

The Assembly met at 13:30.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition signed by citizens concerned with the dangerous and deplorable condition of Highway 58 between Chaplin and Shamrock. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 58 in order to avoid serious injury and property damage.

And this petition is signed by individuals from the community of Shamrock.

I so present.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition here with constituents that are opposed to the grasshopper spray penalty assessed to farmers:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to have Saskatchewan Crop Insurance reassess the grasshopper spray penalty assessed to farmers in 2002; and further, that the government review the definition of viable farming practices as outlined in present Saskatchewan Crop Insurance policy.

Signed by the good citizens from Paynton, Saskatchewan.

I so present.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition from citizens concerned about adequate and 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 in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens of Leask, Saskatoon, Martensville, Langham, Dalmeny, Sonningdale.

I so present.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order the following petitions are hereby read and received.

A petition concerning repairs to Highway No. 58;

A petition concerning funding for a new regional hospital in Swift Current;

A petition concerning that Sask Crop Insurance reassess the grasshopper spray penalty assessed to farmers in 2002;

Another petition concerning Crown lands and existing trails remain open for recreational and tourism purposes;

A petition concerning telephone hookup for cabins and cellular telephone coverage in parks; and

A petition concerning the federal government's intent to sign the Kyoto accord in its current form.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I give notice I shall on day no. 8 ask the government the following question:

To the Agriculture minister: how many applicants were there for the 2002 crop forage cover program; further to that, how many of these applicants have now received their full funding from the program?

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 8 ask the government the following question:

To the minister of Sask Property Management Corporation: does SPMC currently have plans or is it currently executing plans to close the major SPMC storage depot facility in Saskatoon; if so, how many jobs will be lost; where will those services be relocated?

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to stand today and introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly some very bright and energetic grade 8 students, 16 of them in total, from the school in Cudworth. And accompanying them, Mr. Speaker, are their teachers, Bob Dally and Carla Medernack.

I'm looking forward to meeting with these students a little bit later on in the day and I do hope that you enjoy the proceedings in the Assembly today. Welcome.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and to all the members of the Legislative Assembly a delegation here today to mark La Journée internationale de la Francophonie as part of the celebrations during Les Rendez-vous de la Francophonie and La Semaine nationale de la Francophonie.

Excuse me. I ran up the stairs to grab my introduction and I'm out of breath.

They're seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. And if I could ask you to stand as I mention your names, representing a variety of Fransaskois community organizations.

From the Assemblée communautaire francosaskoise: Francine Proulx-Kenzle, directrice adjointe; Grégoire Patterson, coordonnateur régional de PAC (Programme d'accès communautaire) et agent de projets.

University of Regina: Ellen Chapco, Secrétaire de l'université; Dominique Sarny, directeur, Institut français.

From the Conseil culturel francosaskois: Michel Vézina, directeur général.

From école Monseigneur de Laval: Marie-France Girardin, représentante du conseil d'école; Donna Lajeunesse, directrice adjointe.

From the Éditions de la Nouvelle Plume: Joanne Bonneville, présidente.

From the Fête francosaskoise: Michel Cordeau, président; Géraldine Petit-Gras, coordinatrice.

From the Guichet unique: Ronald Labrecque, directeur.

From the Réseau francosaskois de santé en français: Renée Demmans, coordonnatrice.

From the Division scolaire francophone: Marie Patterson, responsable des relations publiques — not there.

And from the Société . . . Oh — there. The lights are in my eyes.

From the Société historique de la Saskatchewan: Marie-Josée Perron, coordonnatrice des activités.

Please join me in welcoming these guests on this fine francophone day.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the minister in welcoming our francosaskois friends, and possibly francophones from across the country, who are with us here today. And so on behalf of the official opposition, we would like to thank you and certainly commend you on your contributions to the country, especially your contributions in the area of language, culture, and in the development of this great country of ours.

Thank you and we welcome you here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House, Vice-Chief Guy Lonechild, who is here. He is of course, as you know, a very prominent member of the FSIN (Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations) governance structure, and I'd like all members to join in welcoming him.

And while I'm on my feet, I'd as well like to welcome a former colleague in the legislature, Grant Schmidt, who has joined us here this afternoon. Welcome, Grant.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seem to be having ample opportunity to be on my feet today, but I too would like to take the opportunity to welcome Vice-Chief Guy Lonechild to the Assembly today.

As well, I'd like to say a great big welcome to a gentleman that's here today as band manager for Whitecap Dakota, Tony Kuchapski. Tony was actually a young man who grew up in the same small village as I did some time ago. Anyway, Tony, it's just a very wonderful surprise to see you here and I hope you enjoy the proceedings.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege today to introduce to you and to members of the House a volunteer group of crop reporters from across Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation, and who report for Sask Ag and Food, Mr. Speaker. This group of crop reporters I had the privilege of having lunch with today. They have been involved in doing crop reporting in Saskatchewan for the past 25 years and I want to recognize them individually today, Mr. Speaker.

I have in the Assembly, or we have in the Assembly today, Glen and Liz MacKenzie from the RM (rural municipality) of Pinto Creek, No. 75. I have with me as well today Fred and Barbara Headford from the RM . . . of the RM of Dufferin, No. 190. Fred and Barbara Headford from the RM of Dufferin, No. 190 . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, thank you very much. David and Irene Ehman from the RM of Craik, No. 222; Norman Langager from the RM of Loreburn, No. 254, who is accompanied today by family friend Ann Follick; Cecil and Mary Reimer from the RM of Barrier Valley, No. 394; William Gryba from the RM of Invergordon, No. 430, who is represented here today by his son, Daniel Gryba, and daughter, Vicky Kuntz; and Bruce and Marilyn Meeds of the RM of Meadow Lake, No. 588; and Ed Shulver from the RM of Pleasantdale, No. 398, who was unable to be here today.

I'd ask all members of the Assembly to join with me in recognizing this special group of volunteers who do good work for the Department of Agriculture and Food, for our Saskatchewan farmers, and our Saskatchewan community.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join in welcoming Mr. Grant Schmidt to the legislature. As you say, I am the member for North Battleford now. However, in a previous life I practised law in Melville as does Mr. Schmidt. We never actually practised together, but we did practise in the same community, and we didn't actually agree on very many things.

We disagreed on most subjects but we did retain, I think, a degree of respect for each other. And we did at least agree in that both of us have a passionate commitment to the ideals of democracy. Please join me in welcoming Mr. Schmidt today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I also want to join my colleagues in welcoming Vice-Chief Guy Lonechild to the Assembly today. And of course with Vice-Chief Guy Lonechild is Tony Kuchapski. And both Vice-Chief Guy Lonechild and Tony, as well Chief Bear, are in the Assembly today to lobby for the four winds training project which is an exciting opportunity for Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to make sure that we all take a minute to first of all welcome them here, and to also point out that we had a hockey discussion before we came down here, Mr. Speaker, and Tony Kuchapski now says to me when he was young, when he played hockey, they called him Slapsky Kuchapski. So I want to welcome Slapsky here today and to point out that they're here promoting, again, a wonderful project called the four winds training project.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition I would like to join the Minister of Agriculture in recognizing the great work performed by the crop reporters of our province.

And those present today have volunteered 25 years of their time, which not only takes great dedication but also a love of our province and a true commitment to the importance of the agriculture industry. So we thank you. It's an honour to have you with us today, and would everyone please join us again in welcoming these great individuals . . .

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

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with great pleasure that I introduce to you and through you to members of the House a representative of labour sitting in the west gallery. Gord Gunoff, the business manager for IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers). I'm very pleased to see Gord here this afternoon and I'd like all members to welcome him to the House.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(13:45)

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Fifth Annual Saskatchewan Party Leader's Dinner

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last night I had the pleasure of attending the fifth annual Saskatoon Saskatchewan Party leader's dinner. Almost 700 people were in attendance, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these people came out at \$200 a plate because they want to change the government. And they support the Saskatchewan Party vision, plan, and team.

These people don't believe the tired rhetoric of this NDP (New Democratic Party) government. They believe their lived reality.

Day after day they see their communities shrinking, the out-migration of youth, the longest surgery waiting lists in Canada, the wasted tax dollars on potatoes, ISC (Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan), and risky foreign investments.

And they know that Saskatchewan is being shortchanged. They know that \$28 million could build two high schools and hire a whole lot of nurses and policemen.

Mr. Speaker, these people, and many more, support the Saskatchewan Party's plan because they've seen the NDP's track record and they know whatever plan this government purports to have just isn't working.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party has a plan for governance and we have clear goals for our province. As Earl Nightingale once said:

People with goals succeed because they know where they are going.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this government to listen to the people of Saskatchewan and call an election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Thank You to the People of Saskatoon Fairview Constituency

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, as the newly elected member of Saskatoon Fairview, I want to thank my constituents for their support on March 17 and for the showing of confidence in me and the New Democratic Party by electing me by a margin of almost 2:1 over my nearest opponent.

Mr. Speaker, on March 17 the people of Saskatoon Fairview judged the opposition, their empty slogans, and their doom-and-gloom scenarios. More importantly, they judged this NDP government. The choice was clear.

Mr. Speaker, it is both daunting and gratifying to think that people of Saskatoon Fairview have chosen me to follow in the footsteps of Chris Axworthy and Bob Mitchell. But I'll do my utmost to represent them as effectively and ably as those two worthy gentlemen.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my opponents for their vigorous and hard-fought campaigns. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my family and my campaign team, especially the volunteers. Mr. Speaker, volunteers are at the heart of any political campaign. Without them, none of this would be here.

I am looking forward to working with all hon. members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Thank You to the People of Battleford-Cut Knife Constituency

Mr. Lorenz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would

like to take this opportunity to thank the people of the Battleford-Cut Knife constituency in supporting me in the by-election. I'm looking forward to working with the people of the Battleford-Cut Knife constituency and representing all people in that riding.

There is needs to be recognized, and responsibilities, in justice, youth, crop insurance, health, and First Nations, as these were some of the issues that were recognized through the campaign. I'm looking forward to be working on these issues and other concerns that will be brought from the Battleford-Cut Knife constituency.

I and the people from the Battleford-Cut Knife constituency will be looking, anxiously waiting for the call for the general election, and also will be looking for the new hope and direction the Saskatchewan Party will be taking in forming the new government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Congratulations to the Melville Millionaires Hockey Team

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to congratulate, and I would ask the members to join me in congratulating the Melville Millionaires hockey team for winning their Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League series over the Notre Dame Hounds. By all accounts, Mr. Speaker, it was a hard-fought series with the Millionaires finally prevailing in the sixth game with a four-to-nothing victory.

Now rumour has it that shortly after the game, Bill Boyd, the real leader of the Saskatchewan Party, unhappy with this outcome, requested a secret meeting with officials in an attempt to have the score overturned, reversed — something, anything, Mr. Speaker. Fortunately reason, good judgment, and fair play won out. Mr. Boyd and the Saskatchewan Party caucus were surprised and disappointed when they were informed that in a hockey game, as in democracy, there are rules of which one of the better known, less obscure ones is, most goals wins.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Condolences to the Rob Sivell Family of Buena Vista

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today with great sadness to talk about the passing of a constituent of mine, and to offer sympathy for the family of Rob Sivell from Buena Vista.

Mr. Sivell was killed while working on a oil rig in the Middle Eastern country of Yemen. This husband and father was a victim of a shooting rampage that left him and two other workers dead, while a second Canadian from Alberta was seriously wounded.

Apparently the shooter was a Yemen citizen employed at the rig located in the oil-rich northern province of Marib, about 160 kilometres northeast of Yemen's capital of Sanaa. The two other workers that were killed were an American who was a superintendent at the rig, and a local Yemen worker.

Rob Sivell, 44 years old, leaves behind his wife, twin one-year-old daughters, as well as a teenage son. Mr. Sivell was described by neighbour and good friend, Sylvia Klaptchuk, as a good, all around Canadian boy. I know in our hearts, we're just missing him terribly. He was way too young; there's no rhyme or reason to why he's gone.

On behalf of every member of this Assembly, I want to relay our deepest sympathies to the family of Rob Sivell. Today we pay tribute to this dedicated family man and proud Saskatchewan citizen. Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this time of tragedy. May the happy memories of this loving husband, father, be with you always. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

La Journée internationale de la Francophonie

Mr. Kasperski: — Merci, Monsieur le Président. Cette journée, 20 mars 2003, a été proclamée officiellement La Journée internationale de la Francophonie en Saskatchewan par la ministre responsable de l'Office de coordination des affaires francophones, la députée de Regina Centre. Nous reconnaissons en ce jour l'organisme international La Francophonie qui réunit plus de 50 pays et gouvernements qui ont le français en partage.

En qualité de président de la Section de la Saskatchewan de l'Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, je suis honoré de souligner cette occasion en français dans notre assemblée législative provinciale.

Le 20 mars marque aussi le point culminant de deux semaines de fêtes qui ont pour but de célébrer la langue et la culture françaises et de mettre en valeur les réalisations des Francophones et des communautés francophones de notre pays.

En Saskatchewan, le thème de cette année est: Notre dualité linguistique à célébrer!

En tant que gouvernement, nous sommes engagés à assurer le développement et la vitalité des deux langues officielles du Canada.

Nous prisons beaucoup la contribution de nos concitoyens et de nos communautés francophones au développement social, culturel, et économique de notre province durant toute l'année.

J'encourage tous mes collègues à soutenir les Francophones tout au long de l'année et à les fêter dans leurs circonscriptions.

Je vous invite maintenant à vous joindre à moi pour souhaiter à tous les Fransaskois et à toutes les Fransaskoises: bonne Journée internationale de la Francophonie.

(Translation: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, March 20, 2003, has officially been proclaimed La Journée internationale de la Francophonie in Saskatchewan by the minister responsible for the Office of French-language Co-ordination, the member for Regina Centre. This day recognizes the international organization La Francophonie which brings together over 50 countries and governments sharing French as a common language.

As president of the Saskatchewan section of the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, I am honoured to mark this occasion in French in our provincial legislature.

March 20 is also the focal point for two weeks of festivities celebrating the French language and culture and recognizing the achievements of our country's francophones and francophone communities.

In Saskatchewan, the theme this year is: In Celebration Of Our Linguistic Duality.

We value the contribution that our francophone citizens and communities make to the social, cultural, and economic development of our province throughout the year.

I encourage all my colleagues to be active year-round in supporting and celebrating the francophones in their constituencies.

Please join with me now in wishing all Fransaskois and Fransaskoises: bonne Journée internationale de la Francophonie.)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Anna Rathje Celebrates 105th Birthday

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to extend a sincere belated congratulations to Ms. Anna Rathje of the Allan district who celebrated her 105th birthday on December 29, 2002.

Anna was born in Germany in 1897 and in 1923 she made the long journey across the Atlantic to Canada by boat. Canada offered Ms. Rathje a new life and she never ever regretted her decision.

Anna and her husband Fritz built their home in 1928 on their farm near Allan. Both Anna and her husband focused their never-ending amount of energy and their ambition and dreams into building a life on the open prairies.

In the year 2000 I had the opportunity to meet Anna and present her with the Three Century Certificate. As we visited she sat in a rocking chair which was given to her by her husband as a wedding gift and she shared so very many stories with me about her life and her adventures. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Anna for her contribution she's made over the years to her family, to the community, and to the province of Saskatchewan.

Happy belated birthday, Anna.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Support for Agriculture

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Speech from the Throne was certainly a disappointment for Saskatchewan people who were hoping for some hint of a new

direction for the future of our province.

One sector that was really looking for a sign of improvement was agriculture. After being ignored by NDP governments for a dozen years, people from across rural Saskatchewan were hoping to hear a commitment of renewal for the rural economy. Instead what they heard was a rehash of the same old, tired NDP rhetoric. The Throne Speech regularly referred to the drought that has had significant impact on our provincial economy, yet provided no indication of any commitment to addressing the impact on agriculture or the rural economy.

Mr. Speaker, after two years of drought and stress on our provincial agriculture sector, why couldn't the NDP come up with any new initiatives to offer farm families support and hope for the future in its Speech from the Throne?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to enter into the discussion and answer the question on behalf of the government today given that it's been now, Mr. Speaker, better than three and a half years that the opposition who say, Mr. Speaker, that they are the ambassadors for rural Saskatchewan and agricultural policy, Mr. Speaker, is what I hear from those people.

And this is the very first question I think, Mr. Speaker, that the member . . . Leader of the Opposition has actually got up and asked. But I say, Mr. Speaker, a year and a half ago, Mr. Speaker, I asked the departed Mr. Bill Boyd, give me some idea about what you have in terms of agricultural policy, Mr. Speaker — never heard a word from them, Mr. Speaker.

A couple of weeks ago before we entered into the agricultural policy framework of which we have now for Saskatchewan and Canadian people, Mr. Speaker — a good agricultural policy for Canadians — I asked the Leader of the Opposition to please send me a response. Not a word, Mr. Speaker. We have a party, Mr. Speaker, over there who represent rural Saskatchewan who are absolutely bankrupt . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, I would remind the Minister of Agriculture that with a 20 per cent increase in our vote in the Battleford-Cut Knife, that 20 per cent will remove him from the Yorkton constituency . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — And will remove the member for Meadow Lake from his constituency because the NDP have not paid attention to rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne focuses on the past. It's a backward look at programs already in place, policy already unveiled. Rather than focus on the future of the agriculture sector in a rural economy, the NDP just looked back at its failures of the past.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP has destroyed safety net programs. Does anyone remember GRIP (gross revenue insurance program)?

Mr. Speaker, they cut crop insurance coverage and they hiked premiums not only last year but this year as well. They have forced the sell-off of livestock herds. Mr. Speaker, they have left the ACRE (Action Committee on the Rural Economy) committee report collecting dust on the shelf. And now they had a chance to do something but they didn't.

Mr. Speaker, when will the Saskatchewan people see any real, new ideas from the NDP — anything to help our rural communities and the agriculture sector?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition shouldn't be standing up in the House and worrying about my seat, Mr. Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition should be standing up in the House and worrying about what's happened in his Melville seat, Mr. Speaker. We're all ready to . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — We're all ready, Mr. Speaker. The constituents of Melville have spoken and said, we don't want that member sitting in the legislature, Mr. Speaker. He should worry about the Melville seat, not the Yorkton seat.

I say to the member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition: all I've seen from you on the agricultural policy is a slogan and a dream, Mr. Speaker. That's all we've seen, Mr. Speaker. We've seen nothing from the agriculture . . . on agriculture from the member opposite, Mr. Speaker.

When in fact, Mr. Speaker, we rolled out the livestock retention program this spring, Mr. Speaker, or this fall, for producers, what did they say over there, Mr. Speaker? They said, well not enough, Mr. Speaker, not enough. But no idea, Mr. Speaker. When we roll out a brand new crop insurance in Saskatchewan, what does their ag critic say? You should have extended it to eight or nine years. We already have 15 years . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Crop Insurance Program

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that minister should just examine what happened in the Battleford-Cut Knife constituency if he wants to know what's happening in rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. The speech . . .

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

(14:00)

Ms. Harpauer: — The Speech from the Throne repeatedly mentioned the severe drought that has gripped a large section of our province over the last two years. Yet despite acknowledgement in the Throne Speech that the crop insurance program has been a critical lifeline for the many farm families, the NDP has just announced that the crop insurance premiums will be hiked another 52 per cent this year. That is on top of the

massive premium increases and the cuts in the program that were implemented last year, Mr. Speaker.

How can the NDP talk about the devastation of the drought and how can they talk about the importance of the crop insurance program and yet at the same time increase the crop insurance premiums, making it one reliable safety net program that the producers of this province have, Mr. Speaker, unaffordable to many of the producers?

To the minister, why is the NDP continuing to attack the farm families with a second year of massive crop insurance premium hikes?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — I can understand why the member opposite is asking questions of the government, because she has very little understanding of agriculture herself, Mr. Speaker, and so this is what . . . beginning of the appreciation of what the agriculture policy is all about, Mr. Speaker. And I say . . .

The Speaker: — Order.

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Let me say . . . Mr. Speaker, let me say this. Just a couple of days ago when we rolled out the crop insurance program, the member from Melfort was on the radio waves and saying, you know what, we need to extend the crop insurance program over a longer period of time so that farmers have an opportunity to pay back that debt that we have today in Saskatchewan. They asked him how long. He said well, I don't know how long; it should be longer.

And then they asked the agricultural critic, Mr. Speaker, from Watrous, how long should they be extending the payback on the crop insurance program. She said well, you know what, I think it should be about eight or nine years, Mr. Speaker, they should do it.

We already have a payback process in Canada, Mr. Speaker, for crop insurance which is 15 years, Mr. Speaker. And the member opposite wants to roll it back, Mr. Speaker. She's talking about helping Saskatchewan farmers, Mr. Speaker, helping Saskatchewan farmers by rolling back the period from 15 years to 8 or 9 years, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope that that minister isn't suggesting that we're going to . . .

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

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope that that minister isn't suggesting that we're going to have a 52 per cent increase in the premiums of the crop insurance program for 15 years.

