



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

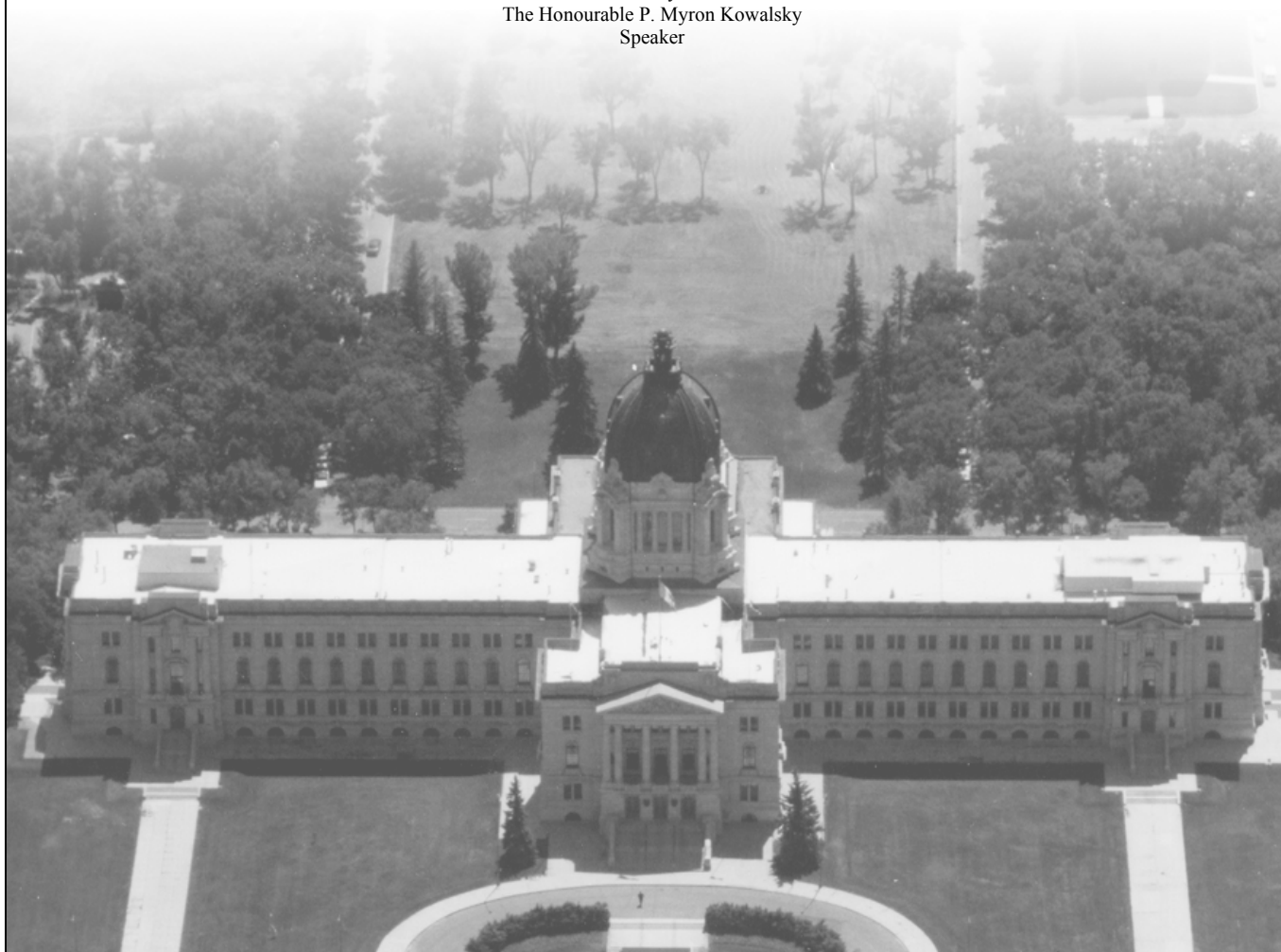
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of

