundaries into place.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well thank you, Mr. Premier, for that explanation, although I would disagree somewhat with the timeline you just described at the end.

If, let's say, the commission does make its presentation, final report, on the part they've done now by the end of July, if they take the three months though for the public hearings process, that would push you back to the end of October. It would be possible, I believe, that they could then do their necessary work plus present it to the Speaker, the 15 days, and still be done by

the beginning of December for a fall session.

It would still work in that manner. But I think maybe your time frame . . . again who knows what this commission may do, but the possibility would be there.

Mr. Premier, is it your — since you are the one who makes these decisions — is it your intention to carry out the next election, assuming it's not this fall because the commission would not be . . . have made its reports in all likelihood, unless again we go to a December election or something — is it your intention to carry out the next general election under the new commission boundaries if they were to be presented and let's say passed this fall in December, late November/ December?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — The answer, if all of the ifs are true, that the new constituency boundaries had been put into law by legislation, then of course the next election will be on the new constituency boundaries. There would be no alternative and there would be no desire to do anything but run on the new boundaries.

Where we would have, I think, a more challenging circumstance is if in fact the commission's work had been done, finished, and the final report is out, we had not established the new boundaries by law. Then I think if an election were held it would have to be held on existing boundaries.

My hope is that we can see the completion of this work, we can deal with it as a legislature, and that in fact the new boundaries will serve as the boundaries for the next general provincial election.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier. If the commission has finished its report in time to carry on . . . to have a fall session, is it your intention then to have that fall session? Or is it still just a possibility that there would be a fall session?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — As we speak today, Mr. Chair, I would describe it as a possibility. I've not made any firm decision about that.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Premier, once the new Boundaries Act becomes law, in practical terms could a general election be held right away? Let's say December 15 the law is passed. Could an election be called on the 16th? In practical terms. I know in theory it can be. But in practical terms would the new boundaries be available? What's the time frame it's going to take to actually accomplish getting all of the mechanisms in place, everything that needs to be done, to actually utilize the new boundaries once the Act is passed?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — I guess, Mr. Chair, almost anything is possible. As the member indicates, under the law a new election could be held. He raises, I think, a very important question that would face, would face constituencies across the province in terms of the practicalities of an election following very hard on a change in boundaries.

I think we all understand that our political organizations of whatever stripe we are have processes of nominating candidates, identifying candidates and organizations, and that

time is required to do some of that in the aftermath of a boundary redistribution. These matters of course will all have to come to play in any decision made regarding the call of an election.

I remind the member opposite that by tradition in Saskatchewan we run on more or less four-year election cycles with some departure from that on occasion, but more or less four-year election cycles. But the law provides for a five-year cycle and so we're not obliged by law to go to election until 2004.

So there will be time, in my view, that we can complete the work of the Electoral Boundaries Commission and allow enough practical time to have it function.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Premier. I think it's very important that all of the sitting MLAs and all of the people across this province who are potential MLAs find out what the boundaries will be, what the election will be run under as soon as possible.

Because, Mr. Premier, people are trying to make decisions today, tomorrow, and into the future as to what their potential and possible careers might be. So for them it's important to know what is happening with the electoral map.

Is it on the near term are we going with the old map; a little further out are we going with a new map? I think it's fair and it's important to be fair to everyone, the sitting MLAs on either side of the House and anyone who may be interested in seeking to run in election, to know what the boundaries are going to be at the earliest opportunity.

So I would certainly encourage you, Mr. Premier, to bring forward the Boundaries Commission Act whenever it can be done so that everybody knows what is happening. Either make a statement that we're going to run under the old boundaries or bring forward the Act in a fall session so that people know what's happening in that area.

I think it's critical that people be given a fair opportunity to put their names forward in any and all of the constituencies that might be available. So, Mr. Premier, I would certainly want to encourage you to do that.

We're ready to run whether it's the old boundaries or the new boundaries. We just want to know when, Mr. Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, in many ways I agree entirely with the member of Cannington. We are all in the same boat; we all know the complications that are created by a redistribution.

I would want to say, from my point of view and from government's point of view, that the redistribution is a matter of law. It's kicked into place, it's put in place by the census of Canada; it's legislated activity.

There is no desire or no way that any premier, any government, or in fact any member of the legislature should or could be influencing the process of the commission and its work. They will make the appropriate decisions as they see fit and we will have to, as best as we can, adjust our timelines in this

legislature.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair, and again I would like to welcome the Premier's officials into the legislature. And we look forward to another few issues that we'd like to discuss under this series of estimate opportunities.

Obviously it was very interesting yesterday to observe that the Premier, in spite of the fact that the estimate process is supposed to be the opposition asking the government questions and receiving answers, was more an issue where the opposition and myself as Leader of the Opposition asked the questions and the Premier, instead of consulting with his officials and asking what the specific answers might be, did the unusual thing of consulting with his cabinet colleagues as to how they might not answer the question. And it appeared the advice that he usually got was, well rather than answering that question because the answer's not very good, why don't you just ask the Leader of the Opposition what he would do.

So I would say, Mr. Premier, I would say, Mr. Premier, that in the right forum I will certainly be very clear as to what the Saskatchewan Party will do. We will do that in the leader's debate when you call the election. We will do that in the election campaign, and we will do that on other occasions as we have between elections. We will make it very clear to the people of Saskatchewan what we intend to do.

But we would ask the Premier in this forum, in the legislature where the taxpayers are investing their dollars to get answers from the Premier, that he would comply and actually provide answers.

Mr. Chair, I quoted from some articles yesterday and I'm going to quote another brand new article that I just received today. It's from the *Biggar Independent*, an editorial July 8. And it's regarding the bus tour which I know the Premier plans to commence immediately upon the completion of the session. And the editorial says:

Stay a little longer, find out a little more. The bus carrying Premier, Cabinet Ministers and MLAs is rolling out of Regina and into the rural communities again this year.

Last year the Premier's Dialogue with Saskatchewan whirlwind tour was just that — a whirlwind.

He blew into prairie towns, shook a few hands, and then left. When he came to Biggar he barely even came into town stopping at the Fire Hall, a mere block into the town and certainly not into the heart of Biggar.

From there the passengers dispersed to various points.

Hopefully this year the Premier and his entourage will take more time. Maybe they could sit down and actually listen to what the voters have to say. Maybe they could actually listen to Town Council and RM Council. Maybe they could actually meet and listen to health care and education boards.

Perhaps the timing could be a little better this year. The tour is supposed to start in July which is a good sign. At

least it won't conflict with harvest.

(15:00)

But we found . . . I will resume my quote:

At least we found out now that it's likely the Kindersley by-election will occur in harvest simply because the Premier failed to call the by-election in June when he should have called it.

And nevertheless, and I go on to quote:

With some better organization and advance notice, people would have time to prepare briefs. Then the MLAs would have some constructive feedback when making decisions in Regina, much better than bebopping into town, hopping off the bus, turning a shovelful of sod, eating a doughnut, and then leaving.

So, Mr. Premier, that is the advice on your bus tour from my constituents in the Rosetown-Biggar constituency.

Before we get into some of the areas that I was dealing with yesterday, I want to just do some housekeeping stuff and actually ask a few questions that deal with Executive Council itself. Mr. Premier, regarding government restructuring, how many positions were eliminated?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, the Leader of the Opposition gets up and asks why yesterday I was not required to consult with many of the officials. Well he demonstrated immediately why. He gets up and starts a political rant. It's exactly how he started yesterday and he starts it again today. He wants to talk about the bus tour; he doesn't want the specific information about government. He wants to talk about the bus tour.

Well he wants to be careful or I'll start talking about the bus tour. I'll start talking about his trips out to rural Saskatchewan, and the three and four and the zero people that shows up at his meeting.

I'll start talking about the Bill that he has before the House today. He talks about going out with a by-election that may occur during a harvest season in Kindersley. This is extremely surprising that we have a Bill, right in the House today, promoted by the Leader of the Opposition, introduced by the Leader of the Opposition — what does this Bill provide for? It would provide that the next provincial election in Saskatchewan would fall right in the middle of harvest — by law. By law. Right . . . read . . . Read your own Bill. Read your own Bill.

So, Mr. Chair, if the member opposite wants specific information about government programs, about issues facing government, we'll be very provide . . . very happy to provide the answer. If he wants to stand up in estimates and do a political rant every day, then we'll do that too.

Now at the end of his little rant today he asked a very specific question. I'm very pleased to provide a very specific answer. As a result of the reorganization of government which occurred this spring, the total decrease in full-time equivalent positions in the Government of Saskatchewan will be 348.6.

**The Chair:** — Why is the member on her feet? Order. Why is the member on her feet?

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. With leave to introduce guests?

Leave granted.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Thank you and I thank the members opposite for allowing me to introduce the guests. I spotted in the gallery someone who was . . . a woman that knew my family very well from Saskatoon.

And I would want to introduce today some guests who have come to us from Melville, from Regina, and also from Calgary. I know that they'd be interested that we're in the middle of the estimates for Executive Council, that the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition would be entertaining questions and answers back and forth.

I'd like to welcome, on behalf of all members of the Assembly, Sonia Pacholek — and maybe they could stand when I introduce them, we'll be able to see them — Mary Schick, Sofie Kozakawich, John and Jackie Ogryzlo, Helen Grexa, Eileen Ballman, and Anne Cherneski.

I welcome them to the Assembly and ask all members to also join me in giving them a warm welcome to proceedings today.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

#### General Revenue Fund Executive Council Vote 10

#### Subvote (EX01)

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. And certainly we also would welcome our guests.

Mr. Premier, my next question is how many of the eliminated positions were vacant at the time?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, as the member I think will remember, we had put a freeze on the hiring in government for a period of time before the budget and therefore had created some opportunity through vacancy management, which I think is a . . . is the correct way to manage these kinds of circumstances.

So at the time of the restructuring, following the budget, there were 201 positions vacant. That would be 64 per cent of the positions in Executive . . . the government that were reduced as a result of the reorganization; 113 positions, or 36 per cent, were encumbered.

If I may say, if the member is interested, of the 201 vacancies, 151 were . . . 152 were in-scope and 49 were out-of-scope positions. Of the 113 encumbered positions, 78 were in-scope

and 35 were out-of-scope. There were also some employees in SPMC (Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation) and SOCO (Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation) that were affected by the reorganizations.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Mr. Chair, Mr. Premier, how many people were paid severance and what was the total amount of severance paid?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, that information is not available to us today in the House, given that the process of contractual obligations and bumping has been taking place over the weeks. That is only now coming to conclusion, and therefore the numbers and terms of severance and the value of severance being paid is not known to us. I commit to the Leader of the Opposition that as soon as those figures are available to the Executive Council, we'll provide them to him.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Okay, I would then ask the Premier when he does that to also provide a list of the people to whom the severance was paid, and what the anticipated savings will be this . . . Actually this is another question to the Premier: what is the anticipated savings in this fiscal year?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, we commit to provide the information to the leader that he's asked for, and in this fiscal year our budgeted expectation, our estimate of savings, is \$16.1 million.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — To the Premier: what were the dates of the hiring freeze and how many people were hired during the hiring freeze?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, the freeze began in early February. It lasted for approximately seven weeks. We don't have here the exact numbers of those who in fact were hired during the hiring freeze. And I want to understand . . . and I said at the time and the Minister of Finance said at the time, and I repeat again today — it was never intended to be an absolute hiring freeze where in fact . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the member says, oh, as if he's learned something. I said it very publicly the day we announced the freeze . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the member from Indian Head said I didn't. I can show him the news release.

Mr. Chair, the fact of the matter is if, for instance, at the Valley View Centre in Moose Jaw, if nursing staff was required, they were not prevented from hiring that kind of staff. I said that the day of the hiring freeze. So there will be those who were in fact hired during that period of time to do extremely essential front-line work. That's the fact of the matter. If we're going to be criticized by that by this opposition, well let them go ahead and criticize.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Well the . . . To the Premier, we actually have a list of eight people that were hired during the hiring freeze. Four of those people, four of those people were hired to the Department of Municipal Affairs and of course in the budget the Department of Municipal Affairs was eliminated. What kind of planning goes into hiring four people during a hiring freeze into a department that's going to be eliminated in a few weeks? What sense is there in that?



**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Well I expect, Mr. Chair, that the Leader of the Opposition will immediately provide us the names and the positions so we can respond to the question.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Well I'd be happy to, Mr. Chair. The . . . In Labour department, Greg Leake, communications director, hired March 4; Terry McKay, occupational health officer, March 1; SPMC, Heather Golding, a postal clerk, March 19; Economic Development, Dave Kutcher, senior project leader, March 4.

Now here's the interesting ones. Municipal Affairs, a department about to be eliminated by this government — Larry Steeves, Larry Steeves, associate deputy minister, hired on March 1; Kim Jetmundson, support services coordinator, hired March 10; Jun Ma, information resource management specialist, hired March 10; and Gloria Hunstad, administrative support, hired March 4 into a department that was about to be eliminated and rolled into another department. How does the Premier account for that kind of mismanagement?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the Leader of the Opposition that the Department of Municipal Government was not eliminated. The functions of that department continue today in a reorganized fashion in a government department now known as Government Relations. Why would we do that, Mr. Chair? Well I'll tell you why we formed a Department of Government Relations. It is to build a better partnership, a better relationship, with other levels of government — municipal, federal, Aboriginal.

And what is the proof of the good work that that department has already done, including Mr. Steeves, who was hired to serve as an associate deputy? It is to produce what we've just passed through this House — The Cities Act. That's what we're doing here, Mr. Chair.

If he wants to send the list over, there will be I am certain, appropriate explanation for each of those. Some of them may have well been hired in advance of the freeze being put on, some will have been hired to do essential work, some will have been put in place to complete work underway. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Chair, that through the freeze and through the reorganization process, we have been able to eliminate 348.6 FTEs (full-time equivalents) in the public service of Saskatchewan.

Now that is, Mr. Chair, a reduction in this public service to what has been often noted across Canada as the smallest, leanest per capita government in Canada. This public service of Saskatchewan does valuable, valuable work. We value the work they do. We didn't walk into this restructuring notion with this is an effort to hack and slash and cut the civil service — the kind of proposals that we're hearing from over there.

We don't go out like the member for Weyburn in public and just say people should be fired. We follow the due process. We respect the public service. We use contractual obligations, we don't write off contracts and that sort of thing. But we do know as well that as we govern, we need to govern to the best level of efficiency as we can by providing the best level of public services, realizing the best of our public service, Mr. Chair.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Mr. Chair, to the Premier: there are a lot of other signs of mismanagement and incompetence right here in Executive Council. And there are some rather strange numbers. In the globals that were provided, could the Premier tell us why he pays more money to Kathy Langlois, a special advisor in the North Battleford Water Inquiry — someone who never even went to North Battleford, and apparently has been globe-hopping around the world, going to conferences that have very little to do with water quality — why is he paying her \$9,248 a month, just about \$1000 more than he pays his own chief of staff? That doesn't make any sense at all.

(15:15)

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a . . . Mr. Chair, it's become very, very apparent over the course of this session, the attitude that the leader and the Saskatchewan Party takes to valuable public servants in this province. They will go the extent of attacking individuals who have no capacity in this legislature to defend themselves. They will go to the extent of naming individuals, attacking individuals. It's not just in this instance, it's in many instances. It extends to the most senior of public servants, it extends to public servants on the front line that the member of Weyburn will stand up and say right in public that they should be fired without due process.

The Leader of the Opposition asks about the salary levels of Ms. Langlois and my chief of staff. Ms. Langlois, I repeat, as I have often said in public and in this legislature, has done extremely valuable work for the public service, for the people of Saskatchewan. She is a career public servant, Mr. Chair, a career public servant. No one can suggest that Ms. Langlois has somehow by political effect achieved her role in government.

She's a career civil servant. She's worked for the people of Saskatchewan for many, many years. She is an extremely competent public servant. She has risen through the ranks. She has achieved a level of status in the public service that provides for her that level of salary which is appropriate at her level. Indeed in many other governments or in fact in the private sector she would probably command a higher level of salary.