This is the second year of massive crop insurance premium hikes that's going to put the program out of reach for many of the farm families. Faced with huge increase in prices of the fertilizer and fuel, the decision to purchase crop insurance will be weighed with all the other input costs that the farmers of this

province are facing. And in more cases this year the price of the program will render it unaffordable.

That's the same situation that occurred, Mr. Speaker, about 10 years ago. When the premiums were hiked, the participation dropped. Mr. Speaker, how does the minister expect farm families to be able to pay for these huge premium hikes after two years of a devastating drought?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Well, Mr. Speaker, that member from Watrous stood up in the House last year and she said to the members of this Assembly and to Saskatchewan people, you know what? Crop insurance next year is going to drop by a substantive margin in this province. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? More people had crop insurance premium last year than anywhere in the province, Mr. Speaker, for last year.

And the member today reads a private statement from Arm River and he says, Mr. Speaker, that the . . .

The Speaker: — Order.

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, he gets up today and he reads a statement, a private member's statement, that talks about the fact that the grass program in Saskatchewan wasn't very helpful last year, and the member from Watrous said the same thing. We started out last year, Mr. Speaker, with 200,000 acres in grass. The new crop insurance program, Mr. Speaker, saw last year 3 million acres interred in grass this year.

And we're building a brand new crop insurance program in Saskatchewan to help farmers, while those people over there say we should have signed an agreement six months ago which no other province than Saskatchewan supported.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Rural Business Telephone Rates

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for SaskTel. Yesterday the NDP confirmed SaskTel is about to implement a multi-million dollar rate increase for rural business customers. It's just the latest attack on rural Saskatchewan by this NDP government.

Last year in the midst of a devastating drought, the NDP raised crop insurance premiums and reduced coverage. This year the NDP goes one better. They increase crop insurance rates by a whopping 52 per cent. And now we find out that SaskTel is jacking up rural business telephone rates by as much as 10 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, why is the NDP attacking businesses in rural Saskatchewan during a time when the rural economy is devastated by a drought?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, the member from Saltcoats and members from the Saskatchewan Party from time to time

continue to say things that are absolutely not fitting to the reality of what's there, Mr. Speaker.

The member from Saltcoats today stands up in his chair and says that crop insurance premiums have gone up with a reduction in the yield return for farmers — is absolutely, Mr. Speaker, false. False, Mr. Speaker.

The premiums are going up, absolutely. They are going up to cover . . . (inaudible) . . . Mr. Speaker. Where the problem is, Mr. Speaker, the farmers in Saskatchewan today will pay a higher premium for higher coverage, not lower coverage, Mr. Speaker. And that's why, Mr. Speaker, the member from Saltcoats today is going to be looking in to this legislature, Mr. Speaker, as opposed to looking out, after the constituents of Melville have their say with him and Mr. Schmidt has their say with him in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the minister got one thing right. Rates are absolutely increasing, last year and this year, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Speaker, since 1999 the NDP government has posted the second worst job creation record and the second worst population loss record in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, since the Liberals joined the NDP to form a coalition government, Saskatchewan has suffered net out-migration of more than 27,000 people. Many of those 27,000 people are from rural Saskatchewan and most of those fleeing Saskatchewan are our young people that we need the most.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Speaker, why is the NDP attacking rural businesses that are struggling now to survive the drought? Why is the NDP singling out rural businesses for a punishment with a multi-million dollar SaskTel rate increase?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — In my last comments, I had two things right, Mr. Speaker. I had two things right. The first thing I had right, Mr. Speaker, is that crop insurance returns to farmers on premiums today are going to go up over what they were last year, without any question about that.

And secondly, Mr. Speaker, I had right the fact that the new democracy of the Saskatchewan Party is not going to work, Mr. Speaker. There is nowhere, Mr. Speaker, today in Canada where you have a constituency, Mr. Speaker, that elects . . . that calls a nomination, Mr. Speaker, elects or selects an individual whom they want to represent them, Mr. Speaker, and at the end of the day, the party says we're going to exclude this person from sitting on the . . . (inaudible) . . . Mr. Speaker. Nowhere else in Canada, Mr. Speaker. This is the new grassroots democratic party, Mr. Speaker, of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SaskTel Investments

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's hard to believe that the New Democratic Party on that . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order, please. Order. Order, please. The member for Swift Current may start over.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's hard to believe that this NDP government would lecture anybody about democracy. This Premier, Mr. Speaker, has borrowed two years from . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, this Premier has absolutely no mandate to sit in the chair he's sitting in . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, furthermore this party that would lecture this House on democracy is currently playing games with the setting of an election date. We on this side of the House are committed to set election dates.

Mr. Speaker, if that party was . . . that party giving anybody any lectures on democracy at all, that's like . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I invite the member from Swift Current to put his question.

Mr. Wall: — This government, this government giving . . .

The Speaker: — Thank you, members.

Mr. Wall: — This party, this government that stole the election from Saskatchewan people, lecturing anybody about democracy, that's like Enron officials lecturing people about accounting policies, Mr. Speaker. It's ridiculous.

Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the minister responsible for SaskTel. For the last couple of sessions he's been standing in this legislature saying that SaskTel is into all of these foreign investments so they can bring profits back home and keep rates low. But now we hear, Mr. Speaker, that this government will increase rates in rural Saskatchewan — increase telephone rates — by \$5 million.

So, Mr. Speaker, to the minister: how is it good public policy that SaskTel customers in the province of Saskatchewan should subsidize all of his adventures abroad?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate the question because it does give me an opportunity to talk about the great things that SaskTel actually does.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, the opposition has had a lot of rhetoric

about this issue. First of all, Mr. Speaker, SaskTel provides the second lowest rates for residents — residents, I say — across Canada, and for businesses. And for businesses, Mr. Speaker, in the highest cost service area — I say highest cost service area in all of Canada — we provide the lowest rates for businesses, Mr. Speaker. That is a fact.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The point is, how much better could it be here in Saskatchewan if the NDP government hadn't squandered millions and millions of dollars in places like Nashville, Tennessee, and Atlanta, Georgia, and in Australia, Mr. Speaker? How much better could it be?

Here's the track record, here's the track record of this government; SPUDCO (Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company) of course we know lost \$28 million; Coachman Insurance in Ontario lost 11 million; Persona Inc., a stock market gamble by SaskTel, lost nine and one-half million dollars . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. I would ask members just to tone it down a bit. I want to be able to hear the remarks. I want to be able to hear the questions and . . . Order, please. Order, please. Order. Order, please.

And furthermore, members, it becomes difficult even for the public to be able to pick up the words of the members if there is too much background hollering. So kind of tone it down. I ask members to just pay . . . give your members who are on the floor a little more respect.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Retx.com is a company in Atlanta, Georgia. They've lost seven and one-half million; we've lost a couple of million more in Nashville, Tennessee in TappedInto.com.

Mr. Speaker, the question is this: if the minister is so confident in the policy of this government, the policy to invest and lose money all around the world through the Crowns, if he's so confident in that policy, will he whisper in the ear of this unelected Premier of the province and tell him that they're ready for an election, they're ready to debate the issue? And we'll see where Saskatchewan people side on the issue.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I note in *The Western Producer*, December 5, 2002, the headline says, "Poor phone service irks rural Albertans," Mr. Speaker. And from the party, Mr. Speaker, that supports complete deregulation, Mr. Speaker, it's a bit odd that they would be critical of a situation that now exists where CRTC (Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission) dictates that you cannot . . . or very . . . you have limited ability to subsidize, Mr. Speaker.

(14:15)

Having said that, I want to quote from this. It says, Mr. Speaker, that:

Claims of poor service and price gouging in rural Alberta put Telus (deregulated and privatized phone company in Alberta, Mr. Speaker) under an uncomfortable spotlight at last week's Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties convention.

Mr. Speaker, it goes on to say that:

Association delegates voted unanimously to push both Ottawa and the Alberta government to enforce service to rural areas after three municipalities brought forward complaints about . . . (that private phone company's service).

Mr. Speaker, SaskTel provides great service in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Treaty Land Entitlement Claims

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Cypress Hills raised this issue yesterday and I feel it's important to follow up because there was no answer from the minister on the issue yesterday. According to the treaty land entitlement agreement negotiated between First Nations, the federal government, and the province of Saskatchewan, the province has 90 days from the time they are notified of a land claim to state their intentions with regard to the claim settlement.

Mr. Speaker, the 90-day period for the remaining Poundmaker First Nation's claims has now expired and the province should have responded to both claims by now.

Mr. Speaker, has the province of Saskatchewan responded to the Poundmaker First Nation's last two claims? If so, what was their response? And if not, why is the province violating the Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement which they supposedly negotiated in good faith?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday in my response to the member from Cypress I did answer the question, Mr. Speaker. And I said this, Mr. Speaker — and I'll answer it again for the member from Humboldt, Mr. Speaker — and I said this: that this, Mr. Speaker, is a very, very sensitive issue. I have asked that this matter be delayed for a year in terms of making a definitive decision about what we do with treaty land in Saskatchewan. And I've said that, Mr. Speaker, to First Nations people, Mr. Speaker; and I've said it to ranchers in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker; and those people from across Saskatchewan who think we should sell off the Crown lands, Mr. Speaker.

I've said that now publicly and openly for the better part of six months. So I say to the member opposite that we shouldn't be trying to pick winners and losers in this exercise. We should be trying to find a negotiated settlement, Mr. Speaker, with First Nations people and ranchers. Because that's the way on this side of the House that we do business with Saskatchewan's people, Mr. Speaker. That's how we do business — in a negotiated fashion as opposed to picking winners and losers,

which the member from Humboldt is alluding to today and that the Leader of the Opposition does on a regular basis when he's on his feet, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Julé: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the minister knows full well that by not honouring the 90-day response deadline — a deadline the province agreed to when they signed the Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement — that that government is not respecting the rights of the other parties to the agreement, especially the rights of the First Nations involved and of the third party stakeholders who are landowners, Crown land lessees, and the rural municipalities, all of them affected by this land issue.

Mr. Speaker, I have a letter from the Department of Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs that states:

The government is conducting a review of the policy respecting leaseholders and treaty land entitlement. Until that review is complete, decisions respecting the availability of Crown land will be held in abeyance.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why is the NDP conducting this lease policy review now? How is this fair to all the stakeholders in the process? And, Mr. Speaker, under what authority does your government assume the right to short-circuit the agreed-upon process?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Revitalization has clearly outlined the position of this government in the matter of treaty land entitlements. This opposition, Mr. Speaker, is not going to get away with this any more. Let that member or let that leader or let someone over there stand in this House and let's hear the position of the Saskatchewan Party. Let's hear the position.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Now I'll tell you this, Mr. Speaker. I'll tell you this. She talks about . . . that member talks about respecting people, from this group respecting . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — This group wants to talk about respecting people and they want to talk about democracy. Let me tell you about their view of democracy. When they sat on the government benches, we waited five years and one day for an election . . . five years and one day.

They were so in disgrace after that election, that what did they do? They had to form themselves a new political party. Did they consult with their grassroots? No. They got together in a restaurant in downtown Regina and cooked up a political party.

Then, Mr. Speaker, after they form a political party, they have conventions here in the capital city — conventions here right in the capital city this year. They won't allow their members to debate resolutions. That's democracy.

And then the icing on the cake — 1,200 of their members come together in Melville, try to elect a member, and they're turned down by that most undemocratic group in the nation of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, please.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Saskatchewan Environment Drinking Water Compliance Report

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise today to provide members of the Assembly with some important information.

This morning Saskatchewan Environment released its 2001-2002 *Drinking Water Compliance Report*. This report reviews the overall compliance of the municipal water systems and reports on elements including sample submission compliance and how well waterworks are performing in meeting drinking water objectives in effect during the reporting period.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased with this report as it showed that most Saskatchewan communities are submitting the required samples and most of those samples show that the communities are providing good, clean drinking water to their citizens. It also shows improvement by other communities who were falling behind in their sampling and in their water quality results.

However, Mr. Speaker, the report also points out the area that need more work. A small number of municipalities did not continuously disinfect their water supplies during the year covered by this report. Mr. Speaker, let me assure you that my department is working hard with these communities to help them improve their water.

The contamination incidents in Walkerton, Ontario, and here at home in North Battleford were clear reminders to us all that water is too precious for us to take for granted and make assumptions. And as you know, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan, because of these incidents, all government departments and agencies involved in the provision of drinking water took a good, long, hard look at their policies and their programs. They then proposed changes that helped to form the government's safe drinking water strategy that was released last year.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to outline just a few of those changes. The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority was created last October to better coordinate efforts for managing and protecting surface water and groundwater resources. A new Environmental Management and Protection Act was created to give Saskatchewan Environment more strength when it comes to the regulation of drinking water. Work continues to ensure that every water and waste water system regulated by Saskatchewan Environment is under the direction of a certified operator by 2005.

In co-operation with the Department of Health and the health regions, Saskatchewan Environment has updated the bacteriological follow-up protocol to ensure prompt, thorough

response to bacteriological problems in waterworks.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, these are just a few of the changes that this government has made over the past year. There have been many more and we'll continue to initiate changes aimed at ensuring safe, clean drinking water for the people of Saskatchewan. In fact the release of this compliance report today is one step in the government's commitment to openness and accountability in the provision of safe drinking water and part of our overall safe drinking water strategy.

Later this summer we'll be releasing the first annual state of the drinking water in Saskatchewan report. That report will further detail the province's actions in terms of drinking water, but it'll also contain updated compliance information similar to the information released today. As well, in just two weeks it'll be the first anniversary of the North Battleford Water Inquiry and the government will provide a fuller progress report then.

Mr. Speaker, rest assured: this government is committed to providing clean, safe drinking water to the citizens of this province. It is committed to working with other agencies, communities, and the people of Saskatchewan to achieve that goal. After all, safe drinking water is not the responsibility of any single government agency, group, or person, Mr. Speaker; safe drinking water is the responsibility of us all.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to reply to the minister's statement. I'd like to thank the minister for the advance copy of his statement.

Mr. Speaker, the minister speaks about overall compliance of the municipal water system and how the sample submissions and compliance has been working and that's a very good objective to work towards. He makes mention that most communities are submitting the required samples. And just from my personal experience in my constituency, the communities are working very hard to . . . meeting these requirements, but there's a number of roadblocks in their way. Possibly more training and information is needed to give to these local officials so that they give proper samples and the proper samples are taken at all times. Mr. Speaker, the communities are doing the best they can under the circumstances.

The minister speaks about the contamination and the incidents in Walkerton and North Battleford and we all agree, all the people of Saskatchewan agree, that water is a very precious asset and we must be very careful with how we protect the water supply because it's very important to the communities, to the health of Saskatchewan residents, also to the future economic development of the province.

Mr. Speaker, the minister speaks about the Watershed Authority that was created in a new Environmental Management and Protection Act, and there's a number of regulations and Acts that he speaks about. I believe that there's a real risk of really laying more regulation upon regulation onto the local communities, and I think we have to take a very close look at

what the government is doing as far as just regulations being added to the bureaucracy and more bureaucracy being added to the local governments without actually improving the whole water system in the long term.

It's very clear to me that the provincial government is shifting responsibility to the local municipalities and that's all fine and dandy. But there is not the resources, the financial resources, for the local communities to continue this responsibility that has been given to them.

As I mentioned before with . . . the local officials I believe, need more training and more support from the local government. And the added responsibility that the government has shifted onto the local municipalities also means more money must be spent.

The minister speaks about the anniversary of the North Battleford Water Inquiry. Well there's another anniversary that's just taken place. The community of Purdue has been just turned down for the third time concerning their application to the Canada-Saskatchewan Infrastructure Program. And this is three years in a row they've applied, three years in a row they've been turned down, and is a very serious problem in Purdue like there is in many communities across this province. And it really speaks to one large concern with this government.

Either the government helps with the infrastructure program by putting more funding in or — which what should happen is — this government should bring in economic policies that will lead to growth and growing of the Saskatchewan economy so the local municipalities do have the resources to update their water and sewage plants and either building new plants or upgrading the old ones.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to just say the local communities are doing the best they can under the circumstances, but they certainly need more help from the provincial government. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:30)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Goulet, seconded by Ms. Hamilton.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and it's indeed a pleasure to rise to participate in the Throne Speech debate for this new session of the legislature. We expect this will be the last session prior to an election which, in the viewpoint of the people of Saskatchewan that I've been talking to, just cannot come soon enough.

But, Mr. Speaker, before I get onto the issues that the Throne Speech raised, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the two new members who were installed into their seats yesterday in this legislature.

First of all, I would like to congratulate the MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) that represented the Saskatchewan Party in Battleford-Cut Knife who won an outstanding victory on March 17.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, St. Patrick's Day will go down in the annals of Saskatchewan Party history as one of the largest victories ever seen in a by-election in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party candidate provided an excellent campaign, talked to the people of his riding, earned their support, and won a very impressive victory.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal candidate was not too pleased with the Saskatchewan Party. The Liberal candidate was interviewed by *The Wilkie Press* and I'm sure the member for North Battleford will be interested in this article.

Now the Liberal candidate's name was Larry Ingram. And unfortunately Mr. Ingram trailed badly in the by-election campaign. Certainly didn't get 15 per cent. I believe he was under 10 per cent support. In fact, Mr. Speaker, he barely even showed up on the radar screen in that constituency. But Mr. Ingram knew why he wasn't doing very well, and I quote *The Wilkie Press* which says:

Larry Ingram of the Saskatchewan Liberals is accusing the Sask Party of running a popular candidate such as Lorenz to hide voter discontent in the province.

"I still believe the Sask Party has done Saskatchewan a disservice by getting such a candidate as Wally, because a lot of people in areas that know him will be supporting him."

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party is guilty of a great big sin — we recruited and nominated a good candidate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, that's not fair because the Liberals and the NDP couldn't find good candidates to represent them, but the Saskatchewan Party did.

Now I'm really concerned, Mr. Speaker, because we've made the same mistake a few more times. Mr. Speaker, we had a dinner in Saskatoon last night and we showcased our Saskatchewan Party candidates in the Saskatoon city, Mr. Speaker — community leaders, business leaders, health care professionals. Mr. Speaker, it was impressive. You'd have been amazed if you had been there of the quality of the Saskatchewan Party candidates.

We've done the same thing in Saskatoon; we're doing the same thing in Regina as we did in the Battleford-Cut Knife. We found the very best candidate that we could — a cut above all the rest, Mr. Speaker. So I'm afraid, Mr. Speaker, when the

election is called, when the Premier gathers up enough courage to call an election, we just may win those ridings as well because we're not playing fair, Mr. Speaker — we're picking better candidates than the other parties. Can you imagine that?

Mr. Speaker, it reminds me of the lead up to the 1999 election, when Premier Romanow, the premier of the day, was predicting gloom and doom for the Saskatchewan Party candidates who were going to be seeking their first election win under the Saskatchewan Party banner. Oh, he said, it's going to be terrible; these people are going to get wiped off the electoral map. There were eight MLAs that sat in this area of the legislature and Mr. Romanow would get up in this House and he would say, you know, every one of you are going to lose your seats; because you're Saskatchewan Party candidates, you're going to be wiped off the map in this province. He called my colleagues a lot of names that weren't very nice.

Well, Mr. Speaker, all eight of my colleagues won resounding victories on September 16, '99 . . . 1999. Mr. Speaker, they were elected with massive majorities in their constituencies. Most of them got over 50 per cent of the vote in their ridings. The member for Cannington got 75 per cent of the vote. Mr. Speaker, I think he's going for 90 per cent this next time, so you . . .

But unfortunately it's because we have good MLAs and because we nominate good candidates. And so we apologize to the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan; we apologize to the member from North Battleford for choosing such outstanding citizens in our province to represent us. We apologize too because we've already done it again, and of course we're not going to undo these nominations because these are such outstanding representatives for our party.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate the other member who won the by-election in Saskatoon Fairview. Mr. Speaker, we know that he ran a very aggressive and impressive campaign. While he didn't do quite as well as the successful candidate in the Battleford-Cut Knife under the Saskatchewan Party banner, yet he garnered nearly 50 per cent of the vote. And we wish him well in his political career. We trust that he, as well as the other new member, will be able to serve their constituents in Saskatchewan very well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we had a speech two days ago called the Throne Speech which is supposed to outline the vision of the government; tell the people of Saskatchewan what direction the government will be going.

Well the speech focused on the past and when you . . . if you use that to be a symbol of the direction the government is going, it means they're going backwards, Mr. Speaker. And that's quite a contrast to the position the Saskatchewan Party has taken where we talk about looking forward into the future, in fact 10 years into the future when our province's population under a Saskatchewan Party government will be 100,000 more precious souls than it is today.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Premier on many occasions, and some of his colleagues, have said, well the Saskatchewan Party has nothing more than a slogan. Mr. Speaker, they've confused a few things and they get confused fairly often. Mr. Speaker, it's

the NDP that just has a slogan — The Future is Wide Open — with nothing to back it up.