The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. P. Myron Kowalsky
 Premier — Hon. Lorne Calvert
 Leader of the Opposition — Brad Wall

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Addley, Graham	NDP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Hon. Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Bakken, Brenda	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Beatty, Hon. Joan	NDP	Cumberland
Belanger, Hon. Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Borgerson, Lon	NDP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Calvert, Hon. Lorne	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Cline, Hon. Eric	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Crofford, Hon. Joanne	NDP	Regina Rosemont
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Dearborn, Jason	SP	Kindersley
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, Hon. David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Gantfoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
Hagel, Glenn	NDP	Moose Jaw North
Hamilton, Doreen	NDP	Regina Wascana Plains
Harpauer, Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Ben	SP	Martensville
Hermanson, Elwin	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Higgins, Hon. Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Huyghebaert, Yogi	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kerpan, Allan	SP	Carrot River Valley
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Kowalsky, Hon. P. Myron	NDP	Prince Albert Carlton
Krawetz, Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lautermilch, Eldon	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMorris, Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Ted	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Morgan, Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, Hon. John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Prebble, Hon. Peter	NDP	Saskatoon Greystone
Quennell, Hon. Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Serby, Hon. Clay	NDP	Yorkton
Sonntag, Hon. Maynard	NDP	Meadow Lake
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Hon. Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Thomson, Hon. Andrew	NDP	Regina South
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Van Mulligen, Hon. Harry	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
Wakefield, Milton	SP	Lloydminster
Wall, Brad	SP	Swift Current
Wartman, Hon. Mark	NDP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

The Assembly met at 13:30.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased today to rise on behalf of people from the Carragana, Porcupine area who are concerned about the future of their hospital. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause . . . take the necessary action to ensure that the Carragana Porcupine Hospital is not closed or further downsized.

The people that have signed this petition are from Porcupine Plain and Weekes, Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition signed by residents of the Rosetown-Elrose constituency regarding recent changes to the crop insurance program which resulted in large premium increases for insured farmers while overall coverage is reduced. Mr. Speaker, the prayer of the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to take all necessary actions to reverse the increase in crop insurance premiums and the reduction in coverage.

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

And the signatures on this petition are from the communities of Kyle, Beechy, and Macrorie, and I'm pleased to present this petition on their behalf.

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

Ms. Bakken: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition on behalf of constituents of Weyburn-Big Muddy constituency who are very concerned about the deplorable state of Highway No. 35 south of Weyburn. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to make the necessary repairs to Highway 35 north from the United States border in order to prevent injury or loss of life and to prevent the loss of economic opportunity in the area.

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

And the petition is signed by residents of Weyburn, Saskatoon, Halbrite, and Colgate.

I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with a petition from citizens in my constituency that are extremely concerned about the prospects of closing long-term care beds. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that the Lafleche & District Health Centre is not closed or further downsized.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by the good citizens of Lafleche and Ferland.

I so present.

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

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the Assembly today to bring forth a petition signed by citizens of my constituency and of Saskatchewan that are concerned with the government's handling of the Crown land leases. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to take the necessary steps to ensure current Crown land lessees maintain their first option to renew those leases.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatures on this petition are from Spiritwood and Leoville.

I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Arm River-Watrous.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition here with citizens opposed to possible reductions or closures, services to Davidson, Imperial health centres.

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

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

Signed by the good citizens from Davidson. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition from constituents against the closure of Biggar's rural centre and Environment office. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to reverse the decision to close the rural service centre and Environment office in Biggar.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens of Biggar and district. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Kindersley.

Mr. Dearborn: — Oh, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today on behalf of residents of west central Saskatchewan concerned with education tax and school closures. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your hon. board may be pleased to stay the closure of Major School until such a time that there is a clear direction on taxation issues from the provincial government and all local efforts have been exhausted.

Mr. Speaker, this particular petition is signed by the good folks from Major, Saskatchewan; Kerrobert, Saskatchewan; Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Unity, Saskatchewan; Luseland, Saskatchewan; Cactus Lake, Saskatchewan; and Compeer, Alberta.