I provide for the chief of staff to myself what I believe is a salary level that's commensurate with her position. I'm sure, Mr. Chair, if in fact through Executive Council I was paying more to my chief of staff than we were paying to senior public servants, I would be criticized for that. So we're criticized either way. What I say is we value these public servants and we appreciate the work they do.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Well it tells us a lot about a Premier who values a public servant's work who got into a great deal of difficulty in Liquor and Gaming, disgraced the government in the Liquor and Gaming portfolio, then is given a position to do with water quality in the province and doesn't even fulfill those duties, Mr. Premier. And you would pay that person more than you pay your own chief of staff for not even providing good service to the province of Saskatchewan is rather beyond belief.

But now, Mr. Premier, you obviously know that we are finding a lot of obvious flaws in your government, but so is your own

people, your own colleagues. In fact your own former sitting member, who now is . . . has left politics, Janice MacKinnon has questioned the restructuring of your government. Just the other day on the radio she says that it's not exactly . . . I quote, Mr. Premier:

It's not exactly clear to me what the priorities of the government are. I think that's part of what the concern of the public would be.

Now, Mr. Premier, you can say, you can make allegations that I'm playing politics. That's fair debate in this legislature. I think I'm presenting the facts and I think you're dodging the questions, but you're entitled to a different opinion.

But when your former colleague, the former minister of Finance, the former minister of Economic Development, questions the budget of this province, questions the way the budget was put together — that it might be deceiving the people of Saskatchewan — and questions the reorganization of government that it's flawed, that's a very serious allegation.

How do you as the Premier counter the concerns expressed by your former colleague, Janice MacKinnon, about your failure to properly reorganize government and about your hiding the deficit by creative accounting through your Finance minister?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, as the Minister of Finance pointed out earlier, when Mr. Romanow occupied this chair there was absolutely nothing that Mr. Romanow could do right. Now they say that Mr. Romanow did everything right.

When Ms. MacKinnon occupied the office of the minister of Finance, that group of men and women said there was absolutely nothing Ms. MacKinnon could do right. And now she . . . she is the person who is getting everything right.

Let's talk about, first of all, the budget. Let's talk about the budget of the province of Saskatchewan. I want to remind again the Leader of the Opposition that budgets that are developed by this government, by any government in Canada, are subjected to the most intense scrutiny, not in this legislature but by the bond rating agencies of Canada and North America . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Now you heard about that, right?

Well then why don't you stand up and congratulate the government for delivering a budget so fiscally responsible, so correct for the times that Moody's investment house of New York City, this continent's — this continent's — leading investment house, who knows I suspect more about the budget of Saskatchewan than any member sitting over there. Moody's investment house of New York City has read the budget, studied the budget, studied the fiscal management of this government and what did they do, Mr. Chair? They gave a credit rating upgrade to this province — only one of three in Canada.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — They looked at the budget of Saskatchewan and took our credit rating from Aa3 to A1. A1,

one of the best credit ratings in Canada. They did that on the basis of this budget.

Now I'll listen to the Leader of the Opposition and I'll listen to the Leader of the Liberal Party and I'll listen to the critics, but I tell you who I'm going to pay attention to. I am going to pay attention to Moody's of New York City. And I believe when people are looking at this province as a place to invest, as a place to do business, as a place to raise a family, they look at Moody's of New York and not the opinions of the Leader of the Opposition.

Now in terms of the reorganization of this government, I will repeat — if the Leader of the Opposition and members of the Sask Party want to accept it or not, that's fine — but the fact of the matter is the reorganization that we undertook of government this spring has been observed by outside observers as the largest reorganization of government, the largest restructuring of government undertaken in this province in 30 years.

Mr. Chair, we did this not first of all and not primarily as an exercise in saving money or cutting public servants knowing that some efficiencies could be achieved and knowing that it would mean we would require fewer public servants. That was not the first motivation. The first motivation was to reshape government in such a fashion that it better meets the needs of Saskatchewan people, that it better is shaped to move this province into the 21st century and that's what we've accomplished in this reorganization.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, if, as the Leader of the Opposition proposes, the only reason to reorganize government is to hack and slash and cut money, well that's not rocket science. That's very easy. You send out a bunch of layoffs. And we've seen it done. We've seen it done by right-wing governments all over Canada. We're seeing it being done in British Columbia. This is not rocket science if your goal is simply to hack, slash, and save money, and rid yourself of public service. That's easy to do.

What takes more thinking, what takes more effort by public service, by political leadership, is to reshape government that it better suits the needs of the times. That's what we've done here, Mr. Chair. I don't need to go through it, I hope, with the opposition, but I would if they want, to look at the entire package of reorganization as it occurred in this province.

Let's take one example. We have taken what was known as the Department of Economic Development and combined it with the former Department of Energy and Mines to create a Department of Industry and Resources — much better position to deal with the economic opportunities of our province, to deal with those who want to invest in our province. And we're seeing the results. We're seeing the results. When I pick up headlines — I quoted them yesterday — talking about the jobs keep coming, more jobs in Saskatchewan. On and on it goes.

I can, if the Leader of the Opposition wants me to go further, describe all of the reorganization and what it is intended to do and what it's doing and what it will do in the future.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Well thank you. Mr. Chair, obviously the Premier did not respond to Janice MacKinnon's criticism unless he was labelling her as some kind of a right-wing nut. Perhaps he was calling his former colleague that. I'm not sure what he was trying to intimate.

He obviously didn't pay attention in question period today when we quoted from the Dominion Bond Rating agency which expressed real concern about Saskatchewan's slow growth and loss of population, and the fact that SaskTel's bad investments may be hurting the fiscal situation of the province of Saskatchewan.

Why is the Premier missing the points of criticism from the Dominion Bond Rating agency and from his own former colleague, Janice MacKinnon, who questions the Finance minister and questions the Premier on the issues of the budget and the reorganization of the government?

Yesterday when we were cut off of estimates to go to other business, I was asking the Premier some questions about gaming. I asked him questions about the 25-year agreement and we didn't quite conclude that.

We know there's been a police investigation that has been completed in regard to concerns about the actions of SIGA (Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority) and the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority. We understand that investigation is complete and in the hands of the Department of Justice. When will the Premier demand that that investigation be released?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, this is a troubling question from the Leader of the Opposition. Now he wants the Premier of the province, he asks the Premier of the province to interfere in the Department of Justice. He is demanding that I go to Justice and ask questions about when reports are intended to be released. Next thing he'll be asking me about when prosecutions are going to be done or who's going to be prosecuted.

Mr. Chair, I will categorically — categorically — not do what the Leader of the Opposition suggests.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Well obviously the Premier and his government have used tactics to stall the release of the report. It's obviously correct for the report to be released but they have changed the prosecutor involved. They have taken, they have taken initiatives to prevent the public from hearing what is in the report.

It's not unusual for the Premier to ask for reports to be released. Why won't the Premier do it in this case?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, Mr. Chair, to suggest that the Premier of the province, that any premier should influence a Department of Justice in the work that it does or in the release of its reports is bordering on scandalous.

Is the Leader of the Opposition in the legislature this afternoon suggesting that officials in the Department of Justice or Crown prosecutors or other Justice officials in this province should be at the whim of political mastery? Is that what he is suggesting?

**An Hon. Member:** — Is that what he'd do?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Is that what he'd do is the better question. You'll notice, by the way, Mr. Chair, that he wants me to influence the course of justice and reports of the Department of Justice when it comes to matters of First Nations gaming. I noticed that, Mr. Chair, I noticed that.

Now I think the Leader of the Opposition would be well advised to stand now in his place and withdraw that line of questioning and indicate to the people of Saskatchewan that he would have no intention, no intention as Leader of the Opposition of trying to influence Justice or the prosecutions branch of Justice.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Let me rephrase the question then for the Premier, let me rephrase. If the Minister of Industry would settle down. If the ministry of Industry would quit yelling from his seat, I would rephrase the question for the Premier. When will the Premier release the report?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Well now he tried to backtrack a little bit and maybe that's appropriate. The fact of the matter is, it is not the Premier's report to release. The report is in the hands of the Department of Justice. And this Premier will not . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Now you see the member from Rosthern, who pretends to be a Justice critic, who pretends to be a Justice critic suggests . . . now he suggests that I should influence the Department of Justice.

Mr. Chair, this is extremely dangerous. This is an extremely dangerous opposition if it is the view of the Justice critic, who should ought to know better, that a Premier of the province should be lobbied in the legislature by the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition and the critic of Justice to influence the course of events in the Department of Justice around reports dealing with legal affairs and potential prosecutions.

Now I think now the Leader of the Opposition better get up and apologize also for his critic of Justice. Or perhaps they want to venture out into the public along with the member from Moosomin and demand that the Department of Justice be influenced by the political leadership of this province.

Just go ahead and do that.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Mr. Chair, perhaps the Premier doesn't understand his position . . .

**The Deputy Chair:** — Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. Order.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Mr. Chairman, to the Premier. Mr. Premier, you are the Chair of Executive Council. The Minister of Justice sits on Executive Council. When the report is made, is given to the Minister of Justice who is part of Executive Council, which you chair, you have the opportunity — and I would say the responsibility — to release that report.

So I would ask the Premier, does he intend to — as the president of Executive Council — to release the report or is he going to keep it hidden?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, perhaps it's lack of understanding, although I can't believe this, but perhaps it's lack of understanding. This kind of report goes directly to prosecutions. It goes directly to prosecutions and prosecutions branch will make decisions. Those decisions will not be ever, so long as I'm Premier here, at the cabinet table of the Government of Saskatchewan. They will not be debated at the cabinet table of the province of Saskatchewan.

I fear, I fear as a result of this conversation today, that would not be the case if the Saskatchewan Party and the member for Rosetown were occupying government in this province.

(15:30)

Mr. Speaker, I repeat, in the matters of prosecution, in the matters of RCMP work, in the matters of Justice reports to prosecutions, they will not be influenced by this Premier. I will accept no advice for the Leader of the Opposition or the critic of Justice to influence these decisions. They will follow their course of events. And I am fully confident in our prosecutions branch in the Department of Justice and the policing services of this Saskatchewan to do the investigations and make the right decisions.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Well it's very unfortunate that the Premier seemed determined to keep as much information from the public as he possibly can. He's not prepared to co-operate. He's not prepared, he's not prepared to ensure that those who are innocent are cleared of any doubt. And those who, of course, should be prosecuted will be handled in due course by the justice system. We know that that's the case.

I want to go on, Mr. Chair, to CIC because time is slipping away. Under your leadership, Mr. Premier, out-of-province investments have been initiated by the Crown corporations. I want to know, is that in agreement with your philosophy that the Crown corporations should invest Saskatchewan taxpayers' dollars outside of the province of Saskatchewan?

We have seen more and more of these ventures become money losers. As I have mentioned at many times, yesterday, and we've mentioned today that the people of Saskatchewan have lost money in your Australian investment; we have lost money in your investment in various dot-coms; we have . . . outside of the province of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Premier, do you subscribe to this latest activity by the Crown corporations investing our dollars outside of the province of Saskatchewan in risky ventures?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, the Leader of the Opposition wants to debate or discuss the matter of Crown investments outside of the borders of Saskatchewan. I think it almost goes without saying that I have supported and continue to support those investments of our Crowns outside of Saskatchewan which have provided significant returns to the people of Saskatchewan.

And I'm pleased, I am pleased that the Leader of the Opposition

has declared his support for this very same activity.

On public radio in this province on March 13 this year, the Leader of the Opposition said, and I quote him:

These Crowns want to grow and they're restricted by the status quo. I don't think we'd dismantle the Crowns but I think we'd create a new generation of Crown. It might not be quite the shape it is now . . . (inaudible) . . . ought to release the shackle so they can expand beyond the boundaries of this province.

The Leader of the Opposition apparently is supportive of our Crown corporations doing work, securing assets, and bringing home profit from outside the province.

Now this is another quote from the Leader of the Opposition, again on the same radio program, where he says:

We're talking about what role the Crowns will play in the future, and I think even the key people in the Crown corporations would tell you that the current set-up is not good for their growth.

I mean (and he illustrates) SaskTel, SaskPower are not structured in a way that they can grow well outside of Saskatchewan.

So the answer to the member's question is, yes, I support the investments of our Crown corporations outside of Saskatchewan when those investments return dividends, return profit, return assets to the people of Saskatchewan, when those investments strengthen the Crowns so that we can have the Crowns maintain the good level of service they provide to our people, the return to the General Revenue Fund, and competitive, if not the best rates for public utilities and services anywhere in Canada.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Well I think it's clear, Mr. Premier, that we have a vision for the Crown corporations that would see them have a chance to expand and be profitable.

Mr. Premier, I stand by those comments when I say that the Crowns are not performing well now. That's what I said in my comments, and you read those comments into the record here at the legislature. I appreciate the fact that you concur with me that the Crowns are not performing well in their out-of-province investments.

We have a list of some of the investments of SaskTel. And when you look at the recent investments under your watch, Mr. Premier, it's an absolute disaster. You're losing taxpayers' dollars. Obviously we have to change things.

The Saskatchewan Party is looking at ways of restructuring the Crowns so that the public portion focuses on their core responsibilities of providing telephone service and power to the people of Saskatchewan, providing natural gas to their customers here in the province of Saskatchewan.

But your government has put in place a management structure under the Crowns that's not able to compete in the global economy and they're losing taxpayers' dollars by the bundle

full.

We have your investment in Australia. It hasn't returned a penny and lost a lot of money. You're playing on the Australian stock market and your shares have dropped to 17 cents a share, and at the current . . . at this current time you have lost 5 million Saskatchewan dollars on the Australian stock market.

I can't understand what your thinking is that you would be satisfied with the Crowns as they are structured now investing our dollars without the proper business plans in place, without the proper people at the helms of these organizations, losing our dollars left, right, and centre. And as the Dominion Bond Rating agency has said, SaskTel rates may be going up as a result of your terrible investments through SaskTel out of the province of Saskatchewan.

The net losses are mounting. We just have listed through this session of the legislature numerous occasions where you have squandered Saskatchewan money that needed to be invested in our province in activities outside the province of Saskatchewan.

How can you defend this horrible mismanagement?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, let's use, let's use SaskTel as an example here. Day after day after day in this legislature — and fair enough — members of the opposition petition this government for improvements in cellular service in their own constituencies. They labour on every day for improvements to cellular service in their own constituencies. Now note this first of all, Mr. Chair.

Here's the party that would privatize SaskTel. Then who would they lobby? Do they lobby AT&T for better cellular service in their own constituencies? No. Do they lobby Bell? No. They have the opportunity to lobby because of a publicly owned telephone corporation in Saskatchewan — the last, if I may say, in Canada, in the United States.

We're bringing cell service across this province because we have a SaskTel, and they would privatize cell. I'd like to know how you get cell service in their half of the constituencies.

We're being able to put CommunityNet, high-speed Internet service into communities across this province, across this province, in a way that no other province in Canada is able to do. Mr. Chair, you'll be interested to know many of our rural communities today, you have high-speed Internet service that won't be available in suburbs of Calgary, Montreal, or New York City because we have a publicly owned telephone company.

Now how is this company, Mr. Chair, to continue to provide the cellular service that the members opposite lobby for? How is it to continue to provide the high-speed Internet services that are so welcomed in rural Saskatchewan, education, and business, and health care? How can they do it without an investment policy that returns dividends to the corporation and then to the people?

Now how could they do it? How would they do it when they

sell it off? Just how do they plan on doing it when they sell it off?

Now he talks about keeping core services. Well I guess I'd like him to define . . . I'm sorry, Mr. Chair, I'd like the Leader of the Opposition to define what he precisely means by the keeping of the core services, which he would intend to do as government.

Now I guess in the telephone example, core services means the actual telephone connections within the province. And he would sell off the security system branch, he would sell off the cellular telephone branch; what he would do is sell off every part of SaskTel that returns revenues.

Now I can you, Mr. Chair, what that's going to do to the rates for the people of Saskatchewan; that's what it's going to do for the rates of people living in rural Saskatchewan. They will skyrocket. Mr. Chair, that's exactly what they will do.