But, Mr. Speaker, our slogan, our theme, our vision, our goal is to grow the province of Saskatchewan by 100,000 people in 10 years, and we have some specific plans that we're talking to the people of Saskatchewan about so that we can achieve that goal.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP haven't been listening very well — it's not unusual; they haven't been listening well to the people of Saskatchewan — but if they are listening today . . . And I hope that there are some of them in their offices watching on their television with bated breath wondering what the Saskatchewan Party is going to say because they've missed it all the other times we've said it. So I'm hoping they don't miss it this time, Mr. Speaker.

But in our plan to grow Saskatchewan by 100,000 people in 10 years, we are going to change the tax regime of this province. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has one of the lowest basic personal income tax exemptions in all of Canada. What that means is that the NDP government likes taxing the poor; they like taxing low-income people; they like taxing people on fixed incomes. Mr. Speaker, they like to tax students who are at summer jobs.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party will change that by raising the basic personal exemption. I wonder if the NDP were listening, Mr. Speaker. If they get up in the House tomorrow or the next day and say, what are the details of your plan, we'll know that just like in months past, they haven't been listening. They're still not listening.

Mr. Speaker, we have talked about making Saskatchewan a small business tax-free zone. Are they listening, Mr. Speaker? Is any of the NDP members on the other side listening? Is the Deputy Premier, sitting in his chair, listening? I hope he is because then he won't be able to, in sincerity, make the comments that he's made in the past.

Right now Saskatchewan has a 6 per cent small business income tax rate. After four years of Saskatchewan Party government, that 6 per cent will be reduced to zero, making Saskatchewan the only small business income-tax-free zone in all of Canada, a remarkable achievement, Mr. Speaker.

Furthermore the Saskatchewan Party will reduce the corporate capital tax. The federal government in its recent budget announced that they're going to eliminate the corporate capital tax and we applaud them for that. Saskatchewan, again, has one of the highest corporate capital taxes in all of Canada — it's point six per cent. It has no relationship whatsoever to profitability and the Saskatchewan Party . . . a Saskatchewan Party government makes a commitment to the people of Saskatchewan who have been listening to us, even though the NDP haven't, that we will reduce that tax in half in our first term of government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why would we select those two taxes? Because those two taxes, if they're high like they are in Saskatchewan, prevent people from getting jobs. Mr. Speaker, the NDP promised to create 30,000 jobs. They do not have a hope of creating 30,000 jobs. Mr. Speaker, the chances of the NDP creating 30,000 jobs in this province before the next

election are just about as slim as the NDP winning the next election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, so there's three specific measures, three specific tax measures that we have committed to in the first term of a Saskatchewan Party government. Furthermore we have said that a Saskatchewan Party government will reduce the burden on property taxpayers to cover the cost of education.

Now, Mr. Speaker, wherever we go we hear concerns about the cost of property taxes and my critics, as they participate in the Throne Speech debate, will talk about a lot of these issues. But it is the commitment of the Saskatchewan Party to increase the provincial government's share of the funding of education to 50 per cent of the total, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I know what the NDP members are going to say. I can tell; I've heard it before. I know as sure as I'm standing here they're going to say, well, how are you going to pay for that; how are you going to lower these taxes and pay for these, and pay for these measures that will make Saskatchewan competitive?

Well I'll tell you what, Mr. Speaker, we're going to stop investing in things like SPUDCO. Mr. Speaker, we're not going to run up \$107 million to automate the land titles system. Mr. Speaker, I tell you, we're not going to invest in cable television in Australia, lose \$2 million, could have lost \$80 million. Mr. Speaker, we're not going to invest in Newfoundland, in Nova Scotia. Mr. Speaker, we're not going to invest in Georgia or Nashville.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to invest in Saskatchewan where governments are supposed to invest.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — So, Mr. Speaker, I hope the NDP were listening. They said, they said, Mr. Speaker, we want to hear your plan. And, Mr. Speaker, I hope they stay in their seats. I hope they don't leave this Assembly because we are outlining our plan. They will have no excuse in the future saying that they don't know what the Saskatchewan Party plan is.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is perceived, and I think rightly perceived throughout Canada and beyond our nation's borders, as not having fair and balanced and modern labour legislation — a good labour environment.

Mr. Speaker, why don't we have jobs in Saskatchewan? Why isn't our workforce growing? Why can't young people get jobs in Saskatchewan? Why must they go to Alberta or some other place to find a job? Well, Mr. Speaker, because the labour environment and the labour laws in this province are not balanced. They're archaic; they're out of step with the global economy. Investors are not investing in this province.

Mr. Speaker, that's why this government is investing through

the Crowns because they can't get private investment. They can't get the multi millions of dollars we need in this province to attract industry, to create jobs, to expand value-added processing in agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, a Saskatchewan Party government, not only in its first term but early in that term, will correct the unfair and unbalanced labour laws in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we're committed to growing the workforce of this province. We're committed to seeing not only non-unionized but unionized labour increase their numbers in this province to make Saskatchewan a stronger economy where our young men and women can actually find real jobs; they don't have to look to the government for a job.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, if the Saskatchewan Party had been writing this Throne Speech, we would talk about the proper role for the Crown corporations in this province.

Mr. Speaker, there are some Crown corporations that have core functions and we believe that they should be focusing on those core functions.

Mr. Speaker, the function of SaskPower is to provide electricity to every home, every business, every industry in this province at the lowest possible cost that can be . . . that service can be provided. What is SaskPower doing? Well, Mr. Speaker, SaskPower is investing outside of our province.

What is SaskTel doing? Same thing. They should be committed to providing the most affordable telecommunications, telephone service to the province of Saskatchewan. What are they doing? They're hiking phone rates by 10 per cent in rural Saskatchewan because they wasted money in Australia and all over the world.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party will restore the Crowns to their core responsibilities, their core duties of providing utilities to the people of Saskatchewan at the lowest possible cost. And that goes for SaskEnergy and SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) as well.

It's about time the Crowns did the job they were supposed to, not be the tool for economic development — the tool that has failed because there's a right-hand thread in the economy and they keep wrenching the left-hand thread and stripping it, Mr. Speaker.

(14:45)

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party is committed to better health care in this province. We have the longest waiting lists in the country, the longest waiting lists in the country in Saskatchewan. That's shameful.

Mr. Speaker, in the past Saskatchewan has been known as a pioneer in innovative health care provision. But under the NDP government and under this particular administration, we have

seen health care deteriorate in Saskatchewan at an alarming rate. Mr. Speaker, we are short about 1,200 nurses. My colleague, the MLA for Melfort-Tisdale, is going to outline in more detail our health care policy, but we have a plan to recruit and retrain . . . retain health care professionals. We have a plan to strengthen the College of Medicine at the U of S (University of Saskatchewan). Mr. Speaker, we care about the people of this province; we care about their health.

The NDP have showed no sympathy, no concern, for the well-being of Saskatchewan people. Mr. Speaker, the NDP doesn't care if somebody has to wait for three years in this province to get a hip replacement. We have a plan for health care.

We also have a plan and a focus on education. The Saskatchewan Party recognizes the importance of K to 12 (kindergarten to grade 12) education and post-secondary education in this province. If we don't equip our young people and our citizens to face the job opportunities and challenges of the 21st century, we as a province have failed.

Certainly the NDP are beginning to fail in the area of education. They are not keeping up with the times. And my colleague, the MLA for Kelvington-Wadena, will be talking about the Saskatchewan Party's plan for education and the priority that education plays and our plan to grow Saskatchewan by 100,000 people in 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, in your home or in your business or in your volunteer association or in your profession, in your . . . in our involvements, we often reflect, we review, we analyze what we've been doing, particularly if things aren't going too well, you know, if the personal cheque book isn't being balanced any more. And we start to have a look — are we spending in the right place; are we working in the right areas.

If our business isn't doing well, if we can't keep employees in our business, we begin to analyze the workplace conditions, we begin to analyze the salaries we pay our workers.

Mr. Speaker, if there's nobody attending our service club organization any more, we start to wonder if we're fulfilling a useful purpose. That's a natural and responsible response to a situation when things aren't going as well as they should.

Mr. Speaker, why shouldn't governments do the same? Why shouldn't governments analyze what they're doing, particularly if things aren't going so well? You would think that after 16 consecutive quarters of population loss, the NDP would start to think, maybe we've been doing something wrong; we need to review how our government operates.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker . . . And I hope that that full set of MLAs over on those NDP benches are listening so that they won't come back tomorrow and say, we don't have a plan. Mr. Speaker, we have a plan to review the function and purpose of every government agency, department, board, commission to make sure they're doing the job they're supposed to do for Saskatchewan people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — I hope they're taking notes, Mr. Speaker. I hope all of those MLAs on the other side are taking notes so that they know the Saskatchewan Party has a plan. They might even want to steal some of our plans. Won't be a bad idea, Mr. Speaker. It would certainly be good for the people of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, perhaps if they'd have done a little analyzing, a little soul searching, they wouldn't have got involved in the SPUDCO affair and they wouldn't have tried to hide it for six years. Mr. Speaker, they would have done due diligence.

And you have to wonder, Mr. Speaker, if they were able to hide SPUDCO for six years, what else has the NDP been hiding from the people of this province? You know they're not really being very careful about their actions. They're not really too concerned about being forthright and honest with the people of Saskatchewan. It's certainly causing concern amongst the citizens of this province that I speak with.

That's why the Saskatchewan Party wants to have a government that's open and accountable, and will review its practices to make sure that Saskatchewan taxpayers and citizens are getting the very best from their government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, this province has so many advantages, so many opportunities. Somebody told me the other day, a businessman here in Regina said, you know the one thing about the NDP is they never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Isn't that one of the best descriptions of the NDP that you've ever heard? They can't . . . They will never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have too many opportunities in Saskatchewan to miss. We have 40 per cent . . . 47 per cent of the arable land, in this province. Mr. Speaker, we have the world's largest deposits of potash and uranium. Mr. Speaker, we're finding out we have even more oil and gas reserves than we thought. Mr. Speaker, we have some successful manufacturing. We have some successful food processing. If we could just remove the barriers to growth in this province, think of how many more opportunities we would be able to exploit.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party understands that we can do much more in the area of value-added in agriculture and food processing. We know that we can do much more in the area of intensive agriculture. We know that we can do much more in the technology sector — information technology, biotechnology.

Mr. Speaker, we've just scratched the surface, but there are too many barriers placed in the way of those industries by the NDP. The Saskatchewan Party will fix that.

And, Mr. Speaker, we need a private-sector-driven ethanol and

bio-diesel industry, and we need a stronger tourism sector in this province. And, for instance, by making Saskatchewan a small-business tax-free zone, we will see tourism expand in this province; we will see a stronger hospitality industry. We will see more jobs for people, particularly young people, in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we need a government that places a proper emphasis on rural Saskatchewan and northern Saskatchewan. Every time I go to the North, people in those communities tell me that the NDP has abandoned them — abandoned the North. You know, there's only NDP representatives from the North and yet northern people feel like they've lost touch with their MLAs. They never see them; they don't care. And as a result, poverty continues in northern Saskatchewan; unemployment is at horrendously unacceptable levels; the quality of life, the level of health care is absolutely unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party has a plan to grow Saskatchewan by 100,000 people in 10 years. Mr. Speaker, that means bringing our kids home.

Mr. Speaker, I was in Toronto. I would . . . The member hasn't been listening. You know, I thought, I thought I'd stated long enough that this was more than a slogan because we have details, and I thought that the member for Regina Dewdney was sitting in his seat the entire time and listening, and he still hasn't got it. How slow is this member, Mr. Speaker? We're talking about the details of our plan and he's still saying it's just a slogan. I'm beginning to think, Mr. Speaker, that those people are absolutely hopeless. They just cannot grasp success; they can't grasp that the official opposition has a plan.

Mr. Speaker, thousands and thousands of young people have left Saskatchewan, but many of them want to come home. They want to come back to their home communities. They want to practise their skills and abilities in Saskatchewan. And they're saying, you know, if the government changes and get the NDP out, we just might come back.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's why we're working so hard to defeat the NDP — because we want these young people to come back home. We have a plan that will make Saskatchewan a land of opportunity once again, a place where our young people will be proud to come back to.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, one point that I will add. I wasn't planning on adding this, but in question period the Premier challenged me. He said, what's your policy on TLEs (treaty land entitlement)? I heard him say that in the . . . What's your policy on TLEs? He doesn't have one, or if he does he won't tell us.

We asked questions yesterday. We asked questions today. And the Minister of Agriculture both times got up and refused to answer our questions, even though there are thousands of leaseholders and Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan wondering what the NDP government's plan is in this regard.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party maintains that the position of having a willing buyer and a willing seller be

maintained. That's the Saskatchewan Party's position.

Furthermore we believe that leases that are currently legitimate should not be cancelled. That's pretty clear, Mr. Speaker. That's the agreement. That's what First Nations and leaseholders and the Government of Saskatchewan agreed to. We support that. That's our position.

And furthermore we say that when leases come due for renewal, when leases come due for renewal, that the current leaseholder — if they have maintained their end of the lease agreement — should have first right of refusal.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, so I've outlined about three or four points of Saskatchewan Party policy when it comes to the TLE lands. Now, Mr. Speaker, that's the way it stands now. That's the way the NDP signed the agreement. That's the way the First Nations signed the agreement. That's the way the leaseholders understand it is. If their word doesn't mean anything, that's not my fault. We make a commitment, Mr. Speaker, and we intend to keep it.

I want to close today, Mr. Speaker, on this Speech from the Throne, in talking about the principle of democracy because the NDP raise it all the time. Mr. Speaker, we believe, we believe that if a person becomes the premier of Saskatchewan, they should at an early occasion go to the people for a mandate. Our Premier refuses to do that. That's not very democratic. Our Premier doesn't have the courage to go to the people of Saskatchewan. Where is his commitment to the democracy?

Mr. Speaker, I see sitting in the seat, the representative for Saskatoon . . .

The Speaker: — Order. There's been a couple of times when the member has referred to the presence or absence, not quite as directly as this time, but I would ask the member not to refer to the presence or absence of members in the legislature.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Saskatoon Meewasin, I've heard her make some comments about democracy. Well the reason she's sitting in her seat is because the candidate that was nominated by the members of her constituency, the members . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, she protest . . . She doth . . . Mr. Speaker, she doth protest too much. She doth protest too much. I wish the member would listen.

Mr. Speaker, there was a member, an NDP member, nominated in the Saskatoon Meewasin constituency to run in the 1999 election. The NDP's executive council said, no way, we do not accept, we do . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. I would ask the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow to take her seat and I would ask the member to withdraw the statement that she just made and apologize to the House.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, it's with regret that I made the comments. I withdraw the comments and I apologize.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So the NDP executive council said, we do not want this person who was elected by the members at an open nomination meeting to be our candidate. The people, the members of that — if I remember correctly and if I'm wrong I will correct it — but I understand that there were some allegations about this member, the person, that the members knew about prior to the vote. And yet they still chose to democratically select a different candidate to run for them in the Saskatoon Meewasin constituency. That was overruled by the party.

The only difference in the case between this and the current case that the Saskatchewan Party is facing, is that the member who was duly and democratically nominated was persuaded to step down. And thus another nomination meeting was held and the subsequent winner is the current member of Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Speaker, I understand those to be the facts. Now we have another, we have another problem about democracy. We have a Finance minister sitting in this House who ran on a public platform in the last election in opposition to the NDP. In opposition to the NDP. That member said, vote for me and I will hold the NDP accountable. And so people voted in the last election for the member for Saskatoon Northwest, based on his commitment to oppose the NDP. And just days after the 1999 election that member — not only personally but with his party — crossed the floor to the other side and said, we will form a coalition with the government, the very government that we criticized in a 28-day campaign. We will be part and parcel with that government.

Now you tell me, Mr. Speaker, is that democracy? Is that treating the people of Saskatchewan with respect? Not one whit. And neither was the member for Melville who was part of that, nor the member from North Battleford who was part of that coalition for quite some time until the Liberal Party exerted so much pressure on him that he moved back from that side to this side, all the while doing it undemocratically, Mr. Speaker.

I am not going to be lectured by those folks about the principle of a democracy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(15:00)

Mr. Hermanson: — Mr. Speaker, their whole . . . all of their arguments, all of their actions, the record of this government is dismal, is disappointing, and sometimes, Mr. Speaker, it is disgusting. It's for that reason that we can't support the Throne Speech.

And for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I would make the following amendment. I would move, seconded by the member for Saskatchewan Rivers, the following . . . that the following words be added after the word "session":

however this Assembly is disappointed with the lack of vision and initiative presented by the current Premier and cabinet in the Speech from the Throne and therefore urges that a general provincial election be called immediately.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wiberg: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly a pleasure this afternoon to rise and speak in support of the amendment to the original motion, the amendment brought forward by the member from Rosetown-Biggan.

Mr. Speaker, it's with a great deal of interest that those of us on this side of the House sat here on Tuesday and listened to the Throne Speech brought forward by the present government, this government led by Lorne Calvert, who has yet, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order. The member is out of order when he uses the names of any member in the Legislative Assembly. Order. So I bring that to the member's attention. The member will continue.

Mr. Wiberg: — I apologize, Mr. Speaker, for my enthusiasm and I will endeavour to be a little more diligent in the future.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, of course we try to practise diligence a lot more than the members on the other side of the House. And of course, Mr. Speaker, I'm referring to SPUDCO.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the debate was opened by the member from Cumberland, and it was nice to hear him open the debate alluding to the fact, Mr. Speaker, that it in all likelihood will be his last opportunity to participate in a Speech from the Throne debate. And so from this side of the House, of course, we want to congratulate him for his many years of representing the Cumberland constituency. Mr. Speaker, it's also . . . of course, a great deal of work has gone into over the years . . . As the member mentioned 17 years he's been a member of this legislature and that takes quite a bit of time away from family and friends to represent your constituency. And we certainly on this side of the House want to recognize that on behalf of his constituents also.

Also, yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the member from Regina Wascana Plains seconded the original motion. And of course on this side of the House, we also recognize that it may be that member's swan song also. Because the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Speaker, is quite . . . with due diligence, Mr. Speaker, and in a democratic way nominated a man who is going to be an excellent representative for Regina Wascana Plains after the next election. And we're certainly looking forward to that. And Mr. Dan Thibault is going to be an excellent member of the government team for the Saskatchewan Party.

Mr. Speaker, as I went through the list of the Throne Speech and took an opportunity to read through it yesterday, I was quite amazed that a government that has been here since 1991 is still grasping, is still grasping for straws at ways in order to try and govern this province.

In 1991 the NDP government was able to run a campaign on what they alluded to at that time was the ineptitude of the Progressive Conservative government and were able to gain a significant majority. Well, Mr. Speaker, over the years, as successive elections have come along, there have been

significant reductions in the majority of the NDP government leading up to, Mr. Speaker, the 1999 election when they were not able to achieve a majority and had to form — in the dead of night behind closed doors — a coalition government with some independent members, members who were sitting as independents at this time.

Although we understand, Mr. Speaker, and maybe the members at some time in the future may be able to correct this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the two independent members may in fact be looking to run for the NDP party in the upcoming election as members of the NDP party.

Now, Mr. Speaker, of course there are several issues that were raised in the Throne Speech or alluded to. Several of them, of course, were the government's self-congratulatory posing so that people will remember that they have been, actually been government for the past few years.

I have listened to many throne speeches. They've been almost identical from year to year, congratulating themselves for what's happened. In the early '90s, the balancing of budgets that had to be worked towards . . . Which was one of the things on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, that we were able to willingly accept, that balancing a budget is crucial, is crucial to being government in this province of Saskatchewan. Unlike, unlike the present Premier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who seems to have no interest in balancing the books in this province, and we are very concerned about that. And the people of Saskatchewan are very concerned about that, and have raised the issue on a multitude of times with members on this side of the House that deficit budgeting is unacceptable and will do everything they can to help us remove this NDP government from power.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the issues that of course — and we talk about this present government — that I just want to allude to very shortly. And I spoke about the big issue with deficit budgeting that this government is carrying out and their fairy tale, fairy tale Fiscal Stabilization Fund that they . . . the so-called rainy day fund that no one, Mr. Speaker, seems to be able to find, including the Provincial Auditor. The Provincial Auditor can't even find the fund and so then how is the government able to prove, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it even exists?

But another big issue that is out there is that we are now running into a period of our history of this province where we have a Premier — a Premier, Mr. Deputy Speaker — who has never gone to the polls in a general election to be recognized by the people of Saskatchewan as the Premier.

This is starting to create a great deal of concern, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the province of Saskatchewan. How can someone continue with a mandate that they have never earned at the polls in Saskatchewan?

And now we understand that, of course in the mid-1960s there was a short period of time where the predecessor to the NDP, the CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) Party, also elected a leader prior to a general election. The gentleman at that time remained as premier for a very short period of time and then went to the polls.

That is due diligence and that is how you gain respect. That is how you gain respect, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in this House by going to the people to seek a mandate, to seek a mandate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from the people of Saskatchewan. And not trying to hide behind their desk in this legislature and make the people of Saskatchewan wait while they try to pad their pensions in this province at the expense of the Saskatchewan taxpayer.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, now the Leader of the Opposition has talked briefly about several issues. He talked about agriculture and the complete lack of vision by this government. And certainly today in question period it was reiterated again by the Deputy Premier, the member from Yorkton, who is also the minister for Agriculture and Rural Revitalization.