I so present.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and hereby read and received:

A petition concerning the Lafleche & District Health Care Centre, that it not be closed;

Another petition concerning the Porcupine Carragana Hospital, that it not be closed;

And addendums to previously tabled petitions, being sessional paper nos. 48, 65, 72, 115, and 128.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Clerk: — As Chair of the Private Members' Bills Committee, Mr. Yates presents the following report approving the petitions for private Bills. And it is hereby tabled.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Private Bills Committee.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this, the first report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills, now be concurred in.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member of Regina Dewdney that the first report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be now concurred in. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Motion agreed to.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

Ms. Bakken: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 32 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Highways and Transportation: what are the specific plans in the current fiscal year for repair of Highway 35 south of Weyburn to the US border? And what are the specific plans in the current fiscal year for repair of the airport road near the city of Weyburn?

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and, through you, to members of the Assembly some special guests that we have in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, with us this afternoon. They travelled in from Young, Saskatchewan, and are here to help us observe the day of mourning for workers killed or injured on the job.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that all members will welcome Gisele Camber and her children Mitchell, Justine, and Chantel. We're very pleased to have them here with us in this very important day, a day in which we recognize the contributions of so many people across Saskatchewan and especially those that are no longer able to be with us. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the Minister of Labour in welcoming the Camber family on this day of mourning. I would like to express on behalf of the official opposition our sincere condolences to the family on the loss of their loved one.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery is a group of 51 grade 6 and 7 students that have travelled to Regina from Buena Vista School in Saskatoon to observe the proceedings of the legislature and to visit the various educational facilities and attractions here in the city.

I want to welcome them along with their teachers, Lisa Dick and Stacey White, and their chaperone, Mr. Johnston.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. White has been bringing her students to the Legislative Assembly for some time. And one of the things that I've noted about Buena Vista students who've attended this Assembly, is that they ask outstanding questions when they have an opportunity to meet with their member of the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome the grade 6 and 7 students from Buena Vista School, and I would ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in thanking them for coming.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, through you to all the members of this House, somebody that probably needs little or no introduction.

Sitting in your gallery is Ralph Katzman, the former member from what I believe was called the Rosthern constituency. I have known Mr. Katzman for many years and worked with him in my practice as a lawyer in dealing with his constituent matters, and found him to be an incredibly hard-working and dedicated MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) for many years, and someone that I regard as a personal friend.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome Mr. Katzman and thank him for coming down today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government members of the Legislative Assembly, I too want to welcome Mr. Katzman to this Assembly. Some of us had the opportunity to serve with Mr. Katzman in this Assembly between 1986 and 1991.

Mr. Speaker, it is true that the former member from Rosthern has been very active, certainly in the member from Southeast's election campaign in finding him space and so on. But when he doesn't . . . when he's not busy doing his work, he sometimes attends to the Saskatoon Co-op 8th Street cafeteria to do coffee row with a group of senators that include my father.

And, Mr. Speaker, I understand that they have some extremely interesting debates and discussions. And for those who are

interested, you can attend coffee row at the Saskatoon Co-op any morning at 8 o'clock. Or you can go at 3 o'clock in the afternoon after they have had the opportunity to witness question period, both in the House of Commons and in the Saskatchewan legislature. And this is available to people from all political persuasions and they have a wonderful time discussing political life in this country and in this province.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Massey Place.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I think we just heard as an introduction, a description of the story of the immovable object and irresistible force, being Mr. Katzman and Mr. Atkinson.

But I rise to introduce to you and all members of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, someone who really needs no introduction. That of course is John Brockelbank, the former Speaker of this House who had a very distinguished career in the legislature over almost 25 years, I think.

And in fact when I was growing up in Saskatoon, Mr. Brockelbank was our member of the legislature. And some of my early political guidance was provided by Mr. Brockelbank and you can see what a fine job he really did.