Mr. Chair, the investments that SaskTel has made internationally have brought home millions, tens of millions of dollars, to the corporation, to the people of Saskatchewan. They have on occasion lost investment overseas, but they have returned in many fold benefit to the province because of these investments — never mind the employment of people in communities across Saskatchewan.

They complain, often complain, about the security wing, the monitoring, the SecurTek of SaskTel, but they don't say much about that in the city of Yorkton where 50 jobs are provided through this investment, through this activity. They just don't say much when they're asking on one hand for cellular coverage, they're not on the other hand talking about the sell-off of the Crowns.

Now I think that it is again time, Mr. Chair, that the Leader of the Opposition stood in his place in the legislature to explain very precisely to the people of Saskatchewan exactly what is the policy for privatization of the Saskatchewan Party. Because in the last election I well recall he went about the province saying that before any privatization there would be a referendum. They would go to the people.

Now somehow, somewhere, that commitment has disappeared. And now I read quotes of the Leader of the Opposition and the critic from Swift Current and other members of the Saskatchewan Party talking about, they would make the decisions about the appropriate privatizations, which Crowns they would sell off.

Now I hear them talking about, well they're going to maintain the core services of the Crowns. The closer they think they're getting to power, the closer they think they're getting to holding the benches of government, the warmer they get to selling off the Crown corporations of Saskatchewan.

Well just because of that position, just because of the notion that they in power will start selling off our Crowns, that's the reason they won't be the government of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Well thank you, Mr. Chair. Well if the

Premier is so confident, why doesn't he call the election?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — If the Premier thinks he can win an election, he should call it. If he has . . . If he really believes what he says, he should call the election. But quite frankly, the Premier, the Premier who was not elected in the last general election, who had to come in the side door through a by-election in a safe riding, has not mustered the courage to go to the people.

He could have done that and said he needed a mandate last year. He was afraid to go to the people of Saskatchewan. He could have called an election this year. He's afraid to call an election because he knows he's going to lose.

And the member from Yorkton knows that he's on the way out. The member from Meadow Lake knows that he's on the way out. And the member for Prince Albert Northcote — all front bench members here — know that they're gone when the Premier calls the next election.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Now, Mr. Chairman, the Premier suggests . . . claims that he supports this out-of-province investment by the Crown corporations.

Well this is what the Dominion Bond Rating company says about Crown investments outside of Saskatchewan. They say that . . . first of all they look at Saskatchewan and say that because the Saskatchewan marketplace has the fundamentals of slow economic growth — this is the Dominion Bond Rating agency, this is not the official opposition — we in Saskatchewan have slow economic growth, few major markets, low population density, falling population base, and lack of a sizeable business community that all add to significant barriers to any competitors entering the province.

They say that the province balance sheet will be impacted by capital expenditure levels increasing to over \$270 million in 2002 by SaskTel. This capital expenditure will be used to, number one — listen, Mr. Premier, listen — fund the launch of a digital interactive video product to compete with cable, something that other telcos are running as far away from as they can because it's nothing but a money-loser. But you're willing to squander Saskatchewan taxpayers' money on this fiasco. And, number two, fund a broadband initiative in Newcastle, Australia.

You are moving the Crowns away from serving Saskatchewan people by not even questionable but by downright foolish investments by your Crown corporations out of the province and within the province in the private sector where they have no business whatsoever.

(15:45)

And the Premier refers to SecurTek and says, look how happy Yorkton is with SecurTek. Well it so happens that people that were involved in the security business in Yorkton have been run out of business because you, Mr. Premier, and the minister

responsible for SaskTel, the minister from Meadow Lake, interfered in the private sector by buying SecurTek. The only company that is happy is the company that was purchased by SaskTel and must have got a wonderful deal. We probably paid more than we should have because they're the only ones that seem to be happy.

Mr. Premier, not only have you fouled up the core Crown corporations like SaskTel with crazy investments but you have moved into other areas, and your predecessors have done the same, where they had no business.

And we talked about . . . you talked about . . . we . . . you've said some nice things about Roy Romanow. Well what we've said about Roy Romanow in praise is that he balanced the budget. We can't say that about you, Mr. Premier, because you're running deficits.

But we certainly did criticize Mr. Romanow for the fiascos that he oversaw such as SPUDCO (Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company). I think you remember that, Mr. Premier, and Channel Lake. In fact we roasted Roy Romanow so badly over those kind of issues that he lost the popular vote in the last election.

We're going to roast you over the fact that you are squandering taxpayers' money with crazy Crown ventures where they have no business investing our dollars. And we're going to roast you because you are putting the province deeper in debt. You are mortgaging our children's future. And not only will we roast you but the people will thoroughly roast you when you do muster up enough courage to call the next election.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — The latest mess, Mr. Premier, in case you haven't been paying attention is the way you have messed up the potential for an ethanol industry here in the province of Saskatchewan. What a gong show.

The Saskatchewan Party comes out with a well-thought-out ethanol policy six months prior to this legislature sitting, where we talk about mandating ethanol, where we talk about taking the fuel tax off of the ethanol portion of gasoline, and where we go even farther and talk about reducing the corporate capital tax so an ethanol industry will invest in Saskatchewan.

We introduced the plan. What does the member for Regina South do? The member from Regina South pretty much mimics what we've said, said it's a good thing, and says, that's my position. The member from Regina South said, don't worry Saskatchewan Party, we won't allow the Crown corporations to interfere in an ethanol industry; this is a private sector development area. The member from Regina South said that very clearly.

Right afterwards, right afterwards the member who's yelling across the way, the member from Prince Albert Northcote, announces that the Government of Saskatchewan through CIC is not even going to offer to take an equity position in an ethanol industry but is going to demand that it be included in every ethanol project in the province of Saskatchewan.

They're going to put together an exclusive arrangement with Broe industries — exclusive arrangement with Broe industries. They're going to corner the domestic market for Broe and they're not going to provide that same opportunity for other ethanol opportunities here in the province of Saskatchewan.

What happens? They decide they're going to play the old Grant Devine game. They're going to pick winners and losers. It was just like Fair Share Saskatchewan. Mr. Premier, what you agreed to was the exact replica of Fair Share Saskatchewan except you were interfering in what should have been private sector investments instead of moving government offices to selected communities.

What did you do, Mr. Premier? You allowed your minister to pick four communities that were going to have some kind of exclusive arrangement to the exclusion of other communities that were putting together an agreement to . . . an arrangement to establish ethanol plants in their communities. The result was that you took a lot of heat, Mr. Premier, for this mess and you went back to Broe industries and said, ah, kind of changed our mind about the exclusivity; I think we're going to allow . . . we're also going to invest with other communities.

Weyburn wants an ethanol industry and should have every opportunity to establish an ethanol industry. But Weyburn wasn't on your list with Broe industries and so you had a big problem because you haven't got the riding of Weyburn. You want to win that riding. You're not going to get it because you've messed this up.

So, Mr. Premier, how can you account for the major screw-up on ethanol. We should have been leading the pack on ethanol development in Saskatchewan. Instead we have muddled this up so badly that Manitoba is moving ahead of us again. We should have had the first opportunity to attract an ethanol expansion and we've messed it up because your government interfered by demanding that it be involved, it call the shots, it picked the communities that the ethanol industry would be established in.

Mr. Premier, will you apologize for this screw-up?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, I'm going to be very, very happy to debate the point that the member makes. He may want to correct his English in the House but . . .

We heard another little diatribe there from the Leader of the Opposition on Crowns.

Now here is, Mr. Chair . . . I'm looking right at the member who's going to be interested in this quote. This is from the *Humboldt Journal*, the *Humboldt Journal*. Note the date, June 27, 2002. This by my estimation is just days ago. It is announced in the *Humboldt Journal*, through a combination of the member for Thunder Creek and the member for Humboldt the following:

The only Crown corporations (according to the Saskatchewan Party) that should exist are the four main utilities, the Sask Party believes. Should they be brought to power, the Sask Party plans to sell off the other . . .

Now isn't it interesting? I was making the observation earlier that at the last election they were talking about the need to have a referendum. That lasted about a year. Then they started talking about, well they'll be selective and they'll choose. Now we started talking about getting rid of the core functions. And now in the *Humboldt Journal* of just days ago, the member of Humboldt and her colleague, the member of Thunder Creek says:

The only Crown corporations that should exist are the four main utilities.

That I assume means power, energy, tel, and SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance). The rest are to be sold. It says right here in the *Humboldt Journal* the rest are to be sold.

Will the Leader of the Opposition stand in his place today and explain to the people of Saskatchewan why it is he wants to sell off STC (Saskatchewan Transportation Company), the bus company that serves rural Saskatchewan? Or if it's not his plan to sell STC, why is it his member from Humboldt and his member for Thunder Creek are in Humboldt speaking to citizens, talking about selling off all the Crowns?

I think the people of Saskatchewan deserve an answer from the Leader of the Opposition. He began his round of comments around the ethanol thing, around the ethanol issue, by describing this as a gong show. Well if the gong show exists over here, we don't know any longer what the position of the Saskatchewan Party is on most anything — on Crowns, on Justice, on and on it goes . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Just calm down, I'm going to answer the question.

Mr. Chair, the member of the legislature from Rosetown-Biggan launches into criticisms of our Crowns and the work they do internationally. By that, he criticizes some of the most advanced thinkers, the best workers in the world, in demand. Does he not understand that when our telecommunications corporation, SaskTel, did the Chunnel, did all of the communications in the Chunnel, that it was the same people that today are going into SaskTel International that are in demand across the world?

He tells us we shouldn't invest outside the province. Does he not know that SaskEnergy's work that's going on in the Maritimes is in demand by the Maritimes, that Canadians coast-to-coast, that the international community look to the people of Saskatchewan to look to the employees of our Crown corporations as the best in the world. Why does he want to criticize and belittle them?

So he says we can't invest outside the province. Now in terms of ethanol he said we should not, cannot invest in ethanol. We should not, cannot invest within the province. Again I ask the member to stand and describe very concisely the policy of the Saskatchewan Party when it comes to the ethanol.

Is it the policy of the Saskatchewan Party that there should be no public equity or investment in an ethanol industry? Is that the position? Is it the position of the Saskatchewan Party that investors from outside of Canada, the Broe group, should they not be involved in ethanol production in Saskatchewan? Is it the policy of the Saskatchewan Party that investors from outside of

this province and Canada should not be involved, Canadian alcohol or others? Is it the view of the Saskatchewan Party that the . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Commercial Alcohol.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Commercial Alcohol, the member from Swift Current corrects me, Commercial Alcohol.

Is it the policy of the Saskatchewan Party, let's get it on the plate today, let's get it on the floor, let's not be hiding anymore. Because the policy of this government is we are willing to work with private investors if that is the right thing to do, the good business case, you will see this government be willing to invest some public equity in the development of ethanol.

Is it the policy of the Saskatchewan Party? Let's get it on the floor; let's have the debate. Is it the policy of the Saskatchewan Party that there should be no public equity, zero public dollars, in the development of ethanol in the province?

And while you're at it please tell us why you want to sell off the Saskatchewan Transportation Company?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I quite like it when the Premier is asking me questions. I feel like I'm being prepared for what's going to happen very soon.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — And I'm very excited, Mr. Chair, because I actually have the answers for the Premier. And I know I don't have to provide them because taxpayers are expecting the Premier to answer the questions. But since he can't answer the questions and would rather ask them, let me answer some of these questions, and let's start with SaskTel.

He says, he says what would we do about SaskTel, and he's talking about the wonderful investments that have been made. Well he talks about the Chunnel, and if I'm not mistaken the Chunnel involvement was through Leicester Cable, and if I'm not mistaken that was an initiative that occurred prior to the Romanow government taking office, if I'm not mistaken.

Another item on the plus column for SaskTel, is ISM Westbridge. That was another initiative that took place prior to the Romanow government coming to office.

Now if you look, if you look at the net gains and . . . if you look at the net gains as reported by the minister, he says that SaskTel has made \$37.4 million on its Saturn/Austar investment. Well that was prior to shares nose-diving on the Australian stock market to 17 cents. That's inaccurate. In fact now the province hasn't made \$37 million, it has lost \$6 million.

Now there are some losses on the other side. There's the NST loss of \$16 million. There's the Clickabid loss of \$1.9 million. There is the Retx loss. And the losses far exceed any gains, particularly any gains under either the Romanow or the Premier's administrations.

Now if the Premier will listen, I will tell him what our policy is on STC, because obviously he hasn't read it on the Internet — the Premier must not be very high tech — nor did he go and listen to my colleague, the MLA from Swift Current, when he presented our policy on the Crowns, including STC, at the Regina Chamber of Commerce. Obviously the Premier is not very well-connected or he wouldn't have asked such a silly question.

We have said yes. The four core Crowns . . . Have patience, Mr. Premier, have patience. The four core Crowns we plan to maintain. We have said specifically in the case of STC, we have said specifically in the case of STC that we would maintain it but we would provide it as opportunities for private sector to take over if they will provide the same service. Now we have many instances where in fact there is better service under the private sector than there is under STC.

So we are going to protect the routes but we're going to allow the private sector to take it over. Now that will generate tax dollars instead of taxpayer losses as we currently experience under STC. Now that's a pretty smart policy unlike the NDP who aren't able to come up with anything that's brilliant whatsoever.

Now, Mr. Premier, there are a lot of other Crowns — and we're not talking about Treasury Board Crowns; I hope the Premier realizes we're talking about CIC Crowns — that are not core Crowns . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . So yes, that's right. That leaves the casino out. The MLAs over on the other side just don't understand this. Well, Mr. Premier, I hope you understand it. We're not talking about Treasury Board Crowns, we're talking about CIC Crowns.

(16:00)

We are looking at Crowns such as . . . we are looking at privatization such as occurred with the potash industry. Would the Premier tell the people of Saskatchewan, would the Premier — now I hope the Premier will answer at least one question this afternoon. I hope he has it in him. He hasn't answered much of anything. Does the Premier think Saskatchewan is better off after having privatized the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, or would he prefer to see it remain a nationalized Crown corporation?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, some summers ago, some of us occupied this legislature and spent a considerable amount of time discussing the privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan — a good bit of time. I don't really think the Leader of the Opposition wants me to rehearse the speech that I gave during that debate, or we're going to be here a long time.

Now it is refreshing to hear the Leader of the Opposition at least beginning to, at least beginning to let be known to the people of Saskatchewan what they intend to do. He has now, he has now committed that they will maintain the four big Crowns. Now he hasn't committed they're going to maintain all of the functions or the aspects of those Crowns, but he's maintained in this House that the rest are going — the rest are going.

Now he indicates that with STC — believe this or not — he's willing to privatize it into the private sector, certain runs. Well I



can predict what's going to happen here. If he were ever given the chance to be administering STC, the private bus lines, probably Greyhound or some other carrier will have the profitable routes. They'll have the profitable routes right away. Now what about all those routes that we do subsidize, we subsidize with some pride. What about all the routes into rural Saskatchewan that we subsidize, providing transportation often to seniors and students, providing the delivery of parts.

Now he says that he's going to sell off the profitable aspects, likely to a national carrier. And what's going to happen to the rest? Well, Mr. Chair, I know what will happen to the rest — it will disappear. And the service of STC that we've known for so many years, that we are willing to subsidize — that we are willing to subsidize — will disappear, will disappear. That's what we heard today.

Now . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You know, the member from Swift Current, the member from Swift Current should take advantage of the opportunity and get on his feet and make those kind of accusations on his feet. Just why doesn't he . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . yes, you should pay attention. You should get on your feet and make those kind of accusations.

We need clarity, Mr. Chair. The people of Saskatchewan deserve clarity from this opposition. They're now standing up in Humboldt and they're saying that they're going to privatize, sell off all of the other Crowns except the four . . . what they describe as the four main utilities. They're going to sell off all the Crowns.