Rural revitalization is a bit of an oxymoron, of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because we know very well that rural revitalization is certainly not taking place at this time. With the significant drought that hit this province, this government's complete lack of commitment to the agricultural industry, that rural revitalization is actually an oxymoron.

Now what we also know, that in the agricultural sector, is that this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, could be one of the huge advantages that this province could have with over 45 per cent of the arable land mass in Canada. We should be a leading industrial agricultural producer in Canada. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're not. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in Saskatchewan, our return per acre ranges right around the \$88 an acre mark — \$88 an acre.

Now let's make a comparison. Now it may be a little bit unfair to the province of Newfoundland to be compared to Saskatchewan for arable land but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the return per acre in Newfoundland for agriculture is over \$700. Now if the province of Newfoundland can get those kind of returns per acre, why in the world not can Saskatchewan improve its ability to generate wealth through agriculture?

But this province's plan under this NDP government, this do-nothing NDP government, is simply to sit back and wait and see if it rains. Now that was what the . . . that's what the Deputy Premier said last year, Mr. Deputy Speaker — if it rains, everything will be better.

Well it didn't rain and it didn't get better. In fact he started the loopy lotto with the rain stations in this province that backfired. They increased, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the insurance premiums for crop insurance. They cut, in crop insurance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the crops that could be insured.

So we're trying to understand, the farmers in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are trying to understand how it is that this government can get up and say, we're here for the farmers of Saskatchewan, when day after day and week after week and month after month, they're able to physically demonstrate they have absolutely no knowledge of what goes on in rural Saskatchewan and do not feel any obligation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to try to understand the devastation that is going on in rural Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, yesterday there was quite a lengthy

speech, I believe about an hour and 15 minutes, from the member from Cumberland. And there was a couple of . . . there was a couple of real interesting points that the member brought forward. And I'll speak about more than two certainly, but there were a couple of real interesting points that the member from Cumberland House brought forward that I think are very important — that need to be continued to be debated about in this House.

Is one, on this side of the House we've got a . . . we've got a bit of a vision, looking through the NDP fog, of what their election platform is going to look like. The NDP, through the member from Cumberland and the member from Regina Wascana Plains, have parted the fog, gently you know, just so we can see through it a little bit what their election platform is going to be.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the NDP's election platform in the upcoming provincial election is going to be Sask Party bad. And I think the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are going to be looking for a little more than that.

But it falls into line, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with what we're hearing from this government on a day-to-day basis when every day in question period, whether it's the Premier, or the Deputy Premier, or the former Economic Development minister, or the minister responsible for the Crowns, get up and say to this legislature, repeat in the media, that what is the Saskatchewan Party's . . . what is the Saskatchewan Party's position on these, on different issues.

Well it's question period. The opposition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is supposed to ask questions, and the government is supposed to respond to them. But they don't. Because the government doesn't have a position on anything, doesn't have a vision for this province, doesn't have an election platform other than Sask Party bad, the people of Saskatchewan are going to be able to very quickly make up their mind in the upcoming provincial election, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who actually has a vision for this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, the party that has a vision for this province is the Saskatchewan Party, led by the member from Rosetown-Biggar, the Leader of the Opposition. That's the party that the people of Saskatchewan are going to be supporting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's the man who's going to lead this province through and into the new millennium.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member from Cumberland also talked of it yesterday, about economic development in northern Saskatchewan. Now we all found that — we found that, on this side of the House — amusing. As the Leader of the Opposition alluded to in his speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no economic development in northern Saskatchewan.

(15:15)

In the town of La Loche, the northern town of La Loche, Mr. Deputy Speaker, unemployment is 90 per cent — 90 per cent. Those members on the other side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are proud that the number one industry in La Loche is welfare. And they are proud of that and they're proud to stand up and brag about it.

But the people of La Loche, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are tired of it. They want jobs; they want real jobs. They know very well that in northwest Saskatchewan there can be real jobs for everyone in northern Saskatchewan, specifically in northwestern Saskatchewan — whether you start at Beauval and work right up the highway to La Loche and further north — that there can be jobs for everyone. In fact, there should be more jobs than there is even people there to fill those jobs. The people will actually have to move there to improve, actually improve, their quality of life in northern Saskatchewan.

So what has the government, what has this government done to help the situation in northern Saskatchewan when it comes to economic development and quality employment? Well we looked at the Throne Speech as the Lieutenant Governor presented it to us on Tuesday and the government said, well we're going to hold a meeting and we're going to talk about stuff. And then we'll see what happens from that. And then we'll hold a couple of more meetings and we'll strike a committee.

So how, how is it that the people of northern Saskatchewan are going to gain confidence in their future for their children and their grandchildren when all this government wants to do is to invite the people of northern Saskatchewan to come to a meeting? What kind of economic development plan is that?

I have talked to hundreds upon hundreds of people in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and not once did I run into someone that says, we go to a meeting with the government and we go a meeting with the government and nothing good ever comes out of it — all they've done is go to a meeting. They've been paid for their mileage, paid for their meals, and sent home. And the government pats them on their back and say, what a great job. For what? The government doesn't listen to them.

There have been proposals, there has been proposals, Mr. Deputy Speaker, brought to this government for economic development in northern Saskatchewan, and what has the government done about it? Well they hold some more meetings, and then they do a study, and then the study ends up on a shelf and it gathers dust, and then they hold another meeting to talk about the study, and then they have a study to study the study. This, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is how this NDP government creates economic development in northern Saskatchewan — by holding a study in the city of Regina.

Let's take a look at some of the things that could be happening in northern Saskatchewan. Now the member from Regina South, he's really looking forward to this. So I want to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that not only is the member from Regina South excited about what I'm going to tell him, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but what I'm about to tell the NDP government are not my own ideas. These are the ideas of the people from northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. These are the ideas of the people who live and want to work in northern Saskatchewan, the opportunities that abound in northern Saskatchewan.

We can look at a multitude of areas. We can look at agriculture. We can look in forestry. We can look in tourism. We can look in the mining sector. We can look at energy. What is this government doing in any one of those areas?

Now there's members on the other side of the House say they have . . . they could tell what's going on in northern Saskatchewan. Well of course they could. You can drive into any community and find nothing. That's what this government is doing for northern Saskatchewan.

In the town of La Ronge at one time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there was 20 exploration companies doing exploratory work in northern Saskatchewan. There was 20, up until the early '90s. As of today there's about six. Now I want to hear sometime through this debate someone on that NDP side of the House, the government side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, explain to me how going from 20 exploration companies in La Ronge down to six is an improvement. How is that providing quality employment opportunities in northern Saskatchewan?

Now we can look at mining. Let's take a quick look at mining. What does this province have, what does this province have, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as an advantage that cannot be matched anywhere in the world? We have opportunities in mining, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that cannot be matched anywhere in the world. We have a clean energy source in northern Saskatchewan that the world is clamouring for. And I mean clean. It's environmentally friendly. And what is this government doing about it? Absolutely nothing. They're sitting there wringing their hands and gnashing their teeth saying, oh, we need to study them. We need another study. Studies are done.

In fact what I heard yesterday in the speech from the member from Cumberland and the member from Wascana Plains, Regina Wascana Plains, talk about that we have problems in the world of energy, that the people of Saskatchewan need to recognize that SaskPower has done a great job. There are problems all around us, all around, but not here, not here, because we have SaskPower.

In fact one of those members said, one of those members said Saskatchewan has never had a blackout, has never had a brownout. Well if they actually believe that, they must not read one single newspaper in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because if they had, they would have known very well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the town of La Ronge has been living with brownouts for decades because of that NDP government not allowing economic development in the energy sector in northern Saskatchewan.

There are . . . Opportunities abound in that region around La Ronge, where you can get private investment, where we would not have to put taxpayer dollars at risk to create cogeneration for energy in the La Ronge area. And do you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? There are members on that side of the House said we can't have that, we can't have people investing in energy in Saskatchewan other than the government. But we know, Mr. Deputy Speaker — we know, Mr. Deputy Speaker — that the record of this government when it comes to investment is dismal and almost zero at best, almost zero.

But there is one investment, there is one investment they're always willing to take credit for. The member from Cumberland brought this up yesterday. There is one investment that took place that they are willing to take credit for except when you remind them about it, except when we remind them about it, how the investment took place. And that's when SaskTel

invested in Chunnel, in building the Chunnel underneath the English Channel. SaskTel was there and made a lot of money for the people of Saskatchewan.

And who was the government that took on that risk? It was not that NDP government. Made a ton of money on that for the people of Saskatchewan. And so, what did they do? They took credit and said we did that. You didn't do that at all. It was the previous government that actually took on that risk, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But I see it raised the hackles, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of the members opposite. They surely don't like to hear that the one golden, one golden Crown that we have in the Crowns where outside opportunity actually went well was not actually initiated by this government.

We can certainly look at a lot of other areas that were initiated by this government that went very badly, and the member from Rosetown-Biggan has gone through that extensively.

And I know in the response to the Throne Speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member from Swift Current, he's certainly going to be reminding the government about all their mismanagement. And I would suspect, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he will also have a few words to say about some investment called SPUDCO.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I stay on the subject of the opportunities in northern Saskatchewan, and I was talking about energy that could be created through the mining sector, there are other mining opportunities in northern Saskatchewan that are being lost because of the waste and the confusion in the NDP caucus as to what to do next.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the North American auto industry, there's a group of metals that are extremely important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the manufacturing of today's automobiles. That group of metals, Mr. Deputy Speaker, exists in Saskatchewan. It exists in abundance. You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those group of metals do not exist to the degree, anywhere else — only one place else in the world — like they do in Saskatchewan. The auto industry has actually found they would rather go to this other jurisdiction to gather those metals that they need for the automobile industry than to try to do business here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the group of metals that I'm speaking about is the platinum group of metals. We have abundant opportunities to create significant wealth in northern Saskatchewan; jobs, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the people of northern Saskatchewan; investment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the people of northern Saskatchewan.

So what is the NDP government doing to make sure that investment by the people of northern Saskatchewan, that economic wealth can be created by the people of northern Saskatchewan, in just this single industry? Mr. Deputy Speaker, they're doing nothing. In fact, they've turned virtually a blind eye to the opportunity. When you talk to officials from the departments about the opportunity that exists, oh well, it's too far north and the government or the automobile makers aren't going to be wanting to go that far to collect, to collect these minerals.

So where are they going, Mr. Deputy Speaker? In North America we are second to no-one in having the abundance of this group of metals, the platinum metal group, that the automobile industry requires in today's automobiles. They can't get it in Manitoba. They can't get it in Alberta. They can't get it virtually nowhere else in any of the other provinces. They can't get enough of it in continental North America. It's not here. The abundance that they need does not exist except outside of Saskatchewan in the North American continent.

So where are they going? Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they are going to a jurisdiction that they find it easier to do business with, Mr. Deputy Speaker, than it is in Saskatchewan. It's hard to believe, it's hard to believe that this jurisdiction is a better place to do business with than Saskatchewan, but that's where the automobile industry is going. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it must be a better place to do business.

So where are they going, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They are going to mainland China to get platinum group metals for the automobile industry in North America when the platinum group metals already exist to supply all their needs for decades right here in Saskatchewan. And we are not mining one ounce, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in Saskatchewan.

In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the platinum group of metals . . . A proposal was brought to this government for two projects, for two projects, in northeastern Saskatchewan. One was for a large-scale forestry operation and one was to open up a mine to mine in the platinum group of metals.

So what happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Well, the minister of Economic Development at that time told the House, told the newspapers, that these companies that wanted to come here didn't have deep enough pockets. Well we'll never know if they had deep enough pockets because certainly the former minister of Economic Development admitted to this House that he has not always been truthful. So we don't know; we'll never know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether these companies had deep enough pockets to actually come to Saskatchewan to do business.

We do know something though that is definitive, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that when one of these companies was interviewed as to why they're leaving Saskatchewan, they were emphatic in their response. They refused to come to Saskatchewan because they didn't know what the rules were. Every time they went over one hurdle and the government would say to them, it's all clear sailing now, they'd go around a corner. There'd be a bigger hurdle. Get over that one, go around a corner, there'd be another big one. And every time they went over the hurdle the government said, you're clear sailing now; all you've got to do is get around that corner, but there'd be another hurdle. It wasn't deep pockets that were their problem; it was this NDP government, Mr. Speaker, that is the problem.

Those two initiatives, Mr. Deputy Speaker, cost northern Saskatchewan residents — northern Saskatchewan residents represented by the member from Cumberland — an opportunity for investment and it cost them an opportunity for quality jobs. Investment and quality jobs is what it cost them, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

(15:30)

And that's another example of how this NDP government talks about we're the ones that want to represent northern Saskatchewan; we're the ones. And as the member from Rosetown-Biggan talked about, they have members from northern Saskatchewan in that government, and still nothing is happening in northern Saskatchewan. And that is simply another example.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the advantages I've had, growing up north of Prince Albert, is having an opportunity to have met many people that . . . they were very experienced and took an active role, an active role, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in helping open up northern Saskatchewan for the people of northern Saskatchewan and the people of southern Saskatchewan on a two-way street that should have — and under a Saskatchewan Party government I might add, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will benefit both parties — but should have opened up great opportunity for northern Saskatchewan.

Before there was a highway to Lac la Ronge, before there was even a good road, I can remember going to La Ronge many years ago when I was young on a small dirt road. And certainly the member from Cumberland House will remember that small, windy, dirt road that we used to take from north of Prince Albert to La Ronge. And prior to that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, freight to La Ronge was done with Caterpillars in the wintertime.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the interesting events that always took place on those trips north, hauling freight into northern Saskatchewan, was that on the night before these freight trains would cross the south shore of Lac la Ronge and they crossed the lake into the town of La Ronge, they'd stop overnight at a . . . along a river. And, of course, they had their own bunkhouses with them. These bunkhouses needed heat. They needed to be heated. So the men on the freight crew would take their shovels out, when they parked at night, go into the riverbank, and shovel coal out of the riverbank and use that coal to heat their bunkhouse for the night.

So I was asked a question several years ago: you know, why don't . . . now that you're an MLA, now that you're a new MLA, why don't you ask the government, go to someone in the government and ask them how much, how large is that coal deposit on the south shore of Lac la Ronge?

So I did that. I did that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I went to a representative from the Department of Energy and Mines, and we were carrying on a very good conversation about opportunities in this province. And I talked to him about this coal deposit. And it caught the civil servant off guard momentarily that he would even be asked such a question. But he quickly, quickly gathered himself, remembered the NDP party line: there is no coal in northern Saskatchewan. That's the NDP party line: there is no coal in northern Saskatchewan. You can go into a riverbank and take it out with a shovel, but there's no coal there.

The people of northern Saskatchewan are asking, why wasn't this developed? We're developing power through coal generation in southern Saskatchewan; shouldn't we have been doing this in northern Saskatchewan?

Well we never did get an answer, just that it doesn't exist. The coal doesn't exist so therefore it can't happen. Now this is how this NDP government, on a consistent and long-term basis, continues to bury their head in the sand or in the case of the south shore of Lac La Ronge, bury their head in the coal, that we can't have anything good in northern Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've moved into that area of transition of mining and energy, and of course in mining in Saskatchewan a great deal of energy can be created through either coal or uranium. And certainly we're one of the leading producers of uranium in the world and could be a lot bigger producer of uranium in the world if we had a little more friendlier government towards business in this province. And under a Sask Party government, led by the member from Rosetown-Biggar, we're certainly going to have that right after the next provincial election.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've heard also for years — you know, growing up, as I mentioned earlier, north of Prince Albert in the forest fringe and having spent considerable time in my youth in northern Saskatchewan — that the tar sands, according to this NDP government, end at the Saskatchewan border. There's a huge tar sands area in northern Alberta and it stops cold at the Saskatchewan border.

So in my multitude of forays into northern Saskatchewan and up the west side, up Highway 355 — or 155, pardon me, Mr. Deputy Speaker — I got to make a lot of friends up there. A lot of friends in northwestern Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that are very influential; community leaders in northern Saskatchewan. Community leaders, business leaders, who are very concerned, Mr. Speaker, about how economic development and how job creation is being developed in northern Saskatchewan, and specifically the northwest.

So we're sitting around at a meeting and the meeting, it's kind of winding down, and we're having a second cup of coffee, Mr. Speaker, and I got to asking about the oil and gas deposits in northern Saskatchewan.

Well the meeting extended significantly when I asked that question, Mr. Speaker, because the people of northwest Saskatchewan simply opened up and told me about a massive opportunity that's being lost by this NDP government, Mr. Speaker.

They know definitively that in northern Saskatchewan that the Athabasca tar sands do not end at the Saskatchewan border and that they extend for miles — nay, Mr. Speaker — leagues into Saskatchewan is how far those tar sands extend into Saskatchewan.

I asked these gentlemen, Mr. Speaker, how deep is that oil? Is there going to be a problem? Is that oil positioned as such that it's uneconomical to go after? Is it just at a layer where you can't strip the topsoil to get at it, yet it's too shallow to want to drill into it?

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, no they didn't think it was too shallow to strip topsoil. In fact there are a multitude of areas, Mr. Speaker, where that if you're digging a basement in northwestern Saskatchewan, you hit oil. All you have to do is

dig a basement, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Eight feet in places, they've struck oil in northern Saskatchewan.

Now here's an opportunity where we have neighbours all around us that are crying for energy. And Saskatchewan has decided, well we're going to wait; we're going to save it for a rainy day.

Well of course if you're talking about rural Saskatchewan, waiting for a rainy day might take a while because we're suffering in the middle of a drought. But for economic development, we are in the middle of a downpour, a monsoon, Mr. Speaker.

And it is time that this government who is devoid of ideas, was not able to bring forth one good, solid, long-range vision for this province in this Throne Speech, it is time for this Premier who has not been given a mandate by the people of Saskatchewan to call an election, and that the Saskatchewan Party can then form the next government. And we can create the jobs and we can create the economic wealth that the people of northwestern Saskatchewan are demanding.

One of the other interesting conversations that took place at this very same meeting, this very same meeting, Mr. Speaker, was that not only were they wanting — these communities' northern leaders who represent the northern community — wanting to have jobs in the energy sector, they were looking for more energy for themselves.

They could see that if they had more energy for themselves they could expand their economic opportunities, Mr. Speaker, to a point where they would be such a massive contributor to Saskatchewan's economic growth that they could virtually lead Saskatchewan by themselves into economic recovery. They can actually see that in northwestern Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So one of the requests that one of the communities actually put forward to the Government of Saskatchewan was access to natural gas. We would like natural gas in our community. Well SaskEnergy told this community, oh that's too far; we can't bring natural gas into this community; it's way too far to bring natural gas.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, do you know how far we have to move that natural gas into that community? Eleven hundred feet, Mr. Deputy . . . 1,100 feet. That natural gas is right underneath the village. It's right underneath the village. There's a large pool of natural gas there to create all the energy for their needs and everyone around them. It would create economic wealth for all the communities around them and specifically for that community. It would create tremendous economic wealth in job creation and jobs for northern Saskatchewan. And that's just one community, what they could do.

Now this government of course has talked many times about, you know, assisting the people of northern Saskatchewan. And certainly since 1944 the people of northern Saskatchewan are still waiting for the NDP government to actually — and their predecessors, the CCF — to actually do something for them. Well they're tired of waiting; they're tired of waiting, Mr. Speaker, and they are making the conscious decision that they

are going to lead the charge for economic development in northern Saskatchewan without this NDP government.

But you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are still barriers. There are still barriers in northern Saskatchewan that they can't overcome. Now certainly we heard yesterday from the member from Cumberland who clearly outlined that the people of northern Saskatchewan have been held back and that the NDP government is going to lead the charge for them to help them become an integral part and equals in Saskatchewan society. Well we've been waiting since 1944, Mr. Speaker. So when, we need to ask this government. And maybe someone in future debates on this Throne Speech, and maybe the member from Athabasca will be able to help out in this debate. When's that day coming? Because the people of northern Saskatchewan can't see it coming.

We take a look, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of how this government continues, continues to put the people of northern Saskatchewan under their thumbs so that they can't create the economic wealth and the economic development that could take people from northern Saskatchewan off the welfare rolls that are so excitedly promoted by this NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, in the early 1950s the town of La Loche didn't exist — did not exist. Thousands of people lived in that area, but not in the town of La Loche. There were small communities around there that some people lived in, but those people lived off the land. But in the 1950s that land was taken away from them.

The CCF government under Tommy Douglas went into northern Saskatchewan and took the land away from the people of northern Saskatchewan, created Crown land . . . they created Crown land, moved everyone into the town of La Loche, and put them on welfare and say, now you're going to be better off.

That was the plan of the 1950s and that's the plan that is still being promoted today by this NDP government. The people of northern Saskatchewan are tired of that plan, Mr. Speaker, and they want a change.