But I do want to say also, I ended up representing parts of the city of Saskatoon that were represented by Mr. Brockelbank at different times. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Brockelbank is remembered still — well still known and active in the community — but remembered as a very good constituency MLA who not only listened to his constituents but acted on their concerns. And it is . . . he is a very tough act to follow. And I want to say that about Mr. Brockelbank, although I continue to try to do my best.

But with that, I'd like all members to join with me in welcoming Mr. Brockelbank to the legislature today. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to welcome, in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, Bernie Lalonde and his family from Victoire, Saskatchewan, which is in the Saskatchewan Rivers constituency.

(13:45)

And Bernie did a great deal of work for me in the '99 election in getting me elected in '99. And now with the boundary changes, he is in the Saskatchewan Rivers constituency. But I would like to welcome him and his family down to the Legislative Assembly today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Day of Mourning

Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, it has been 16 years since Nadine Hunt, who was then president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, asked me to introduce a private member's Bill to make April 28 a statutory Day of Mourning for people who were killed or injured on the job. I was proud to do that, Mr. Speaker, and prouder still that this Assembly passed the Bill unanimously, making Saskatchewan the first jurisdiction in all of Canada to observe this day. Today is recognized across the nation.

Mr. Speaker, April 28 was the day chosen because it was on this day 90 years ago that Canada's first workers' compensation Act was passed. April 28 is a day to share the grief of families who have lost a loved one, and it is also a time to renew our commitment to ensuring the safety of workers.

Mr. Speaker, it saddens me to note that since last year, 28 people have lost their lives on work-related injury or illness here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, everyone involved in the workplace is responsible for identifying and controlling health and safety hazards on the job, and it is our role, as members of this Assembly, to support workers' rights and safety through the legislative tools at our disposal.

On this Day of Mourning, Mr. Speaker, I ask this Assembly to recommit to keeping strong our occupational health and safety legislation and all other laws that regulate conditions in the workplace. For working people in our province, Mr. Speaker, we can do no less.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the member from Moose Jaw North in recognizing this Day of Mourning for those men and women who have lost their lives or were injured in the workplace.

In the last 12 months, 27 Saskatchewan workers died of job-related injuries or illness. I can only imagine, Mr. Speaker, the agony and despair a family must experience when a loved one will no longer return home because they were killed at their workplace. Some of us can relate to their sorrow since we have a colleague whose spouse lost a close friend and workmate in a tragic accident, Mr. Speaker. My sincere condolences go out to all the families who have lost a loved one this year.

Mr. Speaker, I call on all my colleagues in this Legislative Assembly to work together to ensure that those agencies of government responsible for workplace safety have the necessary resources to do their jobs. We must promote a safe and healthy workplace through education, training, inspections, and enforcement of workplace safety standards.

Mr. Speaker, even one workplace death is one too many, and

injuries must be prevented. I sadly note that there were 27 deaths this year and 20 the year previous. We must do better, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Kindersley.

Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Appointment

Mr. Dearborn: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today to applaud the achievements of a member of the Kindersley constituency, Mr. Terry Baker. Terry has recently been appointed the president and chairman of the board for the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. And he began as a delegate in 1998, and since 2001 he served as a director.

Terry, along with his wife Nancy, operate a grain farm as well as a 300-head cow-calf livestock operation in the Denzil area. He's been very active in his community there. Terry's been the Chair of the Denzil local school board, sat on the Board of Directors of the Denzil Credit Union, is involved with the St. John's United Church, and maintains membership with the Saskatchewan beef marketing directors board.

Terry attended the University of Saskatchewan where he received his B.Sc. in civil engineering. As well, he attended graduate studies in environmental engineering. Along with this, he's taken his Canadian securities course and the Canadians futures exams.

With the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool he currently serves as the chairman of the Executive Management Committee and is a member of the nominated/corporate governance, Strategic and Business Planning, and Member Relations/Communications committees. And he's represented the Pool as a director for Bear Hills Pork Producers Ltd. and Manitou Hog Enterprises Ltd.