Well I think what I see, Mr. Speaker, happening here is much fodder — much fodder — for a very, very good provincial debate about the future of the Crown corporations.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Well, Mr. Chair, again we saw disrespect from the Premier who refused to answer my question about PCS (Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc.). He didn't even refer to it, didn't even allude to it, didn't even come close. He was afraid to answer my question. I answered his questions even though I'm the Leader of the Opposition. He's the Premier of Saskatchewan. When I ask him a question, he refuses to answer it. Can you imagine that? What kind of a weak Premier are we dealing with here?

Now we talked about STC and I hope the Premier sits up straight in his seat and listens to this. He has no confidence whatsoever in rural Saskatchewan. He suggested the only profitable routes that STC maintains would be taken over by Greyhound, if I quote him correctly. I'm very close.

Well I will tell the Premier that STC abandoned its route from Swift Current to Leader. They abandoned the route. It was picked up by the private sector and I'm sure Greyhound didn't want it. It was picked up by the private sector, by small business. It's been run for 20 years and it's been making a profit. Six days a week, the bus goes from Swift Current to Leader where STC walked away, said we'll have nothing to do with it. And the private sector, a small-business enterprise, has provided reliable service for 20 years for those people.

But the Premier doesn't believe in small business. He doesn't believe in rural Saskatchewan. He has no confidence in Saskatchewan people. He's willing to throw up his arms and think it's only Greyhound would provide service where STC doesn't. Well the Premier, like usual, is dead wrong.

Now I've answered his question again. So I'm going to ask my question again and I hope he has the courage to answer it. Does he think it was the right thing for the Government of Saskatchewan to privatize the potash industry or would he still prefer it to be a nationalized industry?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, the rhetoric of the Leader of the Opposition gets more and more agitated as we go through this process.

As the . . . as the member should know, I think, when PCS was a Crown corporation, it was not a nationalized potash industry. It was one player in a large potash industry in this province.

And I know what his friends did when they were sitting in government — and they were his friends. He can deny it. He can pretend he didn't know Grant Devine. But the fact of the matter, he's close friends to the works of them. When they sat over here . . . and when they sat over here and privatized the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, you know what?

Well the member from, what is the place; Canora . . . Invermay. The member of Invermay, he says he knew Allan Blakeney as well. Well he should have listened to Al Blakeney. That's what he should have done and he wouldn't have found himself where he is today, in the wrong place.

What I'll tell you we wouldn't do, ever, ever, is take a public asset like the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, sell it off at fire-sale prices to our friends and then you know, what do . . . you know what was done, kept the debt. The province kept the debt, sold the asset at fire-sale prices. We would never do that — never do it.

Now, the Saskatchewan Party today indicates they're all prepared, ready to go, on the privatization of STC. All to go. Now this is interesting because they advanced this theory once before. They advanced it, I'm told, here in 1998. It was reported in the Regina *Leader-Post* with a great big headline accompanying that says, "Sask Party attacks STC." It's a headline.

And exactly what the leader said today he said then. He said, we should look at alternate ways of providing transportation in rural Saskatchewan. That's what he said then, and that's what he says today. Well, I wonder if he remembers what the then president of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities had to say about his new plan. Well here it is:

The Saskatchewan Party is on the wrong side of the road on this one, said Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, President Sinclair Harrison (— on the wrong road on this one).

Keeping STC afloat is a matter of providing equal access to

rural citizens who need to visit cities for services like medical specialists or diagnostic equipment in bigger hospitals. (Mr. Harrison said)

Rural municipalities don't expect a hospital in every centre, but residents want to be able to get to a hospital by bus if they have no other means of transportation. Rural citizens deserve the same help to pay for bus service as city dwellers get, he added.

"Traditionally cities subsidize public transportation from the public purse. We expect STC to operate prudently but to say that private operators could replace STC right now, that's not the case."

Now I think, I'm going to take the view of Mr. Sinclair Harrison in regard to the future of STC, in regard to understanding rural Saskatchewan over the opinion and the position of the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Well thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** — Order, order. Order, order. Order. Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Kasperski:** — With leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Kasperski:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to my colleagues in the opposition and to all members. Mr. Chair, it is my pleasure . . . you may recall a few days ago I gave a statement in the House about a constituent of mine in Ottawa who is the Chief Page of the Senate there. And it's my pleasure to introduce this afternoon, and I can't quite see by your . . . if she's here. It's Melanie Bratkoski accompanied by her mother, Mrs. Bratkoski.

Certainly I'd like to have all fellow members welcome these two constituents of mine here this afternoon.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

#### General Revenue Fund Executive Council Vote 10

#### Subvote (EX01)

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. And of course I would also like to welcome the guest and we certainly appreciate the fine work that Pages do both here and down in Ottawa.

Mr. Premier, your . . . We certainly proved our point on the STC situation because we gave a concrete example of where service is better now as provided by the private sector than it

was under STC who abandoned it. Now I would also argue that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan employs more people and pays them better than they would . . . did and would have under Crown ownership.

So, Mr. Premier, there is a role for government. But there is also a role . . . place where government should get out of the way. And when it comes to Crown corporations that are involved in the private sector, that is clearly an area that has inhibited the growth and has prevented investment from coming to Saskatchewan. It is part of the reason why our standard of living in Saskatchewan is not as high as it should be.

Now, Mr. Chair, I have a news article here from the *Times-Herald* in Moose Jaw, and of course that's the Premier's hometown. And it reminds me of a commitment made by his predecessor, Mr. Romanow, when he said that under an NDP government food banks would be eliminated. They were going to provide such good social policy and have such a good social safety net in Saskatchewan that food banks wouldn't be required any longer.

Well as it so turns out, there is a food bank still in his hometown of Moose Jaw. And what the headline in the local paper says is, "Local food bank usage up." Up, Mr. Chair. Mr. Premier, the situation now is worse than it used to be if the local food bank usage is up in Moose Jaw.

And I will quote from the article. It says:

"There are supposed to be less people on the welfare rolls in Saskatchewan but we haven't seen a decrease in people using the food bank," . . .

Saskatchewan's food banks assisted the highest percentage of children in the country in 2001 at about 48 per cent of recipients.

"That's certainly the case here. Half the people we feed are children, and that number hasn't changed much at all in the last 10 years." . . .

In 2001, 65 per cent of the people using food banks received social assistance, 12 per cent were working poor, and 7 per cent received disability support.

Mr. Premier, you and your predecessor, Mr. Romanow — and you were part of his government — made a commitment to reduce poverty in Saskatchewan. You made a commitment to eliminate food banks in this province, yet the usage of food banks has increased and poverty, particularly in inner cities, has never been more rampant.

Mr. Premier, I have in the past door-knocked in your riding, and I have seen first-hand the living conditions of many of your constituents. Not all, but many of your constituents living in your riding.

Mr. Premier, both you and your predecessor, Mr. Romanow, represented the Riversdale riding. And just recently I even had the opportunity to do a ride along with the Saskatoon City Police and we spent a majority — and it was their call — we spent a majority of the time that we were doing this ride along

in your riding because it so happened that that's where most of the problems were.

There are social issues in Saskatchewan that need to be dealt with. There is poverty; there are children that are hungry; there is still child prostitution. There is high unacceptable rates of crime in your riding, and in your predecessor, Mr. Romanow's riding. And between the two of you, the most two influential people in Saskatchewan, you have had 11 years — and that's a long time, that's half the . . . over half the life of a child — you have had 11 years to make some progress, and I dare say it is worse today in Riversdale; it is worse today in Regina Elphinstone and many inner-city ridings. And in fact food bank usage is higher today, including in your home city of Moose Jaw, than it's ever been.

When it comes to providing the most basic essentials of food and security to people of Saskatchewan that don't have a fighting chance, you have failed. What's your excuse to those people?

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to say this to the member from Rosetown-Biggan. I don't know if he's had any similar kind of experience, but I'm very proud to stand in this legislature today and say that I was one of the founding directors of that food bank in Moose Jaw which he talks about. I'm not sure how much time he's spent on the boards of directors of food banks or in the organizations, but I'm telling you I'm very proud to have been one of the founding directors of that food bank.

(16:15)

I am very proud to have served as a part of a government that allowed me to serve as a minister of Social Services when this government introduced a program we described as building independence, a program that we put in place about four years ago now — 1998, thereabouts. I am very proud of the work of the Department of Social Services; the work of the current minister, the member from Moose Jaw North, in Social Services; the former minister, the minister from Regina Victoria; the work that we have been able to do on behalf of the families and the children who live in poverty in this province, fewer of them living in poverty today than four years ago.

Since 1998, Mr. Chair, more than 6,000 families in the province of Saskatchewan have left social assistance — 6,000 families. That means there are 13,000 children no longer reliant on social assistance in this province who have escaped the poverty trap.

For 89 straight months under this government's administration, for 89 — 90 now, it's 90 in June — 90 straight months, the caseload in social assistance has fallen. In this very session, in this very session, this legislature acting together has passed further steps to protect the children on the streets of my constituency, on the streets of other constituencies in Saskatoon and other cities in the province, to protect those children.

For the Leader of the Opposition to stand up and say that we've done nothing is a very, very inaccurate observation. We are one of two provinces in Canada, and this does not include Alberta or British Columbia or Ontario, we are one of two provinces in Canada that has lowered the child poverty rate — one of two.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — In 1999, Mr. Chair, we were the only province in Canada to lower the child poverty rate.

We have story after story in our recent newspapers talking about the fewer families on welfare. We have stories talking about the new fund for child care, for families in this province; stories that talk about the welfare numbers being down, headlines that say Saskatchewan has fewer poorer children; the Campaign 2000 report on child poverty in Canada highlighting the work that's being done in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Chair, we have so much more to do. So much more to do, not just in my constituency but the constituency represented by the Leader of the Opposition. So much more to do in every constituency in dealing with the family poverty issues that exist for the challenges against some of our young people.

And so before I sit down, I want the Leader of the Opposition to stand in his place and therefore explain, given this line of questioning, why it is that in his policy, in his party policy, he would chop between 25 to \$50 million from the Department of Social Services. Why would he want to take from that agency of government, from that department of government, from those functions of government which most are intended to work with families in this province, particularly families living in poverty? Why in the world would his policy be to take 25 to \$50 million from that department?

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Mr. Chair, I'm very, very happy to answer that question.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — A Saskatchewan Party government would be able to reduce that funding because we would be creating jobs for people and . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — . . . increasing the workforce, unlike your Minister of Social Services who has cut \$10 million from Social Services and, at the same time, we have seen a loss of jobs in Saskatchewan.

Under the NDP, the tax base is shrinking. The Premier shakes his head. He disagrees with Statistics Canada that says we're losing people. He disagrees with Statistics Canada that says there are fewer people working now than there were in 1999. I'm afraid the Premier is just not prepared to face up to the facts.

The Saskatchewan Party has a plan for growth in this province that will grow our province by 100,000 people. So we'll employ people. We'll be able to take people off the welfare rolls and employ more of them. Many, many, many people on social services are there because they can't get a job. They're looking for a job and the NDP have been unable to provide that job for them.

We have a plan that will restore self-sufficiency to people who are looking for a better life in Saskatchewan. Under the NDP —

under the NDP — we have the lowest basic personal exemption of I think just about any province in Canada. This province wants to tax low-income people as quickly as it possibly . . . possibly can. What is the result? People are leaving Saskatchewan and moving to Alberta.

You know what I just heard today? Fascinating piece of information. The Premier's former communication director, Mr. James Millar, has left employment in Saskatchewan and gone to where? He's gone to Alberta and apparently he is making more money in Alberta than he and his wife could make, when you consider taxes, when they were both working in Saskatchewan and she hasn't found a job yet.

This is the reality that the Premier doesn't realize. People that are low-income people that are trying to make a better life for themselves are amongst the people that are leaving Saskatchewan and going somewhere else because we have the lowest basic personal exemption in the Prairies, because we have the highest crime rates in Canada in our inner cities.

The Premier didn't comment on that, but he likes to talk about per capita things. In his riding the crime rate has a higher per capita than in Toronto and in Vancouver. And what does he do? He fails in the commitment to hire 200 additional police officers to protect the people in his very own riding, Mr. Chair.

The Premier, the Premier, the Premier . . . I asked, I asked the Premier a question and he refuses to answer. And so I answer his question and then he asks me for another question. The Premier is acting strangely to say the least. I have to be careful what I say.

Mr. Chair, under the Premier's government our GDP shrunk in 2001, and when your GDP shrinks — that's gross domestic product — when that shrinks it puts more people into poverty, it increases the use in food banks, it increases the crime rates, and it increases the emigration of people out of the province of Saskatchewan. That's what's happening because he has no plan for growth for this province.

Mr. Chair, we are looking at the province of Saskatchewan being under 1 million people, according to Statistics Canada, for the first time in 20 years. Members are chirping, wrong. But Statistics Canada after the 1999 census had us at over 1 million people; 2001 census comes out, Saskatchewan dips below 1 million people for the first time in 20 years. We're going backwards.

The question to the Premier is: in light of the fact that our demographic deficit is becoming more and more young working people, people that are leaving Saskatchewan upon graduation, what is his government proposing to keep young graduates and young families from leaving the province of Saskatchewan? The province is crying for an answer to this question, and he hasn't come up with a single answer to that question.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, the answers from this government will be a whole lot more substantive than a bunch of rhetoric to try to snow Saskatchewan. That's the fact of the matter. Just let me . . . let's just take a look, just let's take a look on what we have done in terms of taxation on families in this

province, 1992 to 2002, in the last decade.

In 1993 a Saskatchewan family with an average of \$50,000 income, in 1993 were paying the second highest taxes in Canada. Today it's the fifth lowest in all of Canada. Our sales tax rate down a full third, 33 per cent, since 1993.

Now I knew this would provoke the member from Estevan. I knew the member from Estevan would be provoked about this because yes, in fact when we came to government in 1991, in fact we had to raise the sales tax. You know why? Because the government at that time, the people of Saskatchewan, the province of Saskatchewan was plainly on the verge of bankruptcy because of the government she worked for. And now she's back. So she ought to be very careful about referring us back to the early '90s.

We are today, Mr. Chair, one of only two provinces in Canada, only one of two in Canada that doesn't have a high-income surtax, a payroll tax, or a health care premium.

Mr. Chair, the non-refundable tax credits — and this is important to the discussion that the Leader of the Opposition is having — in this province as a result of activity of this government, non-refundable tax credits means that the first \$20,000 of income for an average Saskatchewan family is exempt from income tax. By changes that we have made to the income tax system in this province we have removed entirely from the tax rolls, entirely from the provincial tax rolls, 55,000 low-income families.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — We have, under extreme duress and great odds because of what was done by that party when they were in government, we've taken this province from a position of high taxation on families to a very, very competitive position in Canada. That, Mr. Chair, is an incentive for people to invest, remain, and work in Saskatchewan.

It is amazing that this group of men and women will, in this House, vote against every measure that would seek to attract people to Saskatchewan or keep people in Saskatchewan. They say to us, in this session — they've said to me in these estimates, for instance — that we should not be investing in educational capital or educational facilities for our young people, the very tools that will be available to our young people that they can stay and be educated in Saskatchewan. They say . . . they criticize us for doing that.

They criticize us for the new investments we're making in health care to improve the quality of life in this province. And watch later this day, watch — mark my words — they'll vote against every good initiative in this budget. Mark my words. That's what they'll do.

They are denying, they are denying the progress that's made, Mr. Chair. Do they deny, do they deny that in the month of May the number of new jobs in this province is 11,800? Do they deny it? In the month of June, 12,000, 12,800 jobs, almost 13,000 new jobs. Are these in the opposition leader's mind not opportunities for Saskatchewan people? Are these not opportunities for Saskatchewan young people?

Now they have, they have tried to portray the decline in employment that we have witnessed over the last 18 months as directly result of this government. Well will they now then stand in the House and give this government full credit for every job that is created? Is that the logic? Is that the logic? Because you will blame us, you'll blame government . . . In your negativity daily you'll blame government for every job loss. Will you therefore give credit to government for every job gained?