They want a change so badly that that's why we have people in northern Saskatchewan — community leaders, business leaders — who are coming to the Saskatchewan Party and saying, how do we go about electing someone in northern Saskatchewan who will actually represent us and represent northern Saskatchewan rather than the policies of the NDP party? And they clearly understand now, Mr. Speaker, that that can only happen if you elect a Saskatchewan Party member of the Legislative Assembly in Saskatchewan, will they ever have economic development in northern Saskatchewan. They know that, Mr. Speaker.

But do you know what something they also know? That as important as that member is going to be in this House on the Saskatchewan . . . sitting with the Saskatchewan Party in government and maybe even in cabinet . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well I can't make promises on behalf of our leader; he will make that determination himself. But the people that are coming forward actually have the ability to be good cabinet ministers, Mr. Speaker. These people know that the Saskatchewan Party are not going to abandon them like this

NDP Party has. That's the promise.

That's the promise that they are hearing from the Saskatchewan Party and they know, Mr. Speaker, that that is more than a promise. It is a commitment. Because they have heard since 1944 hollow promises from this NDP government and its predecessor, the CCF, that they know very well that they don't want to be trusting those promises any more because after all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you can't trust the government, who can you trust?

Well they've decided to trust themselves. That's what they've decided, Mr. Speaker. After all we had the former minister of Economic Development and the newly named Minister of Industry and Resources, that former minister, admit in this House — admit in this House, Mr. Speaker — that he had not been totally truthful to this House.

People in northern Saskatchewan heard that message, Mr. Speaker. People in northern Saskatchewan heard that message that not only was that minister less than truthful, they know that this government has been less than truthful when it comes to dealing with economic development, job creation, and integrity in northern Saskatchewan.

(15:45)

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to integrity, the people of northern Saskatchewan are a proud people. I have taken many members from my party up to . . . and from this side of the House up to northern Saskatchewan. I've taken the member from Wood River. Talk about a culture shock. I've taken the member from Thunder Creek. Again, a culture shock.

But you know something, Mr. Speaker? They come out of that, those trips up there, absolutely astounded at the opportunity that abounds in northern Saskatchewan. They went up there with the preconceived notion fed to them by this NDP government that northern Saskatchewan is a desolate wasteland devoid of any value to Saskatchewan.

And it is that kind of NDP thinking that is allowing the Member of Parliament for Churchill River to promote the theory that northern Saskatchewan needs to separate from Saskatchewan and become a territory, and they would be better off as a territory than as a part of the province of Saskatchewan. It is that kind of thinking by this NDP government that is driving that debate in the North.

Well you know, Mr. Speaker, the people of northern Saskatchewan have hope. They have hope now that because of the work of the Saskatchewan Party, that what we're doing, that what we're doing, Mr. Speaker, that what we are promoting, that northern Saskatchewan is not a desolate wasteland; that the reality is they can become an integral part of the economic recovery that is going to take place in Saskatchewan under a Sask Party government.

Mr. Speaker, I was meeting with some of the community leaders up north and we were talking about some of the changes that have taken place in municipal governance in Saskatchewan and specifically the whole area of governance for cities and the broadening of power that's going to happen for the cities in this

province. And they were explaining to me their frustration with the northern municipal Act. They are wanting to keep the title of the northern municipal Act because they think that they need to be recognized as being a separate entity; that life in northern Saskatchewan is different than southern Saskatchewan. And we certainly can't disagree with that point and you can't argue that point, Mr. Speaker.

It is certainly quite true that things are different in northern Saskatchewan. Communities are much broader in northern Saskatchewan than they are in the South. We can have communities such as Pense; we can have communities such as Morse. They are separate and distinct communities. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? They remain that way. They work hard to protect their identity and they work hard to promote their communities and maintain the strength of those communities.

But in northern Saskatchewan it's actually broader than that. You take communities such as Beauval, Green Lake, Ile-a-La-Crosse, Buffalo Narrows, Dillon, Michel Village — they're a community as one.

There was one area . . . There's one aspect of the report on municipal amalgamations that was brought forward — municipal restructuring — brought forward by Joe Cartiere, talked about regional government. People in northern Saskatchewan love that idea. They've already been working on those lines to begin with. They'd already been carrying out that mandate under their own auspices to begin with, Mr. Speaker. And so they . . . That was one idea that they really loved in that.

But you know what? But what they found is that it was hard to carry out that mandate under a regional governance, Mr. Speaker, because under the northern municipal Act in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, you can have a dog bylaw but until it's approved by the Department of Government Relations and by the Department of Northern Affairs, it has no teeth, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

That's what this NDP government has done to the people of northern Saskatchewan. Yes, you can have a mayor and yes, you can have a town council and yes, you can have bylaws, but we're going to approve every one of them. We're not going to let you make a decision in northern Saskatchewan unless we approve it. That's what this NDP government, Mr. Speaker, has done to the people of northern Saskatchewan.

So what the people of northern Saskatchewan are telling us, Mr. Speaker, is that if we truly recognize right across the main in Saskatchewan that we are one and the same, that we are all here because we love this province, that if we are all here because we want to see Saskatchewan to be a better place — not only for ourselves but for our children and our grandchildren and our children's grandchildren — that we need all to pull together as one and we need to break down the segregationist policies of this NDP government.

That's the commitment, that's the commitment of this Saskatchewan Party to the people of northern Saskatchewan. Our leader, the member from Rosetown-Biggan, has sat with community leaders and said, this will happen. You will be the determinant, you will be the determinant of your destiny. You

will not, you will not have to go to La Ronge and Regina and beg, and beg, Mr. Speaker; you will not have to beg for anything any more. You will decide. You will decide whether you are in Creighton. You'll decide whether you're in La Ronge. You'll decide whether you're in Uranium City. You'll decide whether you're in Camsell Portage. You will make those decisions on what's best for your community, and not, and not have to go cap in hand to Regina to an NDP government and ask for self-determination.

A Saskatchewan Party government, led by the member from Rosetown-Biggan, Mr. Speaker, has already committed to the people of northern Saskatchewan that they will make their own determination. They are excited about that, Mr. Speaker. They are very excited that for the first time since 1944 they are going to have the ability and the right to make their own decisions in northern Saskatchewan. They will create economic opportunity, they will create jobs in northern Saskatchewan; not, not this NDP government. They are excited about that, Mr. Speaker, they are excited about that more than we could have imagined on this side of the House.

When I took the member from Wood River up there, he couldn't believe the excitement that exists in northern Saskatchewan when we talk about the support that we're going to give them for economic development. That's what they're looking for, Mr. Speaker. They were looking for support. They were looking for encouragement. They weren't looking for us to own it for them. They didn't want us to give it to them. They want us to get out of their way.

And that's what the member from Wood River was astounded by, that the people of northern Saskatchewan, the entrepreneurs in northern Saskatchewan — and northern Saskatchewan is full of entrepreneurs that are being held back by this NDP government — the entrepreneurs in northern Saskatchewan are going to have the opportunity after the next provincial election to actually determine their own directions in northern Saskatchewan.

If they want to build a sawmill, they'll take that risk. If it fails, then at least they've tried. That's what they've been promised. If they build an outfitting camp and if it doesn't work, if it fails, at least they tried.

But you know what? In southern Saskatchewan multitude of businesses are started every year. This NDP government has even told us about the thousands of businesses that started in Saskatchewan in the last year. But you know what? What they left out, was the thousands of businesses that failed in Saskatchewan.

But you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what they didn't admit was that there was not one single tax dollar, not one single tax dollar, put at risk when a business is created. That's what the Saskatchewan Party is talking about in northern Saskatchewan.

Northern Saskatchewan communities are looking for opportunity. They are looking for partnerships. They are not looking for partnerships, Mr. Speaker, from this NDP government. In fact they are looking for it in the private sector. They're looking for it in the private sector. They're not going to

the Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. They're not going to the Crown Investments Corporation. They're going to the private sector.

I heard of a multitude of opportunities where a community had found a partner in the private sector to start a business opportunity. But because of the regulations that this government puts in their way, because they have to get in the way rather than promote, but get in the way of business opportunities, those businesses never got started.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those businesses, those opportunities, they're still sitting there. They're sitting on the back burner. Those communities in northern Saskatchewan are simply waiting for the government to change. They know when they had their conversations with the member from Rosetown-Biggar, Leader of the Saskatchewan Party or Leader of the Official Opposition, they know that when the Saskatchewan Party becomes the government, they are going to be able to develop those opportunities and not put one dime of taxpayers' dollars at risk. They know that, Mr. Speaker, and they know that they have the opportunity, they have the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to be able to create wealth and jobs — and jobs — in northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to just wind up with one little illustration. In November one of the northern communities was putting ice in their curling rink and putting ice in their skating rink. After the ice was going to be put in, the community was going to need two caretakers in each one of those facilities, two caretakers in the skating rink and two caretakers in the curling rink to look after the ice, look after the facility. So they advertised. The community advertised for four jobs. Four jobs in this community, Mr. Speaker.

It doesn't sound like much. These are not big paying jobs, you know, but not minimum wage either — decent jobs. Twenty-two applications for four jobs in this community. You know what this illustrates, Mr. Speaker? That the people of northern Saskatchewan are clamouring for jobs, are clamouring for jobs. And if their jobs were available, they would be there to fill those positions. And the Saskatchewan Party, a Saskatchewan Party government, Mr. Speaker, led by the member from Rosetown-Biggar, is going to make sure that those jobs are going to be allowed to be created — allowed to be created, Mr. Speaker — for the people of northern Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know that the House has some very important business that also needs to be taken care of this afternoon. It also needs to be taken care of, Mr. Speaker, because of some very dramatic events that have taken place in the lives of members of the Legislative Assembly. And so I think it would be appropriate at this time, Mr. Speaker, that we adjourn debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

The Speaker: — Why is the member from . . . why is the Opposition House Leader on his feet?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, with leave to move a motion of substitution of committee members.

Leave granted.

MOTIONS

Substitution of Member on Special Committee on Rules and Procedures

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Canora-Pelly:

That the name of Randy Weekes be substituted for that of Carl Kwiatkowski on the Special Committee on Rules and Procedures.

Motion agreed to.

(16:00)

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, I ask leave of the Assembly to move a motion of condolence.

Leave granted.

CONDOLENCES

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly I would move, the member for Yorkton, seconded by the member for Rosetown-Biggar, by leave of this Assembly:

That this Assembly record with sorrow and regret the passing of a former member of this Assembly and express its grateful appreciation for the contributions he made to his community, his constituency, and to the province.

John Penner, who passed away on March 5, 2003, was a member of the Legislative Assembly from 1991 to 1995, representing the constituency of Swift Current for the New Democratic Party.

Mr. Penner was born on December 12, 1931 in Swift Current and was raised on the family farm. He received his early schooling at Iris School. He furthered his education at the University of Saskatchewan from where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree and Education degree. And he married his wife, Josephine, on July 11, 1953, and together they had two children.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Penner was a teacher by profession and he taught in schools around Saskatchewan for over 30 years. He undertook teaching assignments in Africa over two summers. Mr. Penner's contributions to education extended beyond the classroom. He served as the vice-principal and principal of Swift Current Comprehensive High School. He also served as a councillor with the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and on the local provincial curriculum committee. He retired from his teaching profession. Mr. Penner then turned his interests to the business sector. He became owner and director of the Parkside Mennonite Funeral Home in Swift Current.

In his private life Mr. Penner was an active participant in his community. He was a member of the Rotary Club and active on the Western Credit Union Board for many years, including 12 years as president. The Swift Current Hospital, his church, and other community organizations also benefited from his participation and leadership. Upon leaving elected office, Mr. Penner carried on his public duties as a board member of the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation and as Saskatchewan's representative on the Board of Management of the Canadian Customs and Revenue Canada.

Mr. Penner first sought elected office as an alderman in the city of Swift Current. He later was elected to the Assembly in the 1991 general election. And he immediately entered cabinet as the minister of Energy and Mines. Later, in 1993, he was appointed associate minister of Finance, minister responsible for Crown Investment Corporation. Mr. Penner resigned from cabinet in 1995 and continued to sit as a government member until the . . . following election.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Mr. Speaker, upon other . . . a couple of other comments I'd like to make about Mr. Penner. I will then conclude by forwarding the motion, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, seconded by the member from Rosetown-Biggan.

I had the opportunity to serve with Mr. Penner personally in this Legislative Assembly, was elected at the same time as he was in 1991. And of course, Mr. Penner immediately made his way into cabinet and we entered this Assembly with a large number of members on this side of the House. And as a new member entering the Assembly, as we recognized members who recognized the Assembly today as new members, it was really wonderful to have somebody who had the broad life experience and who knew what it meant to make a difference in community and as being a leader and as a political figure.

I attended the funeral that was held in Swift Current for Mr. Penner, and I have over the years as one would appreciate attended a number of funerals, and I had not ever attended a ceremony or service that was so largely attended by Saskatchewan people. The church was simply full of men and women from all parts of Saskatchewan — people who knew John as a Rotarian, people who knew John as a teacher, people who knew John as a community leader, people who knew John as a family man, and those who knew him as a politician both at the local level and certainly at the provincial level.

And I was touched on many occasions by many of the people who came forward and spoke in respect of John's life. The people from the Rotary who talked about the motto of Rotary which is "service before self", and how we had in the man of John Penner, who always took some extra time to put the welfare of others and his community and often his family in advance of himself, and gave selflessly and tirelessly on many projects for the Rotary.

One of the projects that the Rotary undertakes is to provide safe

drinking water for some of our Third World countries, and it requires a great deal of fundraising. It requires to initiate from within the community often a support for people who are less advantaged than we are in our own province or within our own country, and John was instrumental in raising large sums of money, not only from his own community but when he served at the national Table of Rotary for Third World countries.

It was touching to also hear from his colleagues from whom he taught with who talked about the respect of which he garnered within the school system and how, for many of the teachers that taught with him, how he provided the kinds of strength and direction that's often necessary working in the education of young people.

And then to hear people step forward and talk about the gratitude of which is hard for one to imagine that you could express in having taken an algebra or a math class. Being someone who had difficulty in both of those fronts, I can't imagine that anybody would step forward and talk about how wonderful it was to have an experience in a math class. But on many occasions there were a number of people who talked about how John was an outstanding teacher.

His community leadership — today in the Swift Current area we hear lots about the importance of the health care facility, the need for a new hospital in that area, and how John Penner and the . . . has been leading a group of community leaders in trying to find the resources required to build a new health care centre in Swift Current, and has always worked diligently and hard in that front to improve the health care services in that community.

I was most touched though, Mr. Speaker, by the message and the words that were given by his son-in-law who talked about John as a friend, talked about John as a colleague, and how in fact the two of them would participate in events within the home and within the family that would be described in the fashion of collegiality and warmth that is often hard to describe even when you have your own children and the development of those kinds of relationships amongst them. And to have his son-in-law speak about the exceptionally warm and passionate friendship and relationship that they had was most touching.

Within this legislature on many occasions John provided . . . And those who spoke about his strength talked about the early parts of 1991, the early days when in fact the government was struggling with balancing its affairs, balancing its finances, and how John brought stability to the decision-making process. How in fact he was able to provide a perspective, a strength that often was hard to find through long hours of debate and discussion, and then be able to articulate that message back to those of us who served in caucus with him. And then to build the kinds of financial stability in the province of which we today enjoy, during some extremely difficult times of which John Penner was a pillar in our view, and was recognized from that perspective by both Premier Romanow and certainly by Mr. Mitchell, who served right beside him during those days, at the funeral.

John was someone who was prepared to take some risks. Today we reflect back on the investment of the Husky Upgrader in our province, of which we once were involved in the purchase of and then the disposing of that asset. And there were long hours

of which . . . long hours, Mr. Speaker, of which our caucus said to Mr. Penner that we couldn't believe that we would ever be heading down that path and how it is that we would take Saskatchewan taxpayers' money and invest it in a venture of that type and how high risk that was. And at the end of the day this turned out to be a very successful project for Saskatchewan, of which Mr. Penner was a leading ambassador for our province, and at the end of the day has paid significant dividends for us in our province.

So today, Mr. Speaker, I want to, on behalf of the government, recognize the life of Mr. Penner, thank him for the contributions that he made not only to our community of Saskatchewan but certainly to the community of Swift Current and to all of those people who were touched by him, by his presence. And as was said during the service, that Saskatchewan and this legislature and the people of Swift Current are better for the fact that we've had the benefit of having Mr. Penner a part of our Saskatchewan community.

And with that, by leave of this Assembly, that it be recorded that the sorrows and regrets of the passing of the former member of this Assembly, and that we express our grateful appreciation to the contributions he made to his community, his constituency, and to his province.

Moved by the member from Yorkton, seconded by the member from Rosetown-Biggan.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to be able to participate in this discussion and to say a few words about Mr. Penner, and also through this Assembly and through your Chair to wish his family all the best.

You know I don't think we have to necessarily agree with everything an individual might believe or work for to consider them a role model. And you know I think for me and others, Mr. Penner would arguably fall into that category.

I knew Mr. Penner reasonably well, I guess, on a personal level. Swift Current is a small place and so there are lots of points of contact, frankly, and in fact my brother, my only brother, married John Penner's niece and so that's one contact.

Also my mom worked as a secretary at the Comprehensive High School for a number of years and worked while . . . worked under Mr. Penner while he was the principal at the Comprehensive High School.

And certainly it's easy to see the contribution that he made to the community of Swift Current. There's intangible ways that we can see that and there are tangible ways.

You know, the quick melt in the southwest Saskatchewan, in southwest Saskatchewan has caused our Swift Current Creek to rise fairly high so it was, you know a moment of excitement, I guess. We were all down by the creek-side on Sunday — after whatever we might have been doing that morning — to check out how high it was getting. And people were driving around the community having a look.

And I had . . . we had the chance, as a family, to go for a walk and we walked down a long pathway by the creek. And it's a

beautiful pathway called the Chinook Pathway in Swift Current. It really runs almost the entire width of the city, I guess you could say north and south, and it goes along the creek among other places. And we walked by a large boulder that had been placed there — decorative boulder with a plaque on it — just on Sunday that honoured the city council of the day that had helped make a significant improvement to the pathway and make that possible, and there was the name of Alderman John Penner on that plaque.

(16:15)

We heard, as the Deputy Premier said at the funeral, from his . . . from teachers who talked about his impact in terms of education and we heard indirectly about his impact on the students themselves. And so we know that the impact was made in our community as a teacher and as a principal and as a city councillor, and we know as well of the impact that he made serving his province and serving this Assembly and serving the cabinet of the Government of Saskatchewan.

What many wouldn't know here perhaps is the contribution he continued to make after he was forced to resign or to step away from politics for health reasons. I think many would take that opportunity to slow down and to take it easy, but he returned home and was as dedicated and worked as hard as ever he had for the community.

We have a very, very successful health care foundation now in Swift Current called the Dr. Noble Irwin Healthcare Foundation, and it has done a great job of raising money for health care, not just in Swift Current but across the southwest. And to the extent that we are able to raise money for health care in southwest Saskatchewan and one day even for a hospital, we can owe that in large measure to this foundation.

Mr. Penner was instrumental not in just its operation but in its formation. I think he was an original board member of that foundation and, more than that, someone who really was key to getting it going in the first place. And he continued to work hard on the foundation because it's something that he believed in very strongly.

And he was also a very, very active Rotarian, as the Deputy Premier has alluded to. Now those of us in the Kiwanis Club in Swift Current would say that as good as the Rotarian Club is, they could have done even more, but it wasn't for the lack of effort by people like Mr. Penner. He served as the club president, I think, for two or three years in these years after resigning from this place here.

He served the club as president, was instrumental in things like starting a lobster boil, the first lobster . . . annual lobster feed fundraiser that we've ever known in Swift Current and still going on today. I think he played a key role in that, along with his fellow Rotarians, and he was always raising money however he could for the foundation and raising awareness. You know, if you happened to be in the Carmel Mall where our constituency office is in Swift Current — where I believe his was too; we're in the same area — you know, he always made sure he'd drop by to ensure that I had the latest ticket or raffle offering from the foundation and you just couldn't say no.

So, you know, it's just amazing. I'm not sure exactly of the percentage but I think a good part of his heart had been damaged in those . . . in that heart attack, a very . . . I'd say a majority. And to think he was again able to step back from this, but go home and work as hard as he did in the community to make it a better place, and also to spend time with his family and his grandkids is really quite a . . . it's really quite a testament to Mr. Penner, to his character, and the reason why we can disagree on things but have these people as our role models.

The funeral was very well attended, as the Deputy Premier alluded to. I think there was about, I think there was 900 people there. The church was full and then they had the basement . . . or the gym I should say, it's not in the basement . . . the gym full of chairs and it was very well attended and certainly his former colleagues were there in a very, in a very great number, which I'm sure was wonderful for his family to see.

There were three premiers there, three . . . the current Premier and two former premiers there: Mr. Romanow, Mr. Blakeney, and Mr. Calvert was delayed a bit by his activities but came a little bit later, I believe. And, you know, that's quite a thing. I think any of us who sit here today when we look ahead to that fateful day that we'll all meet would think, well that would be quite a thing to have that many members of a cabinet and a government of the province of Saskatchewan and no less than three premiers there to pay respects and to support the family.