As well, Mr. Speaker, many returning members of this House will be familiar with Terry's and Nancy's youngest son, Cam, who served in the legislative internship program here just last year. So I'd ask all members to please join me in applauding Mr. Baker for this important appointment.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

Arts Education Celebration

Mr. Borgerson: — Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the privilege of participating in the arts education celebration in the Cumberland Gallery here in the Legislative Building. It was a great celebration involving students, parents, teachers, and grandparents — over 200 in all.

This event is a collaboration between Sask Learning and the Saskatchewan Society for Education through Art, SSEA, which has been a long-time partner in the development and support of the arts education curriculum.

This is the fourth year that Sask Learning and the SSEA have held an exhibit at the Legislative Building to celebrate student art. The exhibit is the result of SSEA asking teachers to submit student art to showcase. And the result is a beautiful and diverse display of artworks created by students from all over the province.

These pieces will remain on display in the Cumberland art gallery, as part of May is Art Education Month. And I invite all members to visit this remarkable exhibit.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to meet with students whose works are on display and present them with certificates in recognition of their achievement. It was a pleasure to see first-hand the creativity and artistic contribution to the province that these students have to offer.

I want to commend the SSEA and the arts education community for their dedication to arts education in Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing and celebrating these students and their contribution to culture in the province of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Arm River-Watrous.

Fire in Bladworth

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to talk about a tragedy that occurred last night in my home town of Bladworth. Approximately after midnight last night, a fire broke out in a local resident's house. Fortunately they, all the residents, managed to escape. Within minutes the house was fully emblazed, and with winds gusting to 70 to 80 kilometres last night, it was a very scary situation.

Within minutes, local residents, the whole town of Bladworth, had turned out to fight this fire to keep it basically from spreading. There were sparks that were flying over a quarter of a mile. With the help of the town . . . Shortly after that the volunteer Kenaston and Davidson fire departments both showed up. With the help of the local residents and the volunteer fire departments managed to contain the fire to that house and one occupied house there.

I would like to express sorrow to the loss . . . to the residents that lost the house there. But also I would like to give a hand to the people that turned out and fought that fire all night, and to the volunteer fire departments in the town of Davidson and Kenaston that came out, that could have prevented . . . and prevented a tragedy that could've been much worse. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Sutherland.

Commerce Students Win Competition

Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, since February, six commerce

students from the University of Saskatchewan have been competing in the 40th annual International Collegiate Business Strategy Competition hosted by the University of San Diego.

Mr. Speaker, the U of S (University of Saskatchewan) team was one of 27 involved in the competition. Each was tasked with managing a computer-simulated company called Pangea International, every week making decisions in areas such as international business strategy, finance, accounting, marketing, and sales force management that were forwarded to San Diego for assessment.

The last part of the competition took place in San Diego where teams were presented with international business scenarios for three consecutive days, and judged on how decisions were made and how they fared under pressure.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to report that Ryan Plewis, Lorraine Hurst, Paul de Leone, Stephanie Yang, Jon Herman, and Matt Herman of the U of S College of Commerce emerged the winners. And, Mr. Speaker, in addition to winning the overall competition, they were also declared winners of the strategic communications category for their production of an outstanding annual report, business plan, and presentation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in congratulating these students on this outstanding achievement and wishing them every success in their future business endeavours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Martensville.

Media Involvement

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that as members of this House we are all great watchers of television news and we read a lot of the newspapers. We look at them closely. And the next day we show up in the House and if we think our side's done fairly well we hold them up, and if not, we'll see the members on the NDP (New Democratic Party) scrunched down behind their desks.

At best I would believe that probably only about half of us ever really enjoy the newspaper on any particular day. But the last few days, Mr. Speaker, have been somewhat unusual. We've had the member from Regina Rosemont, Saskatoon Eastview, and even our province's AG (Attorney General) get involved in the newspapers trying to defend their situations, to explain their situations, to refute and debate. And at first that was rather amusing, but I think this is getting to be a bit of a concern — the NDP's desire to sort of manipulate our minds, our institutions, and the media.