Mr. Speaker, as we have managed the affairs of the province of Saskatchewan we've received credit rating upgrades, we're seeing new employment, we're seeing new investment, we're seeing celebrations in the capital city of those who are returning to Saskatchewan, who are coming to Saskatchewan for the first time. We're going to take the tack that we've continually taken in government and that's a futuristic, optimistic tack as opposed to the doom and gloom and the negativism that again is emerging from the benches opposite.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Well thank you, Mr. Chair. Again the Premier is living in a fantasy world but the facts speak differently. You know the Premier, just a few minutes ago, gave the impression that somehow his government was maintaining funding in Social Services and the Saskatchewan Party would reduce spending by an unreasonable amount in spite of the fact that the . . . in spite of the fact the Saskatchewan Party said that we would create jobs; we would create jobs so that those people would not need the support of Social Services.

Now let me read for the Premier what he has done — because I don't think he knows — in the current budget. This is income support, (SS03), sub-programs. Saskatchewan assistance plan in 2001-2002, \$254.52 million. This budget, with job losses, the Premier has cut funding in the Saskatchewan assistance plan by \$15 million, to \$239.724 million. But that's not where it ends. Drop down four lines in the budget, income support, (SS03), Saskatchewan Child Benefit, and last year it was \$32 million, this year \$21.6 million.

The Premier's government has slashed \$25 million from Social Services and we have fewer jobs. We have more people leaving the province. We have more poverty. We have more use for the food banks. What a cruel, uncaring government.

If the Premier had created jobs and taken people off the welfare rolls and employed them rather than scaring them off to Alberta, he'd have something to crow about. But he has failed and he has failed miserably. The Premier is the leader of a government that promised to create 30,000 jobs in Saskatchewan before the next election. Well, Mr. Chair, we are still not even with where we sat when the election in 1999 occurred. We have fewer jobs in Saskatchewan now than we did in 1999.

But then this Premier made a new commitment. Not only did he inherit the promise of Roy Romanow to create 30,000 jobs — of which he has not yet created one — he also promised to create 10,000 forestry jobs. Well, Mr. Chair, we know that right now we are seeing layoffs in the forestry industry. In fact there may be fewer people working in forestry rather than more. We are seeing huge problems in northern Saskatchewan when it comes to employment opportunities.

What is the Premier's answer to his failure to keep his word and his government's failure to keep their promise to create 30,000 jobs province wide and to create 10,000 jobs in the forestry industry? Two targets that are absolutely impossible for them to meet in their wildest dreams.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Well, Mr. Chair, it's surprising that when the social assistance caseloads are going up in the province, they criticize us. When the social assistance caseloads are going down in the province, they criticize us. I understand they believe their role in life is to criticize. Well that is their role in life and it's the role they're going to occupy for many, many years.

Mr. Chair, the Leader of the Opposition refers to the (SS03) budget of income support in the Department of Social Services. Now if the Saskatchewan Party had been paying attention over the last number of years, they would know that when we began the building independence program and instituted in this province, first in Canada, the child benefit, we then took that idea, we took that program and turned it into a national program. We took that program, we turned it into a national program, the first new social program in Canada in 40 years. A Saskatchewan idea taken nationally.

When we began that program and convinced the federal government to become partners in that program, they agreed to phase in funding. We wanted the benefits to accrue immediately to Saskatchewan children and Saskatchewan families, and therefore we put the share of the province's money right in, upfront, and the share of the federal government's money in right upfront, so the program could begin to assist Saskatchewan families.

With good negotiation by this province with the federal government, it was agreed at that time that in fact the federal share then would come in over years and the provincial share would diminish.

What we see in this budget is the provincial share of the child benefit program diminishing — as we announced it, as we planned it, and as we, if I may say, negotiated very well with the federal government to see that this happened.

That's point number one. The Leader of the Opposition doesn't say anything about that detail. He just says we've cut the budget. And then, Mr. Chair, does the Leader of the Opposition not understand when the welfare social assistance caseload has dropped every month for 90 consecutive months under the administration of this government, drops every month for 90 consecutive months, it is therefore some good news that the budget for social assistance is falling? That's good news.

Now, Mr. Chair, what he will not point out, first he does not admit that the budget for social assistance will fall if there are fewer caseloads. He does not admit that the phase out of the child benefit that we put in and negotiated out is there. He doesn't admit that. But he sure doesn't want to turn the page in the Department of Social Services budget. He won't turn the page and talk about, for instance, family services of the Department of Social Services. Those services which, quote:

Protects children from abuse and neglect, supports families

and communities in caring for children, assists people (in) facing family violence and provides adoption services.

He doesn't point out to the House that the budget for that work is increased by \$4 million in this House. He doesn't want to point that out.

Does he want to point out that regional services — the billing of financial assistance to people in need, career services, employment programs through a provincial network of offices — does he point out that the budget for that work in the Department of Social Services has gone up another \$3 million? Does he point that out? No.

Does he point out, for instance, that the budget of the office of disability issues has increased in this budget? No. He doesn't point that out.

Community living budget increase in this budget.

You know, if the Leader of the Opposition is going to get up and talk about the budget of the Department of Social Services, he should do it honestly. He should reflect the truth and he should reflect the success that we're having in Social Services in reducing the caseload in the province of Saskatchewan.

And by the way, while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker . . . while I'm on my feet, Mr. Chair, it was that Leader of the Opposition and that party last year that royally criticized this government when we added new resources to the Department of Social Services to provide more child protection workers. They criticized us day after day after day. They criticize the public service even today. They criticize the work we did yesterday.

I ask the Leader of the Opposition is it still his view, is it still his view, as it was last year, that we ought to be criticized for adding new public servants in the Department of Social Services, new child protection workers? Does he still agree that he should criticize us for that work last year?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Can always tell when we hit a vulnerable point, because the members opposite begin to yell and they become totally illogical.

The fact is that the Social Services budget has been reduced and that the population has dropped and there are fewer jobs, the tax base is shrinking. These are all symptoms of a province that's going the wrong direction. The quality of life in Saskatchewan is not what it should be under this Premier's leadership.

Mr. Chairman, everywhere I go in Saskatchewan; whether it be Saskatoon, whether it be Regina, whether it be in my riding of Rosetown-Biggan, or any other riding in the province of Saskatchewan, people are telling me that they're drawing a conclusion about the current Premier and his government. And the description that I hear over and over and over again is that this is a weak, weak government. It is a government with no vision. It is a government with no solutions to our problems. It is a government preoccupied with its own internal problems.

Mr. Chair, the NDP government has always had wrong ideas

when it comes to economic development and growing the province of Saskatchewan. Even in its heyday under Mr. Romanow, the NDP were not able to stimulate economic growth. Even in Mr. Romanow's heyday, our numbers were not impressive in the least. Even when Canada as a nation saw unprecedented growth, Saskatchewan lagged behind.

And you've got to admit, Mr. Premier, there were some pretty impressive people in Mr. Romanow's team. Mr. Romanow himself was a skilled politician — very established nationally and had a high profile. Mr. Romanow is gone. Mr. Romanow's Finance minister, Janice MacKinnon, has gone. She's not on the team any more.

Others have left. Ned Shillington has left your team. Dwain Lingenfelter, the former deputy premier, has left the team. In fact he's not only left the team, he's left the province and moved to Alberta. Before that, Mr. Anguish left the team. Mr. Anguish too has left Saskatchewan. Another former deputy premier, Mr. Tchorzewski, has retired.

Mr. Chair, it is obvious to the people of Saskatchewan that the key people in the Romanow government are gone. And so, Mr. Chair, they're looking to see who are the replacements. Who is running this province?

Well, Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Chair, they had a look at the member, the MLA for Regina Coronation Park. He got into cabinet for a little while. He couldn't cut it and the Premier removed him from cabinet.

We had the MLA for Regina South, an MLA that is very verbal here in the legislature. He was given a fairly responsible cabinet post. He was unable to deliver, and the member for Regina South was demoted and he has a portfolio he doesn't even like.

Mr. Chair, the MLA for Regina Wascana Plains was removed from cabinet because she mishandled the Liquor and Gaming portfolio.

The MLA for Saskatoon Southeast tried to get into cabinet for 10 years — never measured up according to Mr. Romanow. But our current Premier decided to give her a try. She ran into trouble. He dismissed her from cabinet, brought her back in, she ran into trouble again, she was removed. There was an investigation that cost the taxpayers \$25,000 of which not even the person who placed the allegations against the member had a chance to see, the report, and subsequently the MLA from Saskatoon Southeast has a news conference, embarrassed the Premier and he had to dismiss her from cabinet again.

Mr. Chair, the government put this coalition together. They had the member from North Battleford in their cabinet. He got disillusioned with the government; he left and he joined the Karwacki party. He's the only member actually of the Karwacki party.

The MLA from Saskatoon Idylwyld wasn't prepared to answer to Frank Hart as the Premier instead of our acting Premier. And she said I'm not prepared to be bossed by Mr. Hart and told what I can and cannot do in the portfolio of Economic Development. And so Janice MacKinnon resigned her seat, left this government because she saw that this government was on

the way down. She has subsequently pointed out accounting irregularities by the Minister of Finance and she is so upset by the incompetence of this government that she speaks out on these issues.

The MLA for Saskatoon Fairview, the Justice minister, goes on the evening news and says, I'm contemplating leaving this government. Cabinet ministers just don't do that. Cabinet ministers just don't go out and publicly say, my goodness I'm so concerned about what's happening here, I'm thinking about leaving this government.

The MLA for Saskatoon Eastview has been doing the same thing. I understand that if a better job comes along, she will hand in her resignation. Now here's another MLA that the current Premier put into his cabinet. She couldn't perform, she didn't measure up, and he had to dismiss her from cabinet. He made the mistake of promising her the Chair. He didn't even have the support of his own colleagues and he wasn't able to deliver on that commitment. And so the member from Eastview no longer has a cabinet position and doesn't sit as Speaker of our House.

(16:45)

The MLA for Cumberland is getting tired of this bunch and he says . . . he thinks he may go back to school, he wants to renew his education. So he's considering abandoning ship.

The MLA for Saskatoon Nutana is contemplating retirement. She has left the cabinet. We're not quite sure whether she was dismissed by the Premier or whether she left of her own volition. But again, one of the more experienced members on the other side, one whom we disagree with a great deal but nevertheless had experience, is out of cabinet and may be leaving this NDP government.

The MLA for Regina Victoria we understand is contemplating retirement. I think he sees the ship sinking as well.

The MLA for Prince Albert, the Minister of Industry, is contemplating leaving politics. He's the member for Prince Albert Northcote.

Now there's a few that haven't suggested they're leaving, but there's the minister responsible for the Crown Investment Corporation, the MLA for Meadow Lake. He's the MLA that doesn't even know what his department is doing, and he doesn't even know how he was briefed. And as a result that his lack of knowledge, the MLA, the minister, has to have a review, an inquiry commission, that cost the taxpayers again thousands and thousands of dollars simply because he as a minister is either incompetent or his staff is incompetent or perhaps they're even all incompetent, Mr. Chair.

The MLA who has the Agriculture portfolio, the MLA from Yorkton, has not been able to deliver on one commitment to Agriculture. He has failed in delivering crop insurance. He has weakened crop insurance. He doesn't have a clue what's in the new agriculture policy framework agreement. Other ministers in other provinces seem to know; they're prepared to sign on. Terry Hildebrandt from APAS (Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan) knows what's in the deal. But the

Minister of Agriculture for Saskatchewan who is supposed to be funding 40 per cent of this program has no idea, cannot tell the people of Saskatchewan what is in this new agreement. The people in rural Saskatchewan are saying that our Minister of Agriculture is incompetent.

We have a Minister of Highways, and the Premier has been saying why don't you ask the Minister of Highways a question in question period. Well if there was a good Minister of Highways maybe we'd have a good question for him, but quite frankly the way that member has distinguished himself is being the last MLA to fall on the sword over the long-term care increases, he was the member that yelled so loud in this Assembly it almost blew the walls out, that that gouging of our senior citizens and disabled people was the right thing to do. People heard it out in Pense, Mr. Chairman. People heard it over in Balgonie.

The MLA for Regina Qu'Appelle yelled out that gouging seniors and disabled people was the right thing to do. The people of Saskatchewan are incensed with the MLA from Regina Qu'Appelle. The voters in Regina Qu'Appelle cannot wait to dismiss that member from his responsibilities. It's no wonder the official opposition doesn't ask him any questions.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Mr. Chair, the MLA, a former Liberal, don't know what he is any more, the Minister of Education is negotiating a teachers' contract and will not tell the people of Saskatchewan how he plans to pay for the increase. The Minister of Education — he used to be a Liberal, we don't know what he is any more — he made a commitment to see enrolment in schools drop by 35,000 people by the end of this decade.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — That's his vision for Saskatchewan. The MLA who used to be a Liberal and we don't know what he is any more now is not keeping his commitment to reverse the funding ratio for education so the property taxpayers are given a break. That is the record of this Premier's caucus and Premier's cabinet.

And I want to close, Mr. Chair . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — . . . by talking about the Premier himself. Now the Premier was first elected many years ago. He cannot claim to be a novice. He is not a novice; he has had a number of elected years. Yes, he chose to exit politics for a year or so and then he came, decided to enter back in through a by-election and became the Leader of the NDP and subsequently, because Mr. Romanow resigned, he is now the Premier of Saskatchewan, has never been elected as the Premier of this province.

How has he been representing, how has he been representing the people of Saskatchewan? Well he is the architect of the weakest cabinet Saskatchewan has seen in my lifetime.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — He has nobody in the backbenches to replace them. He's tried and failed. He's brought them in, they failed, and he's had to dismiss them from cabinet.

And, Mr. Chair, he is the Premier that is taking Saskatchewan back into deficits and increasing our debt, the same as Grant Devine did. He's following in his footsteps. He is the Premier that is imitating the fair share program by picking winners and losers, by telling four communities they can get ethanol facilities and nobody else in Saskatchewan can.

Mr. Speaker . . . or Mr. Chair, our current Premier is the so-called ambassador of Saskatchewan that goes from our province and has the nerve to call our province a wee province. I say shame on the Premier. What kind of an ambassador . . . you talk about gloom and doom. What could be worse than the Premier of Saskatchewan going out of our province and belittling it in the media and saying that we have a wee province?

Mr. Chair, we have a great province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — We have a province of potential. We have a province that can grow if the Government of Saskatchewan would get out of the private sector, if the Government of Saskatchewan would encourage private sector investment. If the Government of Saskatchewan would give our young people a hope and a reason to stay here, Saskatchewan would take this country by storm, in fact the world by storm.

Mr. Chairman, we would have the most prosperous private sector. We would have the most prosperous small-business sector in Saskatchewan. Mr. Chairman, we would see industry establish itself in our province. We would see an expanded tourism sector. We would see oil and gas reach its potential in Saskatchewan. We would see mining step forward and grow. We would see the forestry sector expand. And, Mr. Chair, we would even see agriculture respond . . . (inaudible) . . . if we had a Premier . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — . . . if we had a Premier who had confidence in Saskatchewan. But no, we have a Premier that thinks we have a wee province that can't perform.

We have a Premier that's satisfied with emigration from our province, with lack of job creation, with a low standard of living, with negative GDP growth. We have a Premier who can't deliver on agriculture promises. We have a Premier who can't even properly represent his constituents in his own riding. They have one of the lowest standards of living in all of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker . . . or, Mr. Chair, it is obviously time for change in this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Mr. Chair, I have a team around me that's ready to go to work. I have a team that thinks Saskatchewan is a great province. I have a team that thinks Saskatchewan can grow. I have a team that thinks that not only can we keep our young people in Saskatchewan, but we can attract those that have left back to Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — I have a team that can actually establish an ethanol industry in Saskatchewan. I have a team that can balance the books and do it openly.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hermanson:** — I have a team that can bring in summary financial statements. I have a team that can create economic development in Saskatchewan. I have a team, frankly, Mr. Chair, that excites the living daylights out of me. I can hardly wait for the opportunity.

So, Mr. Premier, the last question I ask you, and the most important question I ask you, is when are you going to get out of the way so my team can do the job?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, my observation in political life is as follows . . .