But arguably even more important than that was all of the words that we heard from the various groups and walks that he touched — whether it was education or at city council or in Rotary, and most importantly of course the tribute from his family and his son-in-law as the Deputy Premier alluded to, Randy Hildebrandt. And maybe that's the goal that we strive for — or should strive for, frankly, for that fateful day, even more than to have the dignitaries, which is obviously quite an honour — is to just leave a legacy and leave the legacy that Mr. Penner left in Swift Current and have that kind of a gathering to provide support to his family.

So with those brief remarks, I guess I would just want to pass on, on behalf of the opposition, our best wishes and condolences and our sympathies to his wife, Jo, and his daughter, Sheila, and her husband, Randy, as well as to Maxine.

And I would just . . . I would add this. I remember as a . . . I think I was in grade 11 or 12 and it's hard to believe maybe, Mr. Speaker, but I was, you know, marginally interested in politics at the time when I think, when Mr. Penner was first . . . or I guess I just finished high school when Mr. Penner was first considering a career in politics. And I think he ran in 1986 is the first time he ran in the Swift Current constituency. And I remember feeling particularly smart one day and I drafted a letter to the editor about the fact that Mr. Penner was a retired teacher, or a retired principal, and now he wanted to be an MLA. And was that right because he's already getting one public cheque and should he be getting another cheque? Boy it seemed pretty smart at the time to send that letter to the editor. And of course it was silly. And it's something . . . I'm sure I told him I regretted it. But he joked about it because that was, you know, that was his nature.

The other thing about the funeral I would just add is that there was a great deal of support there and fond remembrances. But there was also a hope at that funeral. And I don't think we can underestimate the importance of that to the family in the days and weeks to come, that they're going to see him again.

So with those few words on behalf of the opposition, I would extend our condolences and sympathies to the Penner family. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very glad to rise to say a few words in memory of John Penner. I was quite honoured, along with the member from Saskatoon Nutana, to serve as a pallbearer at the funeral which has been said by the Deputy Premier and the member from Swift Current was very, very well attended by many people in the Alliance Church, which was very packed. And there was a real outpouring of love and respect for John Penner and support for the family.

But I think first and foremost that funeral was a celebration. It was intended to be a celebration. It was a celebration because it was a celebration, Mr. Speaker, of a life that was very well lived and very fully lived.

And I think it's fair to say that first and foremost, and we heard from various speakers as has been mentioned — various speakers at the funeral — John Penner was a family man first and foremost. His family was the centre of his universe in all his community activities. And that was very important to him and very clear at the funeral, and especially hearing from the family members as has been said.

And secondly, he was a man of faith. That is something that he didn't wear on his sleeve. I don't think John Penner ever discussed with his colleagues his deeply held religious views, but I think he lived his faith through his life and his conduct, Mr. Speaker. But that's what he was — as well as a family man, he was a man of faith.

And of course he was a teacher. And we heard from people who spoke at the funeral that he was one of the best teachers that had ever been encountered there.

And after he left teaching he was a business person and he owned one of the funeral homes in Swift Current, which I think he was active at least as a shareholder until relatively recently and then sold it sometime within the last year or so.

And of course he was a community leader, involved in all kinds of activities — heavily involved in the credit union, involved in the Rotary and city politics and so on. He was a very, very well-rounded, accomplished person.

And as has been said, Mr. Speaker, he was held in very high esteem by the people in Swift Current but also by many across this province, including of course the people in this Legislative Assembly and many others.

And I think it's fair to say that John Penner was not a very flashy person. He wasn't flashy or slick in any way. He was a person that had a sort of a quiet resolve. John was a very big man and he had a quiet resolve. He was somebody who believed deeply in the common good and in the public interest.

I think, you know, those of us in politics . . . Sometimes I'm asked why I would go into politics, Mr. Speaker. And I say, well the only answer to why anybody should go into politics is to serve the public interest. That's the only answer there is. And I don't think there's any question in anyone's mind that John Penner's activities in politics and otherwise were centred around one goal, and that was to serve the public interest.

And I'd like to give as an example of John's commitment to the people of the province — his courage, his wisdom — one example that was alluded to by the Deputy Premier which was the situation involving the Lloydminster Upgrader — the Bi-Provincial Upgrader, now the Husky Upgrader.

And it's a very good example of John's skill and dedication and courage because what had happened there was that the governments of Canada, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Husky Oil, had each invested about a quarter of a billion dollars in the Bi-Provincial Upgrader, but it was losing money. And so Alberta and Canada and Saskatchewan were having to put money into the upgrader. Far from getting money out of it, they were putting money into it every year.

And eventually Canada and Alberta said, well we've had enough of this. We're going to sell our interest in this upgrader. And they had put in each about a quarter of a billion dollars. So had we. And what they did is they went to Husky Oil and they sold their interest in the upgrader at about 7 cents on the dollar, so that Alberta and Canada had put in about 250 million and they got some 20 million out of it in return.

Now imagine, Mr. Speaker, here we had John Penner who was the minister in charge and he came along and he said, I don't think we should sell our interest in the upgrader; in fact, I think we should put more money in. And he convinced the government of the day to invest I think it was another \$40 million to start purchasing the interest of Alberta and Canada in the upgrader. And that's what we did. So while other people were selling their interests, John Penner said, no, we should put more money in because that upgrader is going to pay off; that upgrader is a good investment.

And John Penner of course was right. But that's not the point of my story, or that example, Mr. Speaker. The point I'm trying to make is this: that here was a man who had a lot of courage as well as wisdom. Because he said to people, and stood up in the face of some ridicule, I might add, and said, yes, others are bailing out and it may be the popular thing to do today. But we need to make a courageous decision and actually invest more because it will be in the public interest and a good investment to put more money in in the face of opposition and ultimately it will pay off. And of course he was right.

And what happened was a few years later, because of that decision on his part . . . and there are others I could talk about, other decisions he contributed to as a minister of the Crown that saved the people of the province hundreds of millions of dollars. But that one example when we sold our interest in the Husky Upgrader a few years later for about \$300 million, that one decision of John Penner brought the people of this province about a quarter of a billion dollars, Mr. Speaker. And we used that money to pay down some of the public debt.

(16:30)

And I think it's safe to say that it's not very often that one MLA in the province can have so much impact on the province with just one wise decision, very wisely and courageously made. But I think it illustrates the impact that dedication to the public interest can have, and it illustrates the importance of principles and of integrity.

Now sometimes, Mr. Speaker, we get very cynical about politics, but I think when we think about John Penner and his actions and his life and his integrity and his dignity, that he stood out as an example of just how good we can be as elected representatives.

I think it's unfortunate of course that his career was cut short in 1995 by ill health but he was never a man to sit still. The member from Swift Current wondered what his heart capacity was. I was told that during the last several years of John's life he was operating at a heart capacity of 25 per cent, that three-quarters of his heart had been destroyed over the last 16 years or so through some heart attacks that he had had. But you would never know it, to watch him or to listen to him. You would never know it.

I think he was a big man, he probably had such a big heart that operating on 25 per cent of his heart maybe wasn't so bad, Mr. Speaker, because I think he had a pretty big heart.

Well his many careers in education, business, and the credit union movement, not to mention politics, are all proof of that, I think. And we're happy that John had a full life for several years after his retirement and continued to be able to serve the public as he wanted to do. And we who served with him in this legislature are very grateful to have had the chance to work with him and call him our friend.

And so, our thoughts and condolences go out to his family: his wife, Jo; and daughters, Maxine and Sheila; also his son-in-law, Randy; two grandchildren. And condolences also to his very many friends, Mr. Speaker, all over this province.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to join my colleagues in paying a short tribute, a brief tribute to John Penner. As was indicated, John came to this legislature in 1991, and that's really when I came to know him. I can't say that I knew him before.

But I can say in the few short years that we served together from 1991 to 1995, it became very clear to me that the respect that John has garnered and that was spoken of today was because he was very much a gentleman. But not only a gentleman, Mr. Speaker, he was a gentle man.

He would bring reason and calm presence to discussions that would sometimes around the cabinet table, around the caucus table, would be difficult because we were in those years dealing with some very difficult issues. But you could always count on John to bring a calm presence to the discussion; always a good and a profound understanding of the issues. He always did his homework. And I think part of that profoundness and part of that understanding came from the life experience that he brought to this legislature as a teacher and as a co-operator, as a

business person, and it has been said, as a family man.

As I worked with John, it was very clear that he had gained the respect of his community, and his role as a cabinet minister allowed him exposure to people all over the province. And it became very clear why John gained the respect of the people of Saskatchewan through the different positions he had as a cabinet minister, as I knew him.

And I suppose we all have a small anecdote. I have one memory of John in a difficult time, and the premier had charged him to spearhead discussions as his role as minister of Energy and Mines to deal with some negotiations that were taking place as it related to the Co-op upgrader. And the reason that was because of John's life experience as a co-operator working with the co-operative movement through the credit unions to explain the government's position related to these issues. And there were some pretty heated discussions and some very strong feelings.

I saw John take control of the meeting. It could have been more difficult than it was. The only reason he was able to do that is because of the respect that his fellow co-operators had for him, and knowing that John's presence brought for not only a good understanding of the issue but a probably a wise approach to dealing with it.

Further on down the road I had the opportunity to chair the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation, which John sat as a board member. And it was so clear, it was so easy to see the impact that John could have on his colleagues on that board and on the staff that served and worked for that board.

I spent some time as Energy and Mines minister following John who was our first Energy and Mines minister post-1991. And I can tell you that in 2002 and in 2003, John's work is still having an impact on the relationship that we have, as a government, with the oil and gas sector and the success of the development and the growth of that industry here in the province. And he's still spoken of.

And so I want to say that, as well, John cared very deeply about his family, as I know they did about him. And so I would just say in closing that I want to thank Jo and the members of John's family for allowing him to be part of my life and a part of our life as legislature, part of the history of this province and part of as well the future of this province. Because he had an impact, both on the past and he will have an impact on the future, based on the work that he did.

And I think it's fair to say that Jo and the family should be very proud of someone who was a gentleman and as importantly a gentle man with lots of conviction.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's such an honour to be able to stand and remember Gentleman John, as he's been referred by some of my colleagues. And that truly is John Penner, Gentleman John.

Mr. Speaker, Swift Current was my first city, Beechy being my hometown; Swift Current being the city that John Penner so ably represented in this legislature long after I'd moved away from my hometown.

But I learned something at the funeral. John Penner's first school was in Hallonquist. Hallonquist is where my mother originated along with many other famous Nelsons, and I'm sure that John Penner had something to do with the life of Hallonquist in the year that he spent . . . he and Jo actually spent there.

John Penner turned out, as has been shared, to be an inspired choice for then Premier Roy Romanow's first cabinet. Others have shared the story of the upgrader.

I'm going to sort of fast-forward over that and get right to sort of my last memories of John in cabinet. I shared the day, that fateful day, in Yorkton when John had his heart attack. I was with him and I was . . . I remember vividly us going from a series of meetings with the city council and with the credit union board and the co-op people and just a whole host of meetings through Yorkton that day, and it was interesting because many of the people that came wanted money for some very worthwhile cause in Yorkton.

I remember one of the issues was policing and, interestingly enough, they used the example of Yorkton being the same size basically of Swift Current in population and some differences in policing there — I remember it vividly — and John Penner was the one that we always looked to to provide the reasoned and the reasonable answer, and he never failed us at all. That entire day I was just so proud of the job that he was able to do on our behalf and it was obvious that the good people of Yorkton respected and just knew this was a man giving them the straight goods on how things were.

He quietly didn't show up to one of the final meetings of that day, and it wasn't until later that I found out that the reason he didn't show up at that particular meeting was he was in an ambulance and on his way to the hospital having a heart attack, but never ever trying to distress us or the people of the province. It really, really spoke to Gentleman John and his sort of sense of values.

Of course it wasn't that much longer after that he had his surgery and then came to the conclusion that he was not going to be able to continue in his duties here. And I want to share that that was one of the saddest days of this MLA's career, was the day that I realized that John Penner would not be able to continue.

By way of highlighting that, I'm sure that the current Premier, who I've shared this with before he became the current Premier, would appreciate this. I've actually shared with John Penner in his life that he was the only one I would consider, outside of the current Premier, to become our premier. And it just wasn't meant to be for a whole host of reasons, not the least of which was John's health and his age.

But I cite that simply to share with John's family and his many friends and with colleagues here the huge esteem that I, and I know many others, held John Penner. He earned it. We miss him. I'm grateful for his contribution. Thank you.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join all of my colleagues today in paying tribute to John Penner, a former member of the Saskatchewan legislature, representing the

constituency of Swift Current.

Mr. Speaker, I, like a number of my colleagues, have many remembrances of John Penner. And some of the most poignant remembrances have been mentioned here today, particularly his leadership in our government when we were renegotiating the Co-op upgrader, a heavy upgrader deal, as well as our further involvement in Husky Oil. And I, like many of my colleagues, remember the many, many cabinet meetings that we undertook in order to arrive at a consensus around the cabinet table and then a consensus amongst all government colleagues. And I can say categorically John Penner provided outstanding leadership to our government as we made our way through those many difficult decisions.

And one of the difficult decisions, Mr. Speaker, was adding to the provincial debt when we made the decision to purchase more shares in the Husky Upgrader in Lloydminster. And I recall the criticisms that were undertaken in the public and also in this legislature with that decision. But as my colleague from Mount Royal said, it allowed us to eventually sell our shares at a much greater price and to reduce our overall provincial debt. And I can say that John Penner provided us outstanding leadership as we made our way to that decision.

(16:45)

Mr. Speaker, I think one of the greatest tributes that can be made to a member of this legislature is when the new member representing the constituency of Swift Current says, on the day of the funeral, John Penner was respected by this community. And there's no question when, if you were in attendance at the funeral, there were people from all political persuasions, all religious points of view, attending that funeral to pay respects and to celebrate John Penner's life.

Mr. Speaker, all I can say about John was that he cut an eloquent swath. He was a dashing dresser, he and Jo.

He was a gentle man and a gentleman, but you always knew where you stood with John Penner. He never left any doubt in the cabinet room where he stood. He never stuck his finger in the air to see which way the wind was flowing to determine what his position would be. He was a man of principle and a man of integrity, and I think all of my cabinet colleagues — in particular in those days between 1992 and 1995 — can say that we knew where John Penner stood on the issues of the day. And there were moments when John and I would be walking down the hallway and he'd say, well I don't think anybody has any doubt where you and I stand, Pat. And I appreciated that. And we often stood on opposite side of the issues but you knew where he stood.

Mr. Speaker, to the people of Swift Current, they had a good MLA who represented them well in this constituency . . . in this legislature. He advanced the interests, the public interests of his constituents, and for that we are grateful.

To his family, Jo and to Maxine and to Sheila and Randy and the grandkids, I say I'm sorry John has passed on, but he left his mark in our province and for that our province is a better place.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and by leave of the Assembly, I would move, seconded by the member for Yorkton:

That this Assembly records with sorrow and regret the passing of a former member of this Assembly, and expresses its grateful appreciation of the contribution he made to his community, his constituency, and to the province.

Carl Edward Kwiatkowski who passed away on February 2, 2003, was a member of this Legislative Assembly from 1999 until 2003, representing the constituency of Carrot River Valley for the Saskatchewan Party.

Mr. Kwiatkowski was born on November 20, 1959 in the town of Porcupine Plain. He was raised on the family farm and attended elementary and secondary schools in Porcupine Plain. In 1982, Mr. Kwiatkowski married Leona Kistner and they had three children.

After finishing high school, Mr. Kwiatkowski was employed for several years in road construction and on oil rigs. He then shifted his attention to improving the lives and opportunities of those who lived in his community. His primary focus was on individuals with mental and physical disabilities. He served for over 17 years as the general manager of the Porcupine Opportunities Program Inc. Mr. Kwiatkowski also served as the president of the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres and on the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Administrators.

Mr. Kwiatkowski has a lengthy record of public service. Mr. Kwiatkowski's first foray into elected office was at the municipal level. He served as mayor of Porcupine Plain for three terms. Later he was elected to this Assembly in the 1999 general election. He served as a Justice of the Peace and on numerous boards and committees across the province. The Porcupine Plain Chamber of Commerce and the NewSask Community Futures Development Corporation were two organizations that benefited from his participation.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement, this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy with the members of the bereaved family.

And, Mr. Speaker, if I might, I'd like to add a few personal comments beyond the scope of the motion.

Those of us, and all who knew Carl Kwiatkowski, loved the man. Losing Carl was a personal loss for everyone on this side of the House, and from my understanding members across the way also felt a loss with Carl's passing. He was the kind of a guy you couldn't help but love and appreciate. He was outstanding and very professional in his service as an MLA. He was respected for that. He loved politics. He made no apologies for his love of politics.

And I recall campaigning with Carl in the 1999 election and I can't remember whether it was in the community of Hudson Bay or the community of Nipawin, one of those two

communities, and we were going door to door and having a good time and chatting. And we came to one door and we could hear a noise in the backyard. And so Carl and I went round to the back and we discovered a young mother who was trying to light the barbecue and she was having difficulty — the starter just wouldn't work.

Those of you who know Carl know that he had a smoking habit and of course he had a match. And between the two of us I think I was one that had the courage to light the match, and the happy ending to the story is we got the barbecue lit. The unhappy part of it is it made quite a bang when it did light. And Carl and I had many chuckles over that. I was very pleased that I still had my eyebrows and Carl was very pleased that his hair was still in place.

But, Mr. Speaker, and members present, Carl loved politics; he loved meeting people and doing things. And we have no idea whether the young mother ever voted Saskatchewan Party or not but that didn't matter, we had just had a lot of fun and that is very representative of the way Carl approached life.

Carl is respected province-wide for his work on the behalf of people with disabilities. As Leader of the Opposition I have been fortunate to travel to all parts of Saskatchewan and I would never cease to be amazed at the people throughout the province who knew Carl because of his work with people with disabilities.

He was respected, he was appreciated, and he was loved because he had such an impact in that area of working with people with needs. As I mentioned earlier he was instrumental in starting the Porcupine Opportunities Program. He later became involved with SARC (Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres) and SARCAN and even served in official capacity in both of those organizations. So Carl was respected for his work with people with disabilities.

Carl was also respected for his support of municipalities. Carl was the mayor of a community and he understood the importance of the municipal level of government, and again was known throughout the province for his work at the municipal level. He performed admirably as the mayor of Porcupine Plain, and knew the challenges and knew the responsibilities of serving people at the local level. So Carl was respected for his impact on municipal government.

Carl was respected by his constituents. He had a servant attitude. I never heard any complaints from the people of Carrot River Valley about the work that their MLA did, and that is a real tribute to an MLA.

I remember one of my earliest involvements with Carl, even before either of us were elected to this Assembly. It was working on behalf of the people of the community of Carrot River, trying to maintain health care services in their community. Carl divided his time evenly amongst all of his constituents. Even though he himself resided in Porcupine Plain, he quickly came to earn the respect of constituents in every community of the Carrot River Valley constituency. So Carl was respected by his constituents.

Hundreds of people showed their respect for Carl at the funeral

which was held in Porcupine Plain. The hall, the community hall, was filled to capacity. Every chair was taken and hundreds of people were standing and stood for a long time out of respect and reverence for the life of Carl. Many MLAs, a very large turnout of MLAs from both sides of the House, were present at Carl's funeral. And the Deputy Premier, as well as the member for Saltcoats, and myself, were able to give tribute to Carl at his funeral.

And the MLAs were also allowed to form an honour guard for Carl as he was removed from the hall. You could sense just by the intense look on people's faces, the attitude of the service, that Carl was respected by the people of his community and people throughout the province who came to the funeral service. And I would like to publicly thank every MLA who took part in that service and showed their respect for Carl and expressed their sympathy and condolences to the family by being present at the funeral.

Today we express our heartfelt condolences to the family once again in an official way here in the Legislative Assembly. We want to express our concern and our love and our sympathy to Carl's wife, Leona; to his daughters, Carla and Krystal; to his son, Tyrrell; his parents, Frank and Myrtle; to a brother, Steve; and a sister, Teresa.

Today in this Assembly we remember and we pay tribute to an outstanding citizen of Saskatchewan, Mr. Carl Kwiatkowski.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too want to join the member for Rosetown-Biggan, the Leader of the Opposition, and on behalf of the government express our sincere condolences to the family of Carl Kwiatkowski, and to all of the individuals of whom his life has touched.

My experience and association with Carl is on three fronts, Mr. Speaker. I first met Carl when I was working for a private social service agency in Yorkton called SIGN (Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours). And at that time of my life, in the early '80s, I was busy trying to put together a transportation program and a housing program for people with disabilities. And I called through, through the Saskatchewan Abilities Council at that time, as to whom I might be able to sit down and have a conversation with about what it is that we might do in our community in order to make it better for people with disabilities. And they gave me the name of Carl Kwiatkowski, the member from Carrot River.

And with a great deal of interest and enthusiasm, in the way in which Carl always met and greeted and worked with people, he chose to travel to Yorkton as opposed to me bringing my issues to Carrot River, to where he was working, and to share with me his experiences about how we might be able to provide a better housing program and transportation program for people with disabilities.

And of course when you talk to someone on the phone you form your own impressions about who it is that you might be seeing on the other end of the line. And I had my own little vision of this man because I had not had a chance to meet him before. And of course when you're as tall as I am, everybody

else is shorter. And so I was expecting that when he arrived in my office in Yorkton a much different kind of a personality and individual. And as he came through the door, as we know, sort of tall and imposing, and — it would be fair I think for me to say because it's been said on many occasions — a very attractive, good-looking man and elegant man.

And I welcomed him into my office and then we proceeded to talk about how we could make a difference in my constituency of the province in providing a better lifestyle for people with disabilities. And of course Carl was most instrumental in helping our organization in putting together a transportation program for disabled people in Yorkton and today we have evidence of housing programs in our city of which Carl was instrumental in helping us design.

(17:00)

My second experience with Carl was when he in fact became the mayor of Porcupine Plain. I served as the city alderman for the community of Yorkton and we both had the opportunity to meet at a SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association) convention in Saskatoon.

And for those of us who knew Carl in a social fashion, he enjoyed having a good time. And he lived in a fast lane; the pace was quick for him. And there were . . . and SUMA conventions were about learning, but SUMA conventions were also about having experiences that we can't always share in assemblies of this nature, Mr. Speaker, or publicly, but I can tell you that we soared to some heights which were most appreciative in the learning experience of how to govern municipal governments. And clearly, we passed a lot more public policy outside of the convention on a couple of those evenings than we did when we were doing sessions.

And my third experience of course was in this Assembly here, Mr. Speaker, where as many have already said — the Leader of the Opposition has said — Carl came here with a passion to serve people and it was exemplified in the work that he did in his constituency; it was exemplified in the work that he did with the organization of which he represented prior to coming here, the disabled; and it was representative . . . it was also represented in the passion that he had for the files that he was responsible to do work on.

From time to time in this Assembly, the energy level gets a bit higher and the intensity gets a bit higher and we find opportunities to point out the differences in our appreciation of this Assembly, but rarely would you ever see or hear Carl participate in that. And I look at the words that the Premier had provided when he had heard of Carl's passing and he said this:

Carl was not one who catcalled ever from his seat. This is not to say that when he was on his feet, he didn't speak with a great deal of pointedness if he had a criticism to level at (the) government. But I always felt that the criticism was fair.

And that statement in quote, Mr. Speaker, is absolutely true.

When I looked at Carl's nomination papers — in when he was being courted for the nomination — you will find on that

nomination paper, Mr. Speaker, individuals who are from all party stripes.

And when Carl came to this Assembly and then returned back to his constituency after his election, you will find when you travel his constituency and talk to people about the work that he did in his constituency that the affairs of his work weren't tied to a party affiliation but were tied to responsibility of serving as a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

And I can tell you that he was a hard-working MLA because I have more correspondence from him, as a minister, than anyone else that I've ever received in this Assembly, both from our side of the House and from yours. Collectively this man has done a tremendous amount of work and has done a tremendous amount of work for his constituents.

I want to today also join with the members opposite because often when we rise in this Assembly, on this day, we're speaking about people who from time to time we have a sense of knowing either because we served with them for short periods of time or in many cases we talk about people who have preceded us for some time.

It has been a rare occasion I believe, Mr. Speaker, in this Assembly where we would rise and speak about members who have been very much a part of our day-to-day life in this Assembly as we did earlier with Mr. Penner and certainly today with Mr. Kwiatkowski presently.

And the Leader of the Opposition is absolutely true . . . is correct when he says that when we lose a colleague from the Assembly it touches us deeply and fully, irrespective of which side of the Assembly you serve on.

Because to get here, to this Assembly, irrespective of our political associations and affiliations, there are huge, huge sacrifices that we make as individuals — tremendous commitments that we make to our constituencies and huge sacrifices that are made by our families.

And so we have a tremendous understanding and a warm understanding about what it is about having to work and live and provide service for people of Saskatchewan when we're here in this Assembly.

And I can't hardly imagine, Mr. Speaker, about some of the difficulties that my colleagues across the way are experiencing, because I know the kinds of associations that we form as a team on this side of the House because we, from day to day, have to make some very difficult decisions. We need to support each other from a variety of different perspectives, and we become very close family members in this Assembly, and as a team. And often as much as we might not appear that we always agree on everything — there are days that we don't, which is not unlike what happens within families — but when one of your colleagues or one of those family members leaves you suddenly, it becomes a very difficult place and a very difficult task to manage your way through.

And so today I want to as much as join in extending my condolences to the family, to Carla and Krystal and Tyrrell, I also want to express my sincere condolences to the members of

the opposition who are, I know, experiencing some difficult times as they work through this period of time, and say that our thoughts are with them as well. And that we appreciate having had, in this Assembly, the strength and wisdom of a colleague who served our province exceptionally well at the time he did. And that his family, and we, are stronger for the opportunity to personally, to have been touched by the work and life of Carl Kwiatkowski.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Draude: — There are days in the Assembly that members find extremely difficult to get through, and for me this day of condolences is one of those days. It's made even more difficult, like the Deputy Premier mentioned, when we recall that the member whose work and memory we are honouring was standing in this Assembly just three short months ago.

Mr. Speaker, I believe I speak for all members of this legislature when I say that Carl Kwiatkowski was a friend, not just to those of us here in the Assembly, but also to those outside the House who had the opportunity and the privilege to work with him.

Aside from the two new members who were just sworn in a couple of days ago, I know I'd be hard pressed to find one person here that Carl hadn't taken the time to talk to, sit down with, and converse with.

By the same time, Mr. Speaker, I know that if Carl were with us today, the newly elected members from Battleford-Cut Knife and Saskatoon Fairview would have experienced first-hand, or within a very short time, his warm and winning personality. Mr. Speaker, Carl wouldn't have had it any other way.

Professionally Carl had a tremendous amount of respect for the Legislative Assembly and for the political process. Part of that respect came from Carl's in-depth knowledge of the history and the people involved in the process. It held a never-ending fascination for him.

Mr. Speaker, the first time I met Carl I was at a trade show in Porcupine Plain. My first impression of him was of a tall, polite, wonderfully candid man with a boyish grin and a big laugh. And I was absolutely amazed and impressed at how in touch he was with the day-to-day issues in politics. Not surprisingly, Mr. Speaker, Carl confided to me that politics had always been his passion.

As the mayor of Porcupine Plain, Carl had developed a great understanding of inner workings and the many diverse needs of municipal government. It seemed only fitting and very logical that he would take the next step from local governance to that of the provincial forum. If ever there was a natural candidate, Mr. Speaker, it was Carl. He was a force to be reckoned with when he was campaigning, and his solid victory in the 1999 general election proved how much the constituents of Carrot River Valley personally believed in him and what he stood for.

Not surprising then that the constituents of Carrot River Valley became an extended family to Carl. I was always amazed at how many people he knew on a first name basis. The same passion and respect that got him elected, Mr. Speaker, followed

him right here to the legislature. And as all members are aware, one of the tasks that befall us in this building is often to loudly and pointedly remind the members opposite of their shortcomings. From the very beginning Carl said he'd not be part of that, and he had made a bet to that effect. He did in fact lose that bet. I think it cost him \$50. But to the best of my knowledge and to the knowledge of my colleagues that was the one and only time that he ever did do any calling.

Even after learning that he had been awarded a nickname like Coyote Carl or something of that sort, Carl still refused to give in. Instead he would simply acknowledge the comments with a grin and a shake of his head, and a little smile.

Mr. Speaker, Carl believed wholeheartedly in the dignity of all human beings no matter what their physical, mental, or emotional handicaps may be. And he worked tirelessly on their behalf whenever and wherever possible. This was another one of Carl's great passions and it earned him the admiration and respect of people from all walks of life and from all corners of this province.

The SARC and SARCAN organizations benefited from his dedication and his commitment to their cause, and his belief that everyone has value and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. There are so very many people, too numerous to count, whose lives Carl touched and ultimately made better because of his belief in the unlimited potential of the human spirit.

Since his election to the legislature in 1999, Carl came to fully understand and appreciate the many issues and concerns that were found in the critical portfolios of Environment and Natural Resources. And we learned that there were countless people, both inside and outside of this Assembly, who respected his work and the many suggestions for improvements or innovations that he brought forward.

To say that we'll miss Carl, Mr. Speaker, is an understatement. We'll miss teasing him about his perfect hair and his immaculate grooming. We're going to miss teasing him about trying to talk to him while he's talking on the phone to somebody else. We'll miss hearing him talk about his children — Carla, Krystal, and Tyrrell — his three beautiful children whom he adored and he was so very proud of. But most of all, Mr. Speaker, we're going to miss his friendship.

Mr. Speaker, when we are elected and we enter the political arena, the only thing that we all have in common that day is our political ideology. But in no time at all we come to understand that we can also count on each other as we work towards making our province a better place to live in. While it is our political beliefs that draw us together, Mr. Speaker, it is through the process that we become actual friends. And as friends we help each other through the difficult times and we celebrate the good times. Some days our friends have to remind us what we're doing is important, and that no matter what happens inside or outside this Assembly we can be secure in the knowledge that they're going to be there for us. Their influence on us will last a lifetime, and this is the way we feel about Carl.

We are fortunate to have been part of Carl's circle of friends. Carl's circle of friends knew no barriers of race, creed, age,

gender, or nationality; friends that are connected in hearts and in spirits that have no walls. It's truly a gift that he gave us and we'll treasure his gift of friendship forever; treasure it and pass it on to others in this give-and-take world that we live in.

Mr. Speaker, we know there are things that we have to accept even if we don't understand them. Losing our friend is one of them. Carl and I went skydiving together and he was very excited that day. I remember he talked about the feeling of freedom he had when he was floating towards earth when the parachute had opened. And I was reading a poem lately that made me think of the way Carl talked that day. It was called *Child of the Earth* and I'd like to read it to you:

When you are told that I am dead . . .
 . . . do not believe it.
 Walk among the trees . . .
 I will speak to you in the soft mystery of the winds.
 Touch a leaf sprinkled with sunshine . . .
 . . . and you will be touching me.
 Pick up a smooth worn stone and throw it . . .
 . . . far into the sea.
 That will help you to understand that I am not dead.
 Whether I am in your hands or in the sea
 I'm a child of the changing earth . . . changed and free.

Carl, we are so proud to have known you and to have worked with you, and we miss him very much. Your passion, your work, and your memory will not be forgotten. Our condolences to all those who love you.

(17:15)

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to join my colleagues in celebrating the life of Carl Kwiatkowski. Certainly as we all know in the Assembly, Carl was the critic that I faced off with on many occasions in this Assembly. And it's always important for us to express to the family our sincerest sympathy.

There's no question that change that is provided to us in life, sometimes a tragic change, is always very difficult to adapt to and certainly most difficult to accept. Change is always around us, some of it positive, some of it a great loss to family and friends and to regions and to the province.

And I can certainly say that one of the things that I think is very important is that although we squared off in the Assembly on numerous occasions, Carl was always a gentleman, was always a scholar, and was very, very approachable to talk about things that were of significant interest not only to himself and his constituents and his family and this province but certainly to the number of issues facing Saskatchewan as a whole.

Carl never yelled from his seat. And if my memory serves me correct, he told me one day that he made a promise to an older lady somewhere in his constituency that he wouldn't do that, and she always watched the Assembly to make sure he wasn't doing that. And of course what you don't see is the heckling and the yelling and the challenge we issue to each other when somebody's on his feet. So I can explain to the old lady, who I don't know who she is — he never did give me her name — that Carl never once did heckle.

And I think the important thing here is that in this particular challenge that we face as elected individuals, that it's always important that we have a relationship that is cordial and respectful and one that is certainly one that we recognize each other's challenge that we have to meet to be able to do this job.

Many years ago when I was a young lad, I often hear politicians say that it is a commitment, it is a commitment for me to be at this job. Or you'd hear him in his speech, I'm seeking re-election because I'm prepared to make that commitment. And instinctively people would say, well it's a commitment but you're being paid for that job; you know, it's something that you're seeking, it's a job that you want, so what are you talking about, a commitment? And being you know similar to . . . facing similar circumstances that Carl faced being away from his family, being away from his constituency, being on the road that's steady, that is the commitment that people have to know that people like Carl certainly afforded their particular job.

I think in the whole notion of his role as an MLA, that he was very well connected as a minister responsible for a number of areas that Carl was a critic, which includes SARCAN. It is not without any imagination that I say that when we met with Carl on a joint effort with the folks in SARCAN, that they admired him tremendously. And he took the effort — made the effort — and took the extra step to attend a number of functions that I as a minister travelled to to celebrate what SARCAN has done and a number of other organizations that he was intimately involved with.

And that dedication and that commitment that politicians often speak about, certainly Carl had expressed . . . had shown that, displayed that, and certainly delivered that to this Assembly on behalf of his constituents and certainly on behalf of the organizations that he helped and represented over the years.

To his wife and his son and his daughters and his mom and dad and brothers and sisters, it is a tremendous loss for yourself personally and to point out that we are here to celebrate Carl's life and to also thank you for sharing Carl with us because often when we meet in this particular arena of politics, we get new doors of information and new sights that other people point out to us and certainly, from his perspective, he afforded me many of those opportunities to see what he'd see and certainly to understand what he understood better, and often he would give us many, many words of advice.

About the only criticism I have of Carl was I mentioned to him one day that because I'm stuck in the Assembly answering some of his questions on a wide variety of issues, that my hockey career was suffering. And Carl often picked on my hockey career, Mr. Speaker, and his words was . . . were well, I understood that you were just suffering when you first put on your skates. So he done it in a joking fashion, but as always, it was business.

When we met behind the bar we spoke business and he had his issues to deal with, but he was going to keep everything above-board. Everything was going to be handled in a gentlemanly fashion, and we would get the issues and the questions out in front of the public of Saskatchewan so they know exactly what is going on. But we will not be frivolous and we will not be political and we will not play games with each

other, was the offer that Carl often made to me. And he certainly lived up to his words.

In recognition of some of the travels that Carl undertook, we knew that there was many hours and many miles that he travelled, but we also know that in this job that the lack of rest, sometimes health problems, whether it's high blood pressure or not eating properly, or whether it's family pressures, or whether it's the support systems that sometimes aren't there all the time, or whether you lose contact with friends or constituents — those are all the challenges that I know Carl faced. And it is with his gritty determination that he continued coming here looking for a fight, and deserving a fight, and wanting to fight for what he believed in.

And I think if you compile all those challenges that MLAs face, that at the end of the day it is really how you begin to treat each other which really begins to measure a person's compassion and certainly a person's humanity. And Carl, Mr. Speaker, showed his kindness, his compassion, and showed that he was a human being despite the differences and the sacrifices that he made. He was cordial, respectful, business-like and a great person.

I offer to the family, to the constituents, and to the many people touched by Carl, our sincere sympathy. We share your loss. But let the memories that we have of Carl allow us to celebrate his life. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to join with other members in passing on our condolences to the Kwiatkowski family. And I just thought, and I know some of the members have heard this story before, but I just wanted to tell you my experience of the first night that I met Carl. I believe it was Porcupine Plain or in some community out there, and at the time he was president for the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

And just before the meeting started, or the function that we were attending started, I had gone to the washroom and when I left the washroom, not knowing that anyone was in there, I flipped the light off — being, you know, very concerned about saving energy and stuff like that. And there was this beller out of one of the cubicles in the washroom, and unbeknown to me there was Carl Kwiatkowski who I had never met in my life. And it was a sight to behold, Mr. Speaker, because I flipped the light back on and this guy comes out of the cubicle, pants down around his knees, in sheer shock because he was scared of the dark.

And that was a lasting impression that I will never forget in all my days. And that, Mr. Speaker, was the start of a great friendship. He never forgot me from that point on and I never forgot him, all of him.

Mr. Speaker, the last week before Carl's death we had the good fortune of having Carl stay with us for a couple of days. And in hindsight, you know, you look back and try and find in your mind something that you should have picked up on, and there was nothing there. And hindsight's 20/20, but we could find nothing.

Carl touched, everywhere he went, he touched someone. I think in the building here is a prime example. You talk to people all

over the legislature, people that we don't see that often, and they'll say, oh Carl stopped in and talked to me on numerous occasions. Carl was the kind of person that cared for everyone everywhere he went and had to talk to everyone everywhere he went.

Carl and I spent an awful lot of time together, and many of you in this building will know because at many times during the day when session was on, just for something to do, we would go out and stand on the step and get some fresh air.

Carl's future was very bright and it's so sad that he . . . it was cut short. Carl had told many of us that his dream since he was a little boy was to be an elected representative in the province of Saskatchewan, and who knows where that could have led him to in the future. He was an excellent representative for the people of Carrot River Valley. I've got to know many of them up there — Carol Stewart is president now and her husband and many others up there thought the world of Carl. And I know they're going to be . . . just a tremendous loss with Carl not there as a representative.

The member for Athabasca, I thought, touched on some important points too, Mr. Speaker. I think the public, a good part of the time, thinks that being an MLA is very colourful and rewarding — and for the most part, it is.

But there's another side to being an elected official. Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of stress as you know and everyone in this fine legislature knows. The stresses that can add up after a long day and after long sessions and even when we're not in session, when the people sometimes call you at 6:30 in the morning and say, I thought I might not be able to get a hold of you so I thought I'd call you early. And quite often that can be 7 o'clock on Sunday morning, and these calls can go on any hours of the day. And I know it's our job, and I know we're paid well for our job, but it's things that add to those stresses, Mr. Speaker, as you're well aware.

There's also a loneliness that goes with this job. And I know especially with the rural people, but even the ones that live in Saskatoon and that and places away from Regina, we spend hours and hours on the road. In Carl's case, a one-way trip to Regina was about three-and-a-half hours — round trip, seven hours. That's time that you spend all by yourself many days of the week. How many times did . . . In Carl's case and all of our cases that we would have to drive out to our constituency to a meeting and back in at night, and it was very lonely because usually you're all by yourself.

Many of the days of the year when other people finish their job at 5 or even if they're on shift work, get to go home after work. Mr. Speaker, we're away for many of those days and days in a row, especially when session's on right now. And it can be tremendously hard on family life and hard on our families. And I think in many of our past experiences it's shown, whether it ends up in divorce or whatever. But it is definitely hard on our families.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't know what caught . . . cut Carl's life short and I don't think any of us ever will. But one thing I do know is his passing has made a big hole in my life and I've lost a very good friend. So I want to join with every one of you in

passing on my thoughts and best wishes to Leona and Carla and Krystal and Tyrrell, and tell them that we share with them that we will very dearly miss Carl Kwiatkowski.

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I count it as a privilege to be able to participate in this tribute this afternoon.

I will remember a man who was outgoing and friendly; who treated everyone with respect and warmth, whether they were prominent or average, whether they were political friend or foe. I knew Carl prior to our entering politics and I liked him, as did almost everyone who knew him. His interest in people was genuine and shone through. And of course, as members have alluded, he and I shared a dislike of heckling and catcalls in this Assembly.

His death was a shock to me as it was to all members of this House. His death reminds us that politics is a difficult profession — difficult not only for those of us who have chosen it, but also for our families who in most cases did not choose to have a family member in public life.

His death reminds us that while we practise a profession that requires an ever-ready smile, the appearance of never letting things get to us, and a hiding of any hint of weakness or self-doubt, the truth is that we are as vulnerable as members of any other occupation group. His death reminds us that we are always wrong to presume to know what is in another person's mind. The truth is, we do not.

(17:30)

In 18th century England, it was, I understand, the custom to ring the church bell when there was a death. And as the member for Swift Current pointed out this afternoon, the death of any person reminds all of us of our own mortality. But this one particularly so to me.

And it was the poet John Dunn who wrote a poem on our connectedness to all life and on our loss when any life is snuffed out. And he wrote the immortal words which ended with the line:

(Send not to know) . . . for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee.

And those lines came to me particularly when I learned of Carl's death because this, more than most deaths, reminded me of our shared vulnerability and our shared mortality.

I will miss him as I know will all members of this House.

Mr. Harper: — Mr. Speaker, I first met Carl, like many of my colleagues, when he first came to this legislature after the 1999 election. And Carl quite frankly quickly stood out in this House as a very capable member and obviously a member who cared very much about representing his constituents in the best way possible.

And it was during that first sitting of the legislature that I have my most, clearest memories of Carl. And it was in one of the early question periods when he got up and I believe he was questioning the government on their policy in regards to coyote

hunting. And I think it was myself or perhaps one of my colleagues let out a little bit of a coyote howl. And I must admit, Mr. Speaker, I took the opportunity to howl at Carl every opportunity I got the rest of that session. And he later came about by the nickname of Coyote Carl and I may have had some small part to do with that.

But I think that was the beginning of my appreciation for Carl because he took that howling, and the heckling, and the catcalls in the way that . . . in the fashion that they were meant, with good humour.