**The Chair:** — Order. Order. Order.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, as I was endeavouring to say before the interruptions, it's been my observation, not only in political life but certainly in political life, that someone will engage in a long tirade of personal attacks when they don't have a brand new idea in their head, when they haven't got a substantive issue . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — . . . and when they absolutely would disappoint the people who came here. What we've heard in the last 15 to 20 minutes was a litany of personal attacks from the Leader of the Opposition and not one substantive comment, not one substantive new idea for the province or the people of Saskatchewan. And that is the reason, Mr. Chair, that leader and the so-called team he leads will never occupy the government benches in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — This group of men and women, a collection of the Devine Conservatives who are so afraid of their own history they changed their name, they haven't got a leader in their history they can point to with pride — not one.

A collection of the Devine Conservatives turned Sask Party. A collection of Liberals disaffected, who knew they were going nowhere in that party because the party itself was tossing them out. A bunch of Reformers, former members of the House of Commons, all in a collection that now calls itself the Saskatchewan Party and denies, denies they've ever occupied



the benches of government in Saskatchewan.

Well the people of Saskatchewan know the truth about that matter — when in fact some of them did occupy the benches, when many of them worked for that government, and they all supported it and belonged to the party that supported it, Mr. Speaker.

Now he wants to talk about former governments. He talks about the years that Mr. Romanow served as premier, the Romanow government. Well we're going to talk for a couple of minutes about another former government of which they are all very well acquainted — that being the government led by Mr. Grant Devine.

Now the Leader of the Opposition can go on television and say, I don't know that man. Well that's about how truthful he is on many occasions. That's about how truthful he is on many occasions.

Now he talks about population loss. He talks about population loss in this debate. Let me tell you, Mr. Chair, about population loss in this province. You know when it peaked? You know when it peaked? 1989, when these people were in government. 1989, when . . . (inaudible) . . . when the member from . . . (inaudible) . . . was working in offices right upstairs in this building.

The population loss to this province peaked in 1989 — 18,000-plus decline in the population. It declined every year that those folks were in government almost. Every year since the New Democratic Party and the coalition government has been governing in this province, with the exception of the last two, the population in this province has grown.

And here is . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the member of Saltcoats, the member of Saltcoats wants the facts. You see, this is the difficulty. You can't debate these people because they've got no regard for the truth. No regard for the truth or the facts.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — The member for Saltcoats in particular.

The facts of the matter are . . . I won't take the time of the House to read them. I have them right here from Statistics Canada. Right here.

Population every year in the 1990s growing until, Mr. Chair — and you would think that these ladies and gentlemen, these men and women, would have a sensibility about this — where did our population turn around? It turned around when we faced the crisis in agriculture — the drought and the low commodity prices that have hit our family farms and our rural communities.

You'd think they'd know something about that, but they don't. As the Minister of Agriculture said, they're so out of touch with the very constituencies they would seek to represent, it's either AWOL (absent without leave), deserted, or absent.

Now while they were government, Mr. Chair — they want to talk about former years in government — while these people and their philosophy occupied the benches of government in

this province, what happened? The population went like that every year. But what went like this? The debt of the province. Like this every year that they occupied government.

In their 10 years that they and their philosophy occupied the government benches, they rang up a debt in this province of \$15 billion — \$15 billion, \$15 billion.

Well there's the member from Thunder Creek. He won't deny that he was a member of that party, I hope. He won't deny it. He was right here. His friends were right here, ringing up the debt of \$15 billion, which will handicap every citizen, every taxpayer, and every government in this province for years to come.

That's the result of their philosophy in government. That's the result of the days they were in government. And they can't sit here today and deny their own history. They won't.

So what were they doing while they were busy driving people out of the province, ringing up the debt — what were they doing? They were selling off the assets of Saskatchewan people, fire sale prices. They talked about the Potash Corporation. They talk about the Saskatchewan Minerals corporation. They sold off the assets of this province.

What else were they doing? Raising up the taxes. Raising up the taxes, cutting the services to Saskatchewan people, selling off the Crown corporations and the assets of Saskatchewan, driving up the debt, and driving people out of Saskatchewan. And the people of Saskatchewan do not forget.

They do not forget the nature of these people. They do not forget those years. And they said then, we tolerated them once in the 1930s. We had them once in the 1930s, this Conservative lot. We didn't let them back for 50 years. Having had them once in the 1980s again, we're not having them back for 100 years.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — I have said today, I have said today, Mr. Chair, on many occasions, to many of the journalists of this province, when asked to give my assessment of the session that we are now completing — these last four months, these last 78 days — when asked to give my assessment of this session, I've said to the journalists and thereby to the public of Saskatchewan that in my view a session is measured not by whether it's been successful for an opposition or whether it's been good for a government, although it's been particularly unsuccessful for this opposition and I would say particularly good for this government. But that's not the measurement of the session.

The measurement of a session is how well has it served the people of Saskatchewan. How better today are the people of Saskatchewan today than before this session began. What is the substantive issue . . . issues and accomplishments of this session?

Well, Mr. Chair, I don't want to take the entire time of the House to describe the list. But let me say a few of them.

As a result of this session, Mr. Speaker, children in the inner

cities of Saskatchewan are safer. That's a result of this session. A result that . . .

Mr. Chair, the member from Wood River, former . . . a former distinguished service person in this country, while in this House we discuss the children of the inner city, wants to make fun and a lark of it. I'm disappointed in the . . .

Mr. Speaker, today we've learned a great deal about this opposition. Today, we've learned a great deal about this opposition. They have no regard for fact, little regard for the truth.

We've got a Leader of the Opposition who this afternoon in the House called upon the Premier of the province, along with his Justice critic, to interfere in the process of justice in this province. A Leader of the Opposition who called upon this Premier, accompanied by his Justice critic, to intervene in the process of prosecutions in this province. That, Mr. Speaker, as one of my members has just said, is a shame. It is a shame.

Now these people, Mr. Speaker, these people will not serve in the government benches.

And when they run completely out of ammunition, what do they do? They catcall. They holler from their seats. And they engage in personal attacks.

You see now, we've got the member from Rosthern quite agitated in his seat. He gets very agitated in his seat but rarely on his feet, I notice. He describes . . . he describes, Mr. Chair . . . he describes a discussion of the years when his party was in government as a personal attack. He describes the discussion of the Devine years of government as a personal attack. I guess he feels it a little personally. I understand that. But I'll tell you, the personal attack that resulted from those years was a personal attack on every citizen of the province of Saskatchewan. That was the personal attack.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, I repeat — I repeat, Mr. Chair — I repeat as a result of this session children in Saskatchewan are safer. As a result of this session consumers in Saskatchewan have new consumer protection legislation.

As a result of this session, Mr. Speaker . . . Mr. Chair, there is a host of new educational facilities, colleges, and classrooms being built for the young people of Saskatchewan under the leadership of our coalition partner, the member of Saskatoon, the Minister of Education.

Even today announcements being made in the city of Saskatoon about moving progress on a northeast high school. An extremely important contribution to Saskatoon and the future of young people in that city. As a result of this session young people across Saskatchewan will have new educational facilities; and new support, if I may say, for their teachers and the staff who provide the education.

As a result of this session new funding for post-secondary education. As a result of this session a new Department of Learning which brings together the capacities of learning,

life-long learning, in our province.

As a result of this session, Mr. Chair, new resources for the Department of Health and health in Saskatchewan. And if I may say, Mr. Chair, as a result of this session no health care premium levied on the people of Saskatchewan. As a result of this session no closures of rural hospitals. As a result of this session no user fees, no user fees. All of which you will quickly expect should these folks ever occupy the government bench.

As a result of this session, for the people of Saskatchewan, a leadership plan in health care being implemented by the current Minister of Health. A new Quality Council. A new provincial waiting list program.

New bursaries for the training of health care professionals. New programs to recruit and retain health care professionals. As a result of this session, as a result of this government, negotiated contracts with our nurses, with health care providers.

Mr. Chair, as a result of this session, the record of this government, the fiscal management of this government, we are fixing the highways of Saskatchewan. We're rebuilding the roadways and highways of Saskatchewan. The largest infrastructure program in the history of Saskatchewan being undertaken by this government, being implemented again in this session by this Minister of Highways and Transportation.

And we go a whole session, an entire session of question periods . . . (inaudible) . . . How did I figure it out? Thirty-two hours of question period questions. Over a 1,000 questions and that opposition doesn't ask one question of Highways and Transportation to the minister here.

Now that tells me, that tells me, Mr. Chair, we are doing a good job in terms of . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, as a result of this session — and I have visited many of the locations — new high-speed Internet connections in schools across the province, in health care institutions, in Social Services offices, new high-speed Internet access to the business community across Saskatchewan in an unprecedented in Canada provision of these high-speed 21st century technological issues to the people of Saskatchewan.

As a result of this session — criticize it as they will — a 25-year gaming agreement with First Nations people in the province of Saskatchewan. As a result of this session, a greenprint for ethanol development in the province of Saskatchewan that is leading the continent and leading the nation. And again, despite the opposition, we are building in this province an ethanol industry — despite the opposition.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — During the course of this session, Mr. Chair, we have seen the commissioning of the wind power generation — first in our province. We have gone from a position of no green energy development through wind to a position of being third in the country, and it's growing, Mr.

Chair.

At the end of this session, Mr. Chair, we're beginning to see the fruit of many of these labours. When I can see headlines in the daily papers — they won't be acknowledged over there — but when I can see headlines that say the jobs keep coming; when I see the employment statistics of 11,000 new jobs in May, 12,800 new jobs in June, that's a province on the move, that's a government on the move, and that's a province that's moving into the 21st century.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Chair, these estimates I think have proven some valuable exercise. It's demonstrated, through the course of all the estimates, a government that is hard at work building for the people of Saskatchewan, providing for the people of Saskatchewan good results. When we look at the results of this session, the people of Saskatchewan are better, communities in Saskatchewan are better, the future of this province is better assured.

We've learned from this session as well we face an opposition on a daily basis with no plan, no agenda — at least an agenda that they'll talk about — and when worse comes to worst, they will only result in personal attacks.

Mr. Speaker, today on a number of occasions the Leader of the Opposition has stood in his place, joined by his colleagues, and asked me to call an election. Now this is a peculiar request — a peculiar request for a leader who put into a proposed legislation in this House that we should fix the election dates and the next election should be held next fall. Again, the contradiction. Does he want an election today? Does he want an election next fall?

You know what surprises me about the whole issue? That he would want an election at all. That he would want an election at all because as sure as I stand here today, Mr. Chair, as sure as I stand here today, following the next election I will be standing in this very same place with many more colleagues on this side of the House and many fewer colleagues on that side of the House.

With that I thank the Leader of the Opposition. I thank the critics for their questions. But most of all, I thank the public servants who have sat by my side in the course of these estimates from the Department of Executive Council, and through them, I thank every civil servant who has worked extremely hard to serve all members of this legislature during the course of this session but particularly to serve government members and members of Executive Council who have spent hours and hours compiling the information, answering the questions for the opposition, meanwhile continuing to do the work of serving the people of Saskatchewan through the public service . . . (inaudible) . . . I, on behalf of Executive Council and all of government, want to thank those public servants who have served us so well in this session. And I thank the Leader of the Opposition.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

Subvote (EX01) agreed to.

Subvotes (EX02), (EX07), (EX04), (EX03), (EX08), (EX06) agreed to.

Vote 10 agreed to.

(17:15)

**General Revenue Fund  
Centenary Fund  
Vote 70**

Subvote (CF01) agreed to.

Vote 70 agreed to.

**General Revenue Fund  
Corrections and Public Safety  
Vote 73**

Subvotes (CP01), (CP02), (CP04), (CP07), (CP06) agreed to.

Vote 73 agreed to.

**General Revenue Fund  
Culture, Youth and Recreation  
Vote 27**

Subvotes (CR01), (CR02), (CR03), (CR07), (CR05), (CR06), (CR08) agreed to.

Vote 27 agreed to.

**General Revenue Fund  
Finance  
Vote 18**

Subvotes (FI01), (FI02), (FI04), (FI03), (FI06), (FI05), (FI10), (FI08), (FI09) agreed to.

Vote 18 agreed to.

**General Revenue Fund  
Finance - Servicing the Public Debt - Government Share  
Vote 12**

Subvote (FD01) — Statutory.

**General Revenue Fund  
Debt Redemption, Sinking Fund and Interest Payments  
Vote 175, 176, 177**

Votes 175, 176, 177 — Statutory.

**General Revenue Fund  
Fiscal Stabilization Fund  
Vote 71**

Subvote (FS01) — Statutory.

**General Revenue Fund  
Lending and Investing Activities  
Municipal Financing Corporation of Saskatchewan  
Vote 151**

Subvote (MF01) — Statutory.

**General Revenue Fund  
Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs  
Vote 30**

Subvotes (GR01), (GR02), (GR04), (GR07), (GR08), (GR03), (GR06) agreed to.

Vote 30 agreed to.

**Supplementary Estimates  
General Revenue Fund  
Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Vote 24**

Subvote (MG18) agreed to.

Vote 24 agreed to.

**General Revenue Fund  
Health  
Vote 32**

Subvotes (HE01), (HE02), (HE03), (HE04), (HE06), (HE08), (HE10), (further HE03) agreed to.

Vote 32 agreed to.

**General Revenue Fund  
Highways and Transportation  
Vote 16**

Subvotes (HI01), (HI02) agreed to.

**(HI04)**

**Hon. Mr. Wartman:** — Thank you, Chair. Because it's the right thing to do, Mr. Chair, I move, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Idylwyld:

That Subvote Preservation of Transportation (HI04) of Vote 16, Highways and Transportation, be reduced by \$6,750,000.

Motion agreed to.

Subvote (HI04) agreed to.

Subvote (HI10) agreed to.

(17:30)

**Subvote (HI03)**

**Hon. Mr. Wartman:** — Moved by myself, seconded by the member from Saskatoon Idylwyld:

That subvote, construction of transportation system (HI03), of vote 16, Highways and Transportation, be reduced by \$650,000.

Motion agreed to.

Subvote (HI03) agreed to.

Subvotes (HI06), (HI11) agreed to.

Vote 16 agreed to.

**General Revenue Fund  
Lending and Investing Activities  
Highways and Transportation  
Vote 145**

Subvote (HI01) agreed to.

Vote 145 agreed to.

**Supplementary Estimates  
General Revenue Fund  
Highways and Transportation  
Vote 16**

Subvote (HI04) agreed to.

Vote 16 agreed to.

**General Revenue Fund  
Public Service Commission  
Vote 33**

Subvotes (PS01), (PS02), (PS06), (PS04), (PS03), (PS07) agreed to.

Vote 33 agreed to.

**Supplementary Estimates  
General Revenue Fund  
Public Service Commission  
Vote 33**

Subvote (PS03) agreed to.

Vote 33 agreed to.

**General Revenue Fund  
Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation  
Vote 53**

Subvotes (SP01), (SP02), (SP03) agreed to.

Vote 53 agreed to.

**Supplementary Estimates  
General Revenue Fund  
Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation  
Vote 53**

Subvote (SP02) agreed to.

Vote 53 agreed to.

**General Revenue Fund  
Lending and Investing Activities  
Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan  
Vote 165**

Subvote (CI01) — Statutory.

**General Revenue Fund  
Lending and Investing Activities  
Saskatchewan Power Corporation  
Vote 152**

Subvote (PW01) — Statutory.

**General Revenue Fund  
Lending and Investing Activities  
Saskatchewan Telecommunications Holding Corporation  
Vote 153**

Subvote (ST01) — Statutory.

**Motions for Supply**

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to make the following motion:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain charges and expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002, the sum of \$89,602,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

And I so move.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to make the following motion:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain charges and expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2003, the sum of \$3,681,928,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

And I so move.