And it was during that same, short, December session that Carl and I discovered that we both shared in the need to step outside this legislature two or three times a day to do a quality check of the fresh air out there. And it was during one of these fresh air checks that we also discovered that we shared something else very much in common which is not maybe plentiful in Saskatchewan. There's probably not that many of us that share a common commitment as a lifelong fan of the National Hockey League Montreal Canadiens.

And I remember when we first discovered this and we were discussing the fortunes of the team — quite frankly we preferred to discuss their past fortunes much more than their present ones — but it was during that discussion that Carl disappeared and quickly went off to his office and retrieved a pair of handmade leather gloves that had the Canadian team's insignia beaded on them. And he was very, very — and rightfully so — very, very proud of those gloves, and I was envious.

But it was probably in September of 2001 on a trip to Halifax to attend the annual conference of the Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees that I got to know Carl the best, because during that time we spent much of our free time together, and we had many long, frank, and earnest discussions. And although we didn't always agree on things, I did gain the deepest respect for Carl.

And after that Carl and I would often meet when he was here in Regina on legislative business and doing his MLA work. We would often meet for breakfast and we would carry out some very good discussions, and very friendly chit-chat and chatter. And we did stay in touch on a regular basis.

And, Mr. Speaker, I was happy to have had the chance to get to know Carl, although for a short time. Carl was an honest, hardworking, principled, and a very caring person. In other words, Mr. Speaker, simply put, he was an all-around nice guy. And I am proud to say that Carl was a friend of mine, and I, like many others, do miss him.

I want to offer my condolences to his friends and his family.

Mr. Kasperski: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my distinct pleasure and honour to stand with fellow colleagues as well and remember our good friend, Carl Kwiatkowski.

Carl and I first met back in the late 1980s when I was working as an economic development consultant in those days, and I was working on an economic development project up in Porcupine Plain and Carl was mayor at that time. And it was a pleasure to

have met him then and it was a real pleasure to renew acquaintances when I . . . during my first period that I was elected when Carl was with SARC and used to come as part of that body when they came here to the legislature. And I was certainly very, very happy to be reacquainted with him in 1999 after he was elected to this legislature.

As many of you know, I share a great passion for history and genealogy, and certainly of members of this legislature and of people of Saskatchewan. And it didn't take me long to remind Carl that there were three of us of Polish background at that time in this new legislature that was elected in 1999. The member from Melville who was . . . shortly became Speaker and myself were the eighth and ninth members of Polish background elected to this legislature. And then Carl who was the 10th MLA of Polish background elected to the legislature.

And so we had a lot of chance to talk a little bit about that and Carl certainly shared my interest and passion to the extent that about a year later he brought me this file here which I've been working on. It's the copies of all their family documents for Carl's grandfather and family when they emigrated to Poland . . . from Poland to Canada.

And we found out at that time, or I found out, that we had a lot in common. Carl's ancestral village is a village called Liszkowice which is about 35 kilometres from our ancestral village of Buczacz.

And when you're doing Polish and Ukrainian genealogy you have to be very careful. You know in this area that we talked about, Galicia, there's many villages that have the same name. For instance our village was Trybuchowce. Well there's three Trybuchowces so you've got to make sure you've got the right one. Well Liszkowice, there was four or five Liszkowices.

And Carl had tracked down one, but it was the wrong one, and I had had a chance to talk to him not long ago and I pointed out that I had managed to track down the right one for him. And we were looking forward to getting together here sometime this session to go over this information. So it is with a great deal of sadness that I must say that I won't be able to do it with him. But it's certainly information that I will be passing on to his members of his family.

As I said, colleagues, Carl was of Polish background. The word or the name Kwiatkowski, kwiat in Polish is flower, kwiaty is flowers plural. And although Carl would be a little young to be considered a flower child—like I could have been back in the '60s—certainly we would all have to agree that he was very flowery in his speeches, in his talks.

As an hon. member from Regina Northeast has pointed out, who could ever forget the talk on the coyotes? I recall— to show what a good sport Carl was—the member for Regina Victoria every second year has a constituency fundraiser called Prime Time Politics and where a lot of people and a lot of things and a lot of politics get lampooned.

Well Carl came to this event two years ago, I think it was, and did his coyote question at this what was an NDP constituency event. And I must say everybody, everybody there just really enjoyed that. And it just showed what a great sport Carl was.

More seriously though, I do recall, I think it was Carl's first term here, who can ever forget his . . . the member's statement that he made which affected me very, very much. Carl made a very, very powerful member's statement on the evils of racism as I recall in his first session here. And that moved me very, very much and it was something that I will never forget.

And I actually . . . I was trying to do it today and I didn't have a chance—I was going to go pull it out of *Hansard*—but it's just something . . . I will pull it out one day and pass it around to people. But Carl could be a very, very, very serious and motivated person and that member speech he gave on the evils of racism that day was very, very powerful.

So with that I just want to join with all of my other colleagues here to honour Carl and, if you don't mind, I think it might not be totally inappropriate to maybe say a couple sentences in the language of my grandfather and Carl's grandfather and the member from Melville's father, and I'd just like to say in Polish, Carl Kwiatkowski . . .

(The hon. member spoke for a time in Polish.)

The last part there just said that I plan to finish off this work that I've been doing, the research on the members of Polish background, and I'll dedicate this study in the memory of our good colleague, Carl Kwiatkowski.

And I would like to add to Carl's family again my personal condolences. Thank you.

Ms. Lorjé:— Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Other members have referred today to just how difficult this day of condolences is for members of the Legislative Assembly and have referred to how doubly difficult it is when someone that we have served with in this current session passes away in an untimely and almost incomprehensible fashion.

I want to start out my condolences by first of all extending my condolences to the members of the opposition and also to the members on the government side. I have noticed as various members have been speaking, that many of us in this Assembly have had difficulty controlling our tears, and I think that it's because we move a bit beyond being family in this Assembly.

We often use the metaphor family, but really what we are is a very tight-knit community. Indeed the 58 members who are elected at the beginning of a session really in many ways almost are the whole population of many small towns in Saskatchewan. And we get to know each other in a very peculiar, very intense, very passionate fashion as we debate, as we have our differences of ideology, as we discover our similarities, our shared pasts, our shared futures and dreams.

So I do want to pass on condolences very directly to all members in this Legislative Assembly and most particularly to the members of the opposition who of course knew Carl more than we in the government side did simply by virtue of your many caucus meetings and all the travelling that you would do together. But all of us I think shared a common bond of friendship and of respect for Carl.

When he was first elected and walked in that door, you know

big, tall, cool-looking dude with his funny moustache and this very, very carefully coiffed hair, he had an impact on all of us almost immediately. He was full of hope, full of dignity, full of integrity, and extremely stubborn. And when he said he wasn't going to heckle, he followed through on it. And I know that the member for Kelvington-Wadena, being fair and strictly honest, said he lost his bet, but I don't believe he did because he just slipped just ever so slightly and we all of us have to cut some slack for ourselves in this Assembly. So I think he won his bet that he was not going to heckle during the session.

I also found that Carl was extremely courteous. During my time as minister of Environment, Carl, as the Environment critic, could have done the easy thing and could have sprung on me the issue of the day while we were sitting here in the Assembly. Instead Carl always went out of his way to give me a heads-up, to make sure I wasn't blindsided and I did know the issue that he was going to raise.

(17:45)

Carl always asked genuine questions and he was genuinely interested in the answer. And I think in that respect he was an incredible role model for all of us for what question period could and should be, and often is but unfortunately sometimes is not. Sometimes, like any community, we get into petty bickering; we forget that we are here to serve for the long-term interests of the people of Saskatchewan and we decide that we're going to go for the quick, easy point.

Carl didn't do that. Carl always kept his eye on the future and in that respect I think he was a mentor to all of us — those of us who had served three terms, four or five terms, and those of us who have only served one or two terms.

I was very fortunate to attend an institute in Madison, Wisconsin with Carl. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association had decided to have a much more direct bilateral relationship with the midwest conference of legislators in the United States and we were able to send two legislators to the Bowhay Institute for Leadership Development in Madison, Wisconsin. And so I spent a full week with Carl.

That was probably one of the more interesting weeks in my life, because Carl was always on task but he was also very much focused on certain things that were extremely important to him.

In Madison we had marvellous meals in this brand new facility that had just been opened. We were the first conference to be there. And I said to Carl one day, you never come down for breakfast and they have such a wide assortment of food and everything, and it's just a marvellous thing — you should come down for breakfast. He said, well Pat, I can't. And I said, why, are you dieting or do you not eat breakfast? What is it? He said well, don't laugh, but I get up at 6 o'clock every morning. And I said well, good, that should give you lots of time to get down to the 8 o'clock breakfast. He said well no, it doesn't because it takes me that long to get ready. And I said, Carl, for heaven sakes, why would it take you so long? You're not a woman; you don't have to put on makeup or anything. What takes you so long? And he said, well actually it takes me that long because I have to make sure that my moustache is combed just properly and that every hair is in place. And that was Carl — totally

focused on details and always making sure that everything was perfect. He was a perfectionist.

At the end of that conference — which was a lot of work I must say — we had approximately three hours to go shopping. And I thought well, good; this is my chance to kind of have a little bit of time to myself and see Madison. Carl insisted that I had to come shopping with him.

Now this is very unusual. I don't know how many men in this Assembly would want to go shopping but — and would ask that one of their colleagues come along shopping with them — but Carl insisted he had to go shopping. And not only did he have to go shopping just anywhere, but he had to go into every store and he looked at everything that there was, and he was getting more and more frustrated.

And I thought well, maybe it's me because some men don't like shopping with women. And I said, well am I doing something wrong, Carl? He said, no, no, no; I am looking for the perfect gifts. And I said well, who are you looking for gifts for? Maybe I can help you. He said, I have to get gifts for Leona and Carla and Krystal and Tyrrell.

Because you see for Carl I think there probably was nothing more important to him in his life than his family. Sure, politics was incredibly important to Carl, but really his family was the total fulcrum of his existence.

And so he insisted that we had to go to all the stores so he could find just the most perfect gift. Finally in frustration he settled on T-shirts, sweatshirts, for all the family because he wanted to have something that had the souvenir of Madison, Wisconsin. And I'm not a sports fan so I'm sorry, I can't remember the name of the football team that's there. Oh it's the . . . Is it the Green Bay Packers or something like that? Anyway he had to have souvenirs of the Madison people . . . the Madison football players.

So we finally ended up buying all these T-shirts. And he's holding them out and trying to decide if they're the right size and picking out people, shoppers, to say well, Leona's about that size and, you know, Tyrrell, well he's young yet and he's sort of like that young lad over there, and so forth. We bought these T-shirts or sweatshirts rather, walked out, and Carl was carrying a huge shopping bag of course by this time because he had his presents for his family.

And we walked out and the first thing we saw was an ice cream shop and the ice cream shop name was Chocolate Coyote. The member for Regina northwest has already referred to the coyote catcalls that Carl suffered with such good nature in this Assembly. Carl very kindly agreed to let me take a photograph of him in front of the Chocolate Coyote ice cream shop. And Carl was carrying in that picture the shopping bag with gifts for his family.

I would like to table this photo with you, Mr. Speaker, and hope that when the *Hansard* proceedings of today's motion is transmitted to his family that you would include this photo that very definitely speaks to happier times for Carl and his family — times before he, like all of us in this Assembly, succumbed to the long hours, the lonely life, the times that we do not ask

for sympathy because we don't . . . we asked for this job. But we always do have the sacrifices we make. We suffer in silence mostly and we give to our families and to our community of legislators here in this building and, more importantly, to the bigger, broader, beautiful community of the people of Saskatchewan.

So I would like to express my condolences to all of the MLAs here in the Assembly and most particularly to Carl's family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Goulet: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I too would rise to pay honour and respect to Carl Kwiatkowski, MLA. I'd like to start by giving the condolences to the family, the friends, all the people in the House, and everyone who knew Carl Kwiatkowski.

Many members have stated that he was a very skilled person. As I watched him come into the House, I have watched many MLAs over the past, you know, over 16 years, you know, come into this House. And I was indeed very impressed with this person. As I come into the House I knew not only his meticulous nature and his skills, not only in regards to the serious nature of the debate, but also in the light humour that is demanded of us as we deal, you know, with the issues of this province and our constituencies.

But there was a special something about indeed Carl. Many people have talked about many aspects of Carl. One of the things that struck me about Carl was his sensitivity, what you would call the humanitarian side of people. It was sensitivity not only to people within the realms of the legislature, but you saw that in the many walks of life from the different backgrounds of people. You saw that in his work with people on disabilities and the tremendous compassion that he had in that regard.

But I also wanted to say this, you know, as an Aboriginal person, that when you look at the issue of racism and the fact that this person was a strong fighter against racism, he proved it to me time and again in this House. I remember the time when he came into this House and he did that member's statement and there was racism against, you know, the aspect of somebody with a eastern European origin. And he made his commentary and he made his statement in the House.

I was listening and I looked up to him and, you know, I gave him a nod, you know, of approval on his comment. And after he was finished, I stood up in the House and I looked at him and I walked right across. And I went over and I shook his hand. And I said that was well done. You know, I said I really appreciate what you did.

After that he was new in the legislature and we had many discussions, you know, about my own experiences. You know, I had talked to him about, you know, the many debates including the Meech Lake debate in the House when there was three of us MLAs that voted against Meech Lake and everybody voted for Meech Lake, and I had become one of the members to vote against Meech Lake in the House. And it was not long after that when we were having one of those debates in the House and it came to be on the issue of The Métis Act.

On the issue of The Métis Act, in the question of The Métis Act, most of the members of course voted for The Métis Act and in that particular regard . . . And I remember when I was in Meech Lake, you know, all of our members voted for Meech Lake, except for three of us. And there was Carl standing up voting for The Métis Act along with another of his colleagues. And I thought, now there is a guy who lives up exactly to what he says.

You know, after I talked . . . we had talked but it was not on the basis of some generality on the humanitarian side. He had looked at that Métis Act and had turned it upside down and he had come to talk to me about the different clauses of it. He had done it through knowledge; he had done it through the compassionate route that he had. And I learned to respect, you know, this MLA who had made this first speech that I heard of before, you know, in dealing with the issue of racism.

And I knew the genuine nature, you know, that he felt in regards to the issue of inequality here of all peoples. So I stand in this legislature, you know, with all my colleagues and many other people who have learned to respect such a man and to say that this indeed was not only a skilled man, he was not only a good man, he was a compassionate man — somebody that we can say we were proud to know in this House.

(18:00)

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to stand and join with colleagues on both sides of the House this afternoon in expressing our thoughts and feelings about the loss of a colleague that we all obviously thought a great deal about.

It seems very strange entering this session of the House, and not being able to look over to the Speaker's left and see Carl Kwiatkowski there, passionately attentive to what is going on, when his opportunity came to raise issues and questions or put his position and principles on the order paper to do that.

It's hard to think of this House without Carl as part of it. It will be adjustment for all of us from wherever we sit in this Assembly to not feel something's missing because Carl isn't there.

And, Mr. Speaker, we all shared today some of our glimpses in Carl's past, his great accomplishments. When I first came in contact with Carl in the Northeast of the province was through joint participation on a community committee. And over the years cross paths with Carl in the Northeast and could see his compassion and passion for people of disabilities, his commitment to the environment and recycling, his commitment to his community and to his family, were all things that were easy for any of us and all of us to see even if we met him, initially, quite casually.

And I wasn't aware of his interest and passion for politics really until 1997 when after eight of us decided to embark on a new adventure in politics and form the Saskatchewan Party, I received a phone call that night when I got home to Melfort, and it was Carl Kwiatkowski expressing his enthusiasm for the decision and his interest to be involved. Before that I had no idea that he had a political interest.

And since that time through '99 and afterwards, you got to know Carl much better, his passions, and all the strong points that you his colleagues have outlined, and some of his little quirks. I plead guilty to passing by his meticulous, spotless office with the door open and finding it irresistible not to walk over to the picture and just give it a little nudge out of square. And the next time you walked by it, it'd be right back where it was supposed to be. So I was one of the gremlins that made sure that Carl was always vertically, and horizontally, and organizationally challenged.

He was the kind of fellow that it not only seems impossible not to see him in this House, but to not see him on the steps of the legislature or in the rotunda, or in the corridors of this building, visiting with people. And it didn't matter at all to Carl, I mean, if it was his colleagues or people on our side of the House. He just loved people and he saw them for what they were — people who had jobs to do and were committed as equally as he to this province.

And it makes me sort of wonder that when you listen to what . . . the tributes that have been given today to Carl, if we don't have to think about what does it mean going forward. If all is we're going to do is remember Carl for what he was, then I think we somehow sell Carl's memory short. Carl should be an example and an inspiration for us. On both sides of the House people talked about that he was a mentor and a role model, somebody we all looked up to in our own way even though we took pleasure in laughing with him and teasing him and he, we in return.

And I know people of this profession are very often questioned as to why we would ever do this. A member opposite said we do it because we love this province and we're committed to it. And that's true. But we have to ask ourselves even further, how do we conduct ourselves in expressing that passion for this province?

And I think Carl was an example in many ways because sometimes we get too wrapped up into the passion and the debate of this place. And what we do is we forget that there are people on the other side of the issue who believe equally passionately and equally appropriately in their point of view. And we get into the slippery slope of diminishing each other as people, as part of that debate. And Carl didn't participate in it.

And I agree he shouldn't have had to cough up the 50 bucks. But it should be a lesson and an inspiration for us to make that differentiation. And while good-natured howling from the other side of the House or humorous catcalls that maybe are meant in good humour and good taste are probably not a problem, but we have to commit ourselves to not letting it ever get to the point where it diminishes each other as human beings.

I know very often the impression from the outside of how we conduct ourselves here is very different than what's going on in this last couple of hours in this House. But this is also real. It's also legitimate. And it's also something that we have to work towards authenticating, not in each other's minds, but in all of our attitudes to the way we approach the challenge of this place.

The second challenge that I think we have to take out of Carl's life is the challenge that many people mentioned today about

what this job and this profession does in our relationships to our families and to our friends and to the people back home.

And they're all different because each of our relationships and each of our points of family relationships are different. Some have young families. Some have grown families. Some have a closer environment and live closer and can be closer here.

But you know we shouldn't just think about, is there a life after politics. Surely there must be a life during politics. And that life should include our family and our friends in meaningful ways. And too often we think too much about the politics and not nearly enough about what the effect of decisions we make in exercising the politics of a decision is going to have on our families and friends. I think politics could be a family-friendly profession if we want it to be, if we choose it to be.

It's difficult and there are times, as members mentioned, when we're alone on the roads and travelling distances and all of those things are true, but surely we can find ways to make that more family friendly. Not just for ourselves individually but for ourselves — as the member opposite talked about — that we are also a family.

And so I would like to suggest in expressing my condolences on the loss of Carl — to his family and friends, to Leona and their children, and his parents — is to say that I believe we should commit ourselves to improving this place, to take Carl's life in example as a challenge to make this a better place in the way we deal with each other and with our families. I don't think Carl deserves any less.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, leave to move a motion of transmittal.

Leave granted.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Cannington:

That the resolutions just passed, together with a transcript of oral tributes to the memory of the deceased, be communicated to the bereaved families on behalf of this Assembly by Mr. Speaker.

I so move.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 18:11.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS	
PRESENTING PETITIONS	
Stewart	37
Brkich	37
Weekes	37
READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS	
Deputy Clerk	37
NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS	
Brkich	37
Wall	37
INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS	
Julé	37, 38
Crofford	37
Lautermilch	38
Serby	38
Hillson	38
Belanger	39
Harpauer	39
Higgins	39
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS	
Fifth Annual Saskatchewan Party Leader's Dinner	
Toth	39
Thank You to the People of Saskatoon Fairview Constituency	
Iwanchuk	39
Thank you to the People of Battleford-Cut Knife Constituency	
Lorenz	39
Congratulations to the Melville Millionaires Hockey Team	
Van Mulligen	40
Condolences to the Rob Sivell Family of Buena Vista	
Brkich	40
La Journée internationale de la Francophonie	
Kasperski	40
Anna Rathje Celebrates 105th Birthday	
Harpauer	41
ORAL QUESTIONS	
Support for Agriculture	
Hermanson	41
Serby	41
Crop Insurance Program	
Harpauer	42
Serby	42
Rural Business Telephone Rates	
Bjornerud	43
Serby	43
SaskTel Investments	
Wall	44
Sonntag	44
Treaty Land Entitlement Claims	
Julé	45
Serby	45
Calvert	45
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	
Saskatchewan Environment Drinking Water Compliance Report	
Belanger	46
Weekes	46
ORDERS OF THE DAY	
SPECIAL ORDER	
ADJOURNED DEBATES	
ADDRESS IN REPLY	
Hermanson	47
Wiberg	52

MOTIONS

Substitution of Member on Special Committee on Rules and Procedures

D'Autremont60

CONDOLENCES

Penner, John

Serby60

Wall62

Cline63

Lautermilch64

Trew65

Atkinson65

Kwiatkowski, Carl

Hermanson66

Serby67

Draude69

Belanger70

Bjornerud71

Hillson72

Harper72

Kasperski72

Lorjé73

Goulet75

Gantefoer75

Lautermilch (transmittal motion)76