The division bells rang from 17:45 until 17:49.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

**Yeas — 29**

|              |           |           |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| Calvert      | Atkinson  | Hagel     |
| Lautermilch  | Serby     | Melenchuk |
| Cline        | Sonntag   | Osika     |
| Lorjé        | Kasperski | Goulet    |
| Van Mulligen | Prebble   | Belanger  |
| Crofford     | Axworthy  | Nilson    |
| Junor        | Hamilton  | Harper    |
| Forbes       | Jones     | Higgins   |
| Trew         | Wartman   | Thomson   |
| Yates        | McCall    |           |

**Nays — 26**

|           |             |         |
|-----------|-------------|---------|
| Hermanson | Kwiatkowski | Heppner |
| Julé      | Krawetz     | Draude  |

Gantfoer                      Bjornerud

**The Speaker:** — Order.

|             |             |           |
|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Toth        | Wakefield   | Stewart   |
| Elhard      | Eagles      | McMorris  |
| D'Autremont | Bakken      | Wall      |
| Brkich      | Wiberg      | Weekes    |
| Harpauer    | Hart        | Allchurch |
| Peters      | Huyghebaert | Hillson   |

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that the committee rise and that the Chair report that the committee has agreed to certain resolutions and asks for leave to sit again.

The committee reported progress.

**FIRST AND SECOND READING OF RESOLUTIONS**

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that the resolutions be now read the first and second time.

Motion agreed to and the resolutions read a first and second time.

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, I move:

That Bill No. 81, The Appropriation Act, 2002 (No. 4) be now introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to on division and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill read a first time.

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly and under rule 55(2), I move that the Bill be now read a second and third time.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill read a second and third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member from Moosomin on his feet?

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Speaker, with leave to introduce a motion regarding committees.

Leave granted.

**MOTIONS**

**Special Committee on Regulations**

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Regina Dewdney:

That the membership on the Special Committee on Regulations, other than that of the Chair, shall be transferable by written notice, signed by the original member, and filed with the Chair of the committee.

Motion agreed to.

### ROYAL ASSENT

At 18:02 Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took her seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following Bills:

- Bill No. 61 - The Regional Health Services Act  
 Bill No. 62 - The Health Statutes Consequential Amendments Act, 2002/Loi de 2002 apportant des modifications corrélatives à certaines lois sur la santé  
 Bill No. 41 - The Health Quality Council Act  
 Bill No. 43 - The Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation Act  
 Bill No. 57 - The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 40 - The Highway Traffic Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 4 - The SaskEnergy Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 79 - The Saskatchewan Farm Security Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 32 - The Land Surveys Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 33 - The Land Titles Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 9 - The Real Estate Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 59 - The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Act  
 Bill No. 60 - The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Consequential Amendment Act, 2002/Loi de 2002 apportant des modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Act  
 Bill No. 63 - The Members' Conflict of Interest Amendment Act, 2002 (No. 2)  
 Bill No. 69 - The Saskatchewan Applied Science Technologists and Technicians Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 3 - The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 53 - The Department of Economic Development Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 48 - The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 77 - The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2002 (No. 2)/Loi de 2002 modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la réglementation des boissons alcoolisées et des jeux de hasard  
 Bill No. 74 - The Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 72 - The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 70 - The Labour Standards Amendment Act, 2002  
 Bill No. 203 - The Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness Day Act

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

Bill No. 81 - An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Years ending respectively on March 31, 2002 and on March 31, 2003.

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

Her Honour retired from the Chamber at 18:07.

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I request leave of the House to go to motions for returns (debatable).

Leave granted.

### MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

#### Return No. 1

**Mr. Hillson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move for an order of the Assembly that an order do issue for return no. 1, seconded by the hon. member from Lloydminster.

Motion agreed to.

#### Return No. 2

**Ms. Draude:** — I move, seconded by the member from Rosetown-Biggar, item no. 2, return no. 2.

Motion agreed to.

#### Return No. 3

**Mr. Hillson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 3, seconded by the hon. member from Lloydminster.

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that all the words after "dangers" be deleted and substituted with the following:

of improper usage of electricity. (2) Whether the incidents of toaster tragedies dropped significantly since the public awareness campaign.

I move that, seconded by the Government Whip, the hon. member for Regina Dewdney

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

#### Return No. 4

**Mr. Allchurch:** — I move item 4, return no. 4, seconded by the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Motion agreed to.

#### Return No. 5

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Rosthern, item no. 5, return no. 5.

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the words "in the year 1992" be deleted.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

**Return No. 6**

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Carrot River Valley, item no. 6, return no. 6.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 7**

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member for Humboldt, item no. 7, return no. 7.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 8**

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member for Rosthern, item no. 8, return no. 8.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 9**

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Carrot River Valley, item no. 9, return no. 9.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 10**

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar, item no. 10, return no. 10.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 11**

**Mr. Wall:** — I move, seconded by the member for Arm River, item no. 11, return no. 11.

Motion agreed to.

(18:15)

**Return No. 12**

**Mr. Wall:** — I move, seconded by the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy, item no. 12, return no. 12.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 13**

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, and seconded enthusiastically by the member for Arm River, item no. 13, return no. 13.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 14**

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member for Canora-Pelly, item no. 14, return no. 14.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 42**

**Ms. Julé:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Shellbrook-Spiritwood, item no. 15, return no. 42.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 43**

**Mr. Heppner:** — I move, seconded by the member from Swift Current, item no. 16, return no. 43.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 49**

**Mr. Hillson:** — I move, seconded by the member for Lloydminster, for an order for item no. 17 that an order do issue for return no. 49.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 53**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member for Saskatchewan Rivers, on item no. 18, return no. 53.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 54**

**Mr. Hillson:** — I move, seconded by the hon. member for Lloydminster, for an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 54, item no. 19.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 55**

**Mr. Hillson:** — I move, seconded by the member for Lloydminster, item no. 20, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 55.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 61**

**Mr. Bjornerud:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Melfort-Tisdale, item no. 21, return no. 61.

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That all words after “corporation” be deleted and substituted with the following:

the policy for SaskEnergy and that of its subsidiaries regarding payment of property taxes to local municipalities.

That's seconded by the Hon. Whip, the member for Regina Dewdney.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

**Return No. 62**

**Mr. Bjornerud:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Melfort-Tisdale, item no. 22, return no. 62.

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That all the words after "corporation" be deleted and substituted with the following:

the policy for SaskEnergy and that of its subsidiaries regarding payment of grants in lieu to local municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, that's seconded by the Government Whip, the hon. member for Regina Dewdney.

Amendment agreed to on division.

Motion as amended agreed to on division.

**Return No. 78**

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Opposition Whip, the member for Indian Head-Milestone, item no. 23, return no. 78.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 79**

**Mr. Hillson:** — I move, seconded by the member for Moosomin, item no. 24, return no. 79.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 81**

**Mr. Wakefield:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member of Thunder Creek, item 25, return no. 81.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 82**

**Mr. Wakefield:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Moosomin, item 26, return no. 82.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 83**

**Mr. Wakefield:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Saltcoats, item 27, return no. 83.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 84**

**Mr. Wakefield:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Thunder Creek, item 28, return no. 84.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 85**

**Mr. Allchurch:** — I move, seconded by the member from Estevan, item 29, return 85.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 86**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Swift Current, item no. 30, return no. 86.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 87**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy, item no. 31, return no. 87.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 88**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Cannington, item no. 32, return no. 88.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 89**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Lloydminster, item no. 33, return no. 89.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 90**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Swift Current, item no. 34, return no. 90.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 91**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 35, return no. 91.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 92**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Rosetown-Biggar, item 36, return no. 92.

Motion agreed to.



**Return No. 93**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Canora-Pelly, item no. 37, return no. 93.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 100**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Regina Dewdney, item no. 38, return no. 100.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 101**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Estevan, item no. 39, return 101.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 102**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Indian Head-Milestone, item no. 40, return no. 102.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 103**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Redberry Lake, item no. 41, return 103.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 107**

**Mr. Weekes:** — I move, seconded by the member from Watrous, item no. 42, return no. 107.

Motion agreed to.

(18:30)

**Return No. 108**

**Mr. Weekes:** — I move, seconded by the member from Estevan, item no. 43, return no. 108.

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That all the words after “projected” be deleted and substituted with the following:

actuarial cost is for increasing the WCB maximum wage rate from \$48,000 to \$51,900 on January 1, 2003; \$51,900 to \$53,000 on January 1, 2004; and \$53,000 to \$55,000 on January 1, 2005.

That’s seconded by the Government House Leader, the hon. member for Regina Dewdney.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

**Return No. 109**

**Mr. Weekes:** — I move, seconded by the member from Arm River, item no. 44, return no. 109.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 110**

**Mr. Weekes:** — I move, seconded by the member from Saskatchewan Rivers, item no. 45, return no. 110.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 111**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Battleford-Cut Knife, item no. 46, return no. 111.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 112**

**Mr. Brkich:** — I move, seconded by the member from Wood River, item no. 47, return no. 112.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 113**

**Mr. Weekes:** — I move, seconded by the member from Watrous, item 48, return no. 113.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 114**

**Mr. Weekes:** — I move, seconded by the member from Watrous, item 49, return no. 114.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 115**

**Mr. Weekes:** — I move, seconded by the member from Watrous, item no. 50, return no. 115.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 116**

**Mr. Peters:** — I move, seconded by the member from Wood River, item 51, return no. 116.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 119**

**Ms. Harpauer:** — I move, seconded by the member from Redberry Lake, item no. 52, return no. 119.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 120**

**Ms. Harpauer:** — I move, seconded by the member from Cannington, item no. 53, return no. 120.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 121**

**Ms. Harpauer:** — I move, seconded by the member from Indian Head-Milestone, item no. 54, return no. 121.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 122**

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Rosetown-Biggar, item no. 55, return no. 122.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 123**

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — I move, seconded by the member from Battleford-Cut Knife, item no. 56, return no. 123.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 124**

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Battleford-Cut Knife, item no. 57, an issue for return no. 124.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 125**

**Mr. Weekes:** — I move, seconded by the member from Rosetown-Biggar, item no. 58, return no. 125.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 127**

**Ms. Julé:** — Thank you. I move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member from Saltcoats, item no. 59, return no. 127.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 128**

**Ms. Harpauer:** — I move, seconded by the member from Saltcoats, item no. 60, return no. 128.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 129**

**Mr. Heppner:** — I move, seconded by the member from

Humboldt, item no. 61, return no. 129.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 130**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move item no. 62, return no. 130, seconded by the member from Humboldt.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 131**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 63, return no. 131.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 132**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 64, return no. 132.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 133**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 65, return no. 133.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 134**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 66, return no. 134.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 135**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 67, return no. 135.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 136**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 68, return no. 136.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 137**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 69, return no. 137.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 138**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 70, return no. 138.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 139**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 71, return no. 139.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 140**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 72, return no. 140.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 141**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by that member from Swift Current, item no. 73, return no. 141.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 142**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 74, return no. 142.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 143**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt, item no. 75, return no. 143.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 144**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Saltcoats, item no. 76, return no. 144.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 145**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy, item no. 77, return no. 145.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 146**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Rosthern, item no. 78, return no. 146.

Motion agreed to.

(18:45)

**Return No. 147**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Arm River, item no. 79, return no. 147.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 148**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Redberry Lake, item no. 80, return no. 148.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 149**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Lloydminster, item no. 81, return no. 149.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 150**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Battleford-Cut Knife, item no. 82, return no. 150.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 151**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Rosetown-Biggan, item no. 83, return no. 151.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 152**

**Mr. Weekes:** — I move, seconded by the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy, item no. 84, return no. 152.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 153**

**Mr. Weekes:** — I move, seconded by the member from Lloydminster, item no. 85, return no. 153.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 154**

**Mr. Weekes:** — I move, seconded by the member from Battleford-Cut Knife, item no. 86, return no. 154.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 155**

**Mr. Hillson:** — I move, seconded by the member for Battleford-Cut Knife, item no. 87, issue a return for return no. 155.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 156**

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by my friend and colleague, the member for Meadow Lake, item no. 88, return no. 156. He said okay.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 157**

**Ms. Harpauer:** — I move, seconded by the member from Redberry Lake, item no. 89, return no. 157.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 158**

**Ms. Harpauer:** — I move, seconded by the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy, item no. 90, return no. 158.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 159**

**Ms. Harpauer:** — I move, seconded by the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood, item no. 91, return no. 159.

Motion agreed to.

**Return No. 160**

**Ms. Harpauer:** — I move, seconded by the hon. member from Swift Current, item no. 92, return no. 160.

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, this being the final resolution before us under motions for returns (debatable), I think it is worth noting that in this session there were 446 questions asked, which is an extremely high number.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — And I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that of those, there were 439 written answers provided which I believe may be an all-time record for the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, many of those questions had multi parts to them. And it took literally hundreds of hours of public service employees' time to provide the answers. And on behalf of the Executive Council, I would like to express the appreciation of the Executive Council and of the House to those many public service employees who provided the answers for the House today. And I think it would be appropriate to express our appreciation to them.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Leave to move an adjournment motion.

Leave granted.

## MOTIONS

### House Adjournment

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As is customary in this House, the Government House Leader and the Opposition House Leader take the adjournment motion as an opportunity to say thank you to our colleagues and to the people who have worked with us so diligently during the session.

And I want to say in the beginning of my brief remarks, Mr. Speaker, that this will be my favourite speech of the session because it signals an opportunity for all of us to go back to our constituencies and be with our family and with our friends. And it also signals a great deal of work that has been accomplished by, not hundreds, actually thousands of people who make our government function.

And as usual, Mr. Speaker, it's been a lively session. We have passed over 80 pieces of legislation with the government business, appropriation Bills, and so on. And I think it's been a very successful session. So I think we can all be very comfortable with the work that we've done.

But it's been interesting as well, Mr. Speaker, in that we've welcomed a new member to this legislature, the member from Saskatoon Idylwyld. We've said goodbye to a colleague, someone who has served this legislature for a long time, Mr. Bill Boyd, the former member from Kindersley.

And as well we've seen some very positive things; some things that we feel very grateful for. The member from Battleford-Cut Knife who's come back to work and is looking fit and fiddle.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — And so, Mr. Speaker, I think we can all be thankful for that.

I want to say a few words of thanks to people who work in the building, but before I do that, before I thank all of my colleagues, I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your work. I want to congratulate you. This is your second session.

I think you've served all of the members of the session, both the government and the opposition side, and the independent member — or the Liberal member; I'm sorry, Jack. With . . . oh, excuse . . . and I withdraw that. I withdraw that. The member from Battleford.

You've served all of us really with fairness and you've allowed debate on the issues and you've allowed us to display our emotion and our enthusiasm as this place is wont to bring to the fore on occasion.

I want to thank my colleague, the Opposition House Leader for his work. I think it's fair to say the member from Cannington and I don't always agree. Sometimes, sometimes I'm right — but it is true, Mr. Speaker — sometimes I'm right and he's wrong; and sometimes he's right and I'm wrong. So . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Oh, it's a moment for concession.

But moving on, I also want to thank our deputy House leaders: the member from Moose Jaw North who's taken a very, very large role in the operations of our side of the House; and the member from Indian Head-Milestone; and I want to thank them for their advice and their assistance.

I need to and I want to thank the Clerk of the Assembly. Gwenn, you have been a stalwart member of this Legislative Assembly for a long time. You serve us well.

I want to thank Greg Putz, and I want to thank Meta Woods, and Viktor Kaczkowski. And Viktor, they put it in phonetics here, I need to tell you, because your name is as bad as mine. It's a real difficult one. And I want to thank all of you for your hard work.

Monique, Sandra, Rebecca in the Clerk's office, thank you.

And our Pages. You're going to be leaving us to move on to other parts of your life. Andrea, Robin, Michelle, Fabian, and Dean, thank you all for your assistance and I know that, and I hope that you . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — And I'm hoping you carry some fond memories with you.

I want to thank our interns — Tim, Maria, Wendy, Jessica — for your assistance. And I hope . . . oh there you are, some of you are. I hope you found this a rewarding experience as well.

And I want to thank our constituency assistants who represent us not only when we're gone during session, but they work very, very hard. They're sort of the pulse of our constituencies and they work all the time. It's sort of a 365-day job out there, and I thank all of them. So all of you who are listening, thanks a bunch.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — I need to, and I want to thank all of

the caucus office staff, the staff in the ministers' offices, the Executive Council staff. They work probably as long or longer hours as we do in carrying on our duties.

And I've got to thank our Sergeant-at-Arms, Patrick, and your staff and all the commissionaires for keeping this place safe and helping to build security.

And of course the *Hansard* staff and Journals. I think there's sometimes we're very thankful that inaudible interjection is part of what you report. So thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — And our Law Clerk, Ken Ring, and his staff; Ian Brown and his staff in the legislative drafting office who prepare our legislation.

And of course the staff in the cafeteria. It's very noticeable, their work. Some of the work that happens around here is not that tangible but certainly theirs is and I can attest to that. I've got to go home and work on some of this.

But I also want to thank the SPMC building and maintenance staff. I want to thank the visitor services staff who bring in school groups, tourists, and the general public.

And of course all of this is televised in many places in the province so I want to thank Gary, Ihor, and Kerry in the broadcasting services who provide the television coverage for the people of Saskatchewan. And I want to note, Mr. Speaker, that these folks have worked together for 20 years and they continue to do a very excellent job.

I think all members would like to recognize as well the contribution of the officials from the different government departments as my colleague, the member from Moose Jaw North, has indicated, and their work as they help us put together the work of the Committee of Finance and the Committee of the Whole.

And I need to mention the reporters. I'm going to be very careful here — I don't have to. I guess today's our day off. We can say . . . No, I seriously want to thank the media for their work. They report I think in a fair and an impartial way as journalists are wont to do. We don't always agree with what they say but I know that's the direction and that's where they're headed and they like to report and need to report the happenings of the legislature.

(19:00)

But I think lastly as I close, Mr. Speaker, before I move to the motion, I want to thank, on behalf of all of us — and I think the Opposition House Leader will concur — I want to thank our families, our spouses, our partners, and our kids for what they do because without what they do, all of this couldn't be possible. And so I want to, on behalf of all of us, thank those who are at home and were waiting for us to be back there.

So with that . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move, seconded by the member from Cannington:

That when this Assembly adjourns at the end of this sitting day, it shall stand adjourned to the date and time set by Mr. Speaker upon the request of the government; and that Mr. Speaker shall give each member seven clear days notice, if possible, of such date and time.

I so move.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to rise at this time, along with the Government House Leader, to thank the various people that we have dealt with over the past session.

I'd like to particularly also congratulate the member from Battleford-Cut Knife for being here, fulfilling his duties. It was a pleasure working with him.

And yes, Mr. Speaker, we do miss the past member for Kindersley, Bill Boyd. Bill was very much a joy to have in caucus where his sharp wit . . . wit; and whip, once in a while too. Mr. Speaker, he certainly brightened our day and had a very good outlook on life and we wish Bill well in his future career.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — I'd like to thank the officers of our side of the House that I have to work with and that's the Whip, the member from Indian Head-Milestone; the Deputy House Leader, the member from Redberry; and the Deputy Whip, the member from Saltcoats.

Working with them and working with my colleagues has been a very easy thing to do in this session. Whenever there was any hint of a possibility, I'd just ask those three to go and deal with it. Mr. Speaker, it didn't have to happen, though. The colleagues on this side of the House this time were very, very co-operative and worked very hard.

I'd also like to thank, Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader and his deputy. While I agree with him we didn't always agree, at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, we both knew and understood that we were here to serve the people of Saskatchewan and that, to do that, we have to co-operate at times. At the end of the day, we have to co-operate. And I think that while it's our role as opposition to hold the government accountable, we also have to be able to pass through this House good legislation for the people of Saskatchewan and that does take the co-operation of both sides of the House, and I'd like to thank the members for working co-operatively.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Speaker, when people are watching on television, particularly in question period, they get the impression that we are very combative, that we haven't got anything good to say about the members on the other side, that when we go into the corners we always go in with our elbows

high. Well in question period that's true. But the rest of the time, Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of dealing back and forth, of co-operation, of working towards the best interests of the people in the province.

I know that my colleagues, when they approach a minister on the other side of the House to deal with an issue dealing with a constituent, they can generally resolve the issue. There are cases where there is no resolution possible and both sides understand that. But whenever there is an issue that needs to be dealt with, there was always co-operation in place and I'd like to thank the ministers and their staffs for that.

I'd also like to thank, Mr. Speaker, our caucus staff and our constituency offices. They're the ones who, if we do look good, Mr. Speaker, it's because of the work that they do behind the scenes. They are the ones who do the research. They are the ones who are in contact with the constituents and the people around the province that are phoning up or writing, inquiring about issues. So they're the first line of contact and they do an excellent, excellent job, Mr. Speaker.

Like to say thank you to yourself, Mr. Speaker, and to your office. We've always had co-operation from your office, from yourself, and from your staff. They're always very helpful and very friendly whenever we need to be in contact with them.

I'd also like to thank the Clerks at the Table and the other clerks, their office staff. Again, whenever we need to deal with the Clerk's office, the Clerk, when we have a question, we always receive the proper answer. Not always the answer we want, but we receive the proper answer. And we have to appreciate that, Mr. Speaker, and thank you.

The Government House Leader mentioned *Hansard*. And we stand in this House and a few of us, like the member from Rosthern, make long, long speeches. And you would wonder why anybody would want to ever review that.

But the people at *Hansard* record it just in case somebody does want to review that. So while sometimes the words are not exactly as we wished we had pronounced them, they do record it and it's there for posterity, Mr. Speaker. And we'd like to thank them for the hard work and the long hours they put in.

And there's one tradition, Mr. Speaker, that again *Hansard* carried out this year. It's the annual passing of the cinnamon bun to the Opposition House Leader. That occurred yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and I have to say that while it was a struggle, I managed to hold off my colleagues long enough to eat it.

**An Hon. Member:** — And now I'm wearing . . .

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Yes, and I get a lot of help from my colleagues on some of these things, Mr. Speaker.

Broadcast Services, Mr. Speaker, do an excellent job for us. They send the signal out into TV land that let people observe and see what's going on in here to gain some understanding of how the parliamentary process works.

They also broadcast it, Mr. Speaker, on the Internet which is a new facility that we've taken advantage of part of last session

and this entire session. And I know that the people at Broadcast Services are very diligent on their job and want to enhance the services that are available to the people of Saskatchewan to be able to observe their members and their parliament in operation. And I'd like to thank them for their services.

There's one of the officers of the legislature that as members of the opposition we work with fairly closely, and that's the Law Clerk, Mr. Speaker. And we'd like to thank Ken Ring and Allison and his other staff members for the hard work that they do on our behalf.

They're the ones who prepare the pieces of legislation that we present to the House. We have the ideas, we know what we want to do with a piece of legislation, and Ken and his staff are the ones that get it into a form that it's acceptable to the House. And we'd like to thank him for his work.

We'd like to thank the department officials and the civil servants that have worked on all of our questions. You know, this is inquiring minds want to know, and the people like the member from Arm River are very inquiring and want to know all of the answers. And some of the answers . . . some of the questions, Mr. Speaker, he's still looking for answers for such as: where are the fish?

Now I'm not exactly sure which fish he's talking about but there were, Mr. Speaker, some fish floating around here one day in some of the members' water glasses. And so perhaps he should make inquiries with the Pages as to where are the fish.

I'd like to thank the Pages for their hard work. You know, they're around on the floor of the House every day while we're in session. They're never recognized by yourself, Mr. Speaker, but they do an excellent job in here. And while they're not heard, Mr. Speaker, they are seen and we appreciate the hard work that they've done.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Pat Shaw and the security staff have done an excellent job in keeping us safe again this session, as they always do.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — And I know that Mr. Shaw is looking forward to some opportunities outside of the House here this fall. He was just telling me, he signalled to me that he was . . . had just been drawn to hunt elk up north this fall. So good luck.

It sort of looks like a touchdown, only a little different.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the library staff for the hard work that they do in here for us; visitor services, the cafeteria staff, and yes, not to forget the media. We sort of have a symbiotic relationship with the media. They need us to report and we need them to put our message out, Mr. Speaker. And we only hope that what they write is what we're hoping they will write. But they always seem to have an interpretation on it that either side of the House doesn't always agree with. But, Mr. Speaker, they report what we say and what we do accurately. And I guess at the end of the day that's all we can hope for.

Mr. Speaker, one last group that I think needs to be thanked, and that's our spouses and our children. They're the ones who hold the fort down when we're gone. And that means a lot to all of us.

Mr. Speaker, I have . . . we have just finished another memorable session. And while most of the Bills that we pass in this House are housekeeping, there are a few that are very meaningful. And I'd like to mention some of those.

The ethanol Bill, Mr. Speaker, I think is an important step forward for Saskatchewan. We may have different methods of implementing that kind of a strategy in Saskatchewan, but both sides of the House recognize its importance.

The Emergency Protection for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation was an extremely important Bill, Mr. Speaker, to protect children in Saskatchewan. And I'd like to congratulate the member from Humboldt on her work on this particular issue.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — She spent five years, Mr. Speaker, trying to bring this Bill to culmination. And the government recognized the importance of this particular Bill, so they need to be congratulated as well on this. Again, it's one of those areas, Mr. Speaker, where both sides of the House were able to co-operate.

Another Bill that I believe was extremely important was The Automobile Accident Insurance Act, which started a new insurance program in Saskatchewan. But in some ways it reminds me, Mr. Speaker, of that old Red Rose Tea ad — only in Saskatchewan, you say? So we will see, Mr. Speaker, how this experiment works out. I think . . . I'm hoping that it works well for both areas of that insurance, both the no-fault and the tort system, that it serves those people well who choose it.

Two of the other Bills that I want to mention is The Cities Act and The Saskatchewan Farm Land Security Act. I think these two particular Bills are going to have a major impact on the social and economic landscape of Saskatchewan and certainly I . . . people on both sides of the House want those Bills to be successful and prosperous Bills for all of us.

The opposition, Mr. Speaker, presented 14 private members' Bills and passed one of them. The member for Kelvington-Wadena saw her Bill, The Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Awareness Day Act, passed — again, Mr. Speaker, though with the co-operation of the government. I'm sure that for this member this will be the first of many Bills that she will be able to pass in this House. Congratulations.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the time has come for us all to go home and get reacquainted with our spouses and our children. So, Mr. Speaker, you all . . . to you and to all the members and staff, have a safe and enjoyable summer and we'll see you back in here for the fall session or at the polls. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hillson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to make a few remarks at the conclusion of the third session of the twenty-fourth legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not asking for sympathy, but there are times when being on your own in here is not the best of situations — 57 to 1 is not the greatest odds. Sometimes I feel like the human pinata. But I want to put all members of the legislature on notice that if I'm back next session, no more Mr. Nice Guy.

Mr. Speaker, I may be the only Liberal in this House at present, but may I point out we were the first government. And I'm bold enough to predict there will be Liberals sitting in this Assembly long after both the Saskatchewan Party and the New Democratic parties have passed into history.

(19:15)

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, they have no mercy. Our format here is a very adversarial one and that perhaps at times gives a false impression.

Premier Thatcher, that most adversarial of politicians, once said, quite correctly:

We do not differ as to goals; we only differ as to means.

All of us as members have the same aspirations, the same visions, the same beliefs, the same goals as to what is fundamentally in the interests of this province and of this society. We differ only as to the means of getting there.

I do want to say though, Mr. Speaker, that I think that what has unfolded, especially in the last three or four weeks of the session, points out the necessity of a fall session. In the province of Manitoba, legislation is introduced in the fall and given first reading. The House then adjourns in order that all members can become familiar with the legislation in order that the parties most particularly interested in the legislation can be consulted with and can give their opinions. Then everyone comes back in the spring prepared to debate.

Unfortunately, something very . . . there is a very unfortunate procedure which has come into our House, and that is that the most contentious and significant pieces of legislation are held back until well into June, in the hope that by the time the important pieces of legislation see the light of day, everyone will be tired and fed up and so anxious to get out of here that they will not receive proper scrutiny and debate.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that that may be a political strategy but it is frankly not one productive of healthy, democratic debate.

So I would ask that we consider, we consider something different. We consider means of making this a forum for the debate of public policy and that can best be done by a fall session, at which time legislation is given first reading instead of held back until we are well into the summer.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion I also want to add my very sincere thanks for all of the staff who have served us with courtesy and

with skill — the library, our Pages, your office, Mr. Speaker, Sergeant-at-Arms, cafeteria. And may I take this opportunity to particularly mention that I have been assisted throughout this session by Vic Polsom and Joanne Johnson who have done so much to prepare me for House each day. And I very much appreciate the dedication of Joanne and Vic in my office.

I want to wish all members a safe and happy summer. And I hope that they will have time to be with their family and constituents. My family and I are going to climb the Chilkoot Trail.

And I hope everyone will pursue activities that refresh and renew. I happen to think that we've earned it, whether Murray Mandryk agrees or not. But I do want to add my thanks, as well, to our media.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to report that in the past session the Liberal caucus did not have a single, solitary disagreement. Unfortunately our federal cousins didn't fare nearly so well.

Mr. Speaker, I want to warn all hon. members that next session the Liberals will be back and ready to fight. And I've only one piece of advice for you all — don't mess with North Battleford. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Members, if you will just permit to make . . . add a few remarks, I feel that it's a . . . you can never really say enough thank you's or thank you enough times. And I would just like to add a few of my own.

Earlier this session we honoured the *Hansard* production manager, Donelda Klein. Donelda's career began in December 1973 and after 29 years she's retiring to go golfing and travelling, and more golfing.

Donelda's trained dozens and dozens of new staff over the years. And she's been teaching them to strive for accuracy and excellence in their work. And her director stated:

Donelda herself has always been ready, willing, and able to do an excellent job. And I admire her dedication to *Hansard* and to the Assembly.

Now many of our MLAs might not recognize Donelda by name, but it is she who operates the audio switching equipment during routine proceedings and question period. She's one of the dedicated employees in this Legislative Building, one of the people who take pride in their work and in the beautiful, historic building in which they work.

We wish her well in her retirement. Thank you, Donelda, good luck and best wishes.

But Donelda's work ethic is typical of many of the Legislative Assembly staff. And it is through the service of our capable staff like Donelda that we're able to work here on behalf of our constituents.

And I'm very pleased to add my thank you to some of those that have already been spoken of. And that is to Lorraine



deMontigny and staff at visitor services; Ken Ring and staff, who is our Legislative Law Clerk; the security people with Pat Shaw and the sessional security led by Ben Block; people in broadcast services led by Gary Ward.

Al Hansen and Steve Bata who is our building manager for SPMC; Trent Brears and the staff, the Dome Cafeteria manager; Marilyn Kotylak and Pam Scott of Journals. Our Pages: Andrea Barraza, Robin Canham, Fabian Contreras, Fredrick Khonje, and Michelle McNichol and Dean Regier. Judy Brennan of *Hansard* and all of the *Hansard* crew.

Of course Gwenn Ronyk and her assistants in the Clerk's office; our interns; and in addition to that, Linda Kaminski and the people in human services; and Marilyn Borowski and the people in financial services that manage to get our cheques out monthly; and Guy Barnabe and his crew who keep our computers going.

My notes here point out as well that I should add my own staff at this point. And I do want to say myself that nobody could really wish people who have a greater loyalty, combination of graciousness in their job, and the competence that I have in Margaret Kleisinger, Linda Spence, Rhonda Romanuk, and Kathy Beck.

So members, I want you in the end to join me with a heartfelt thank you for all of us . . . to all of us for our staff here and those back in our constituency offices for the work they do. As has been said earlier, it's now time to return our constituencies, to our families, meet with those back home.

And thank you to all of you MLAs for the work that you do to make Saskatchewan a better place for our children and our grandchildren. It's been very much a pleasure to work with each and every one of you and it's so much a pleasure because you're all dedicated to service.

And thank you particularly to those who occasionally gave me, spontaneously, advice how to handle this Chair.

Motion agreed to.

**The Speaker:** —This House stands adjourned until an order from the Speaker.

The Assembly adjourned at 19:25.