Mr. Speaker, why the sudden interest in getting involved in the media from the NDP side? I believe the NDP has probably been caught in its own machinations, and they're just trying to get out of that one way or the other. But at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, I believe the old bard said it well, when we listen to what we've all read, and that is, "Me thinks thou dost protest too much."

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

Health Care Resources and Planning

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier.

On budget day, the NDP announced that the health care system is facing significant challenges in the province, that the Government of Saskatchewan would be closing a significant number of beds — acute care, some long-term care beds — as a result of the budget.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier is how much of this did the Premier know prior to the last provincial election?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, as we all know on budget day there was \$160 million more provided for health care, and that money is being used right across the system.

At the present time we've allocated money to all of the regional health authorities. They are looking at how that money is being used or should be used in their particular area. And we're working with them to make sure that the most appropriate use of the extra money is made.

We'll continue in that process and make sure that we provide good health care for all Saskatchewan people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, ever since the election campaign concluded, the Premier, the Minister of Finance, maybe even the Minister of Health who is answering questions here today, have been saying they didn't know how bad it was, notwithstanding the fact that they were the government prior to the election.

But, Mr. Speaker, even before the election was called, before it was called, the NDP were planning bed closures and service cuts. And the Premier didn't say a word about it through the whole election campaign. Mr. Speaker, the Premier withheld that information, that agenda for health care, from the people of the province.

Will the Premier, will he confirm that the NDP was planning these health care cuts and closures prior to the last election and didn't bother to tell the people of the province, but instead hid those facts from the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, the plan that we put forward in the spring put \$160 million more into health care at a time when the dollars were extremely tight.

We continue to look at what happens within the health care system. And in fact in the health care system in Saskatchewan, we can say that it's been undergoing change for 50 years. And what that means is that you . . . continually you are looking at where you're providing your services, whether you should move services. And in fact in the Leader of the Opposition's own hometown we're actually going to be planning to close the beds in the old hospital so we can put them in the new hospital.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — We continue to do things like that because that's what Saskatchewan people want us to do. They want us to plan carefully, use the dollars that we have efficiently, and make sure we provide good health care for them for the long term.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the people of Swift Current are grateful for the new hospital, but there will be fewer beds than there were previously. Particularly concerning for the residents of the Southwest, if beds in the smaller communities around Swift Current will also close, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party has obtained a Saskatchewan Health department document called regional health authority and Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, 2004-05 operational planning guidelines. The document orders the regional health authorities to prepare their operational budgets based on a range of expected funding levels. It also orders the health authorities to identify the impact on health services, specifically the number of acute care beds and long-term care beds that will be closed.

(14:00)

Mr. Speaker, according to the document, health authorities were ordered to submit their budget plans by September 25, 2003 — September 25, Mr. Speaker. That's before the election was called. Mr. Speaker, the Premier knew. He knew that health care cuts and closures were coming before he called the campaign. Why did he hide that stark fact from the people of the province in the last election?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, that question shows us exactly why those people opposite will never run government because, practically, what you have to do, on an ongoing basis, is continually to ask people for their forward plans.

As we set out last year, we were looking at two and maybe three year rolling amounts for what we were going to spend in health care. What happened last summer was that we asked all

of the health authorities to look at the kinds of things that they could do within a certain range of expenditures, and that's exactly what they did.

That information was provided to the department and, during October and November, those kinds of reports were looked at by the department. Eventually, they became part of the overall health plan which was presented in the budget process in late January, February, and into March. And we're continuing to work on all of that, but it's part of how we run the health system in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, health authorities were ordered to submit their budget plans by September 25, two weeks before the Premier called the election. Then, from October 9 to 17, right in the middle of the campaign, health authorities met to discuss their budget plans with officials from the Department of Health, the Department of Finance, and Executive Council — the Premier's office, Mr. Speaker, the Premier's office.

They met with officials from the Premier's office right in the middle of the election campaign to discuss their budget plans. Plans which apparently included acute care bed closures, long-term care bed closures, and health care facility conversions or closures.

Mr. Speaker, why won't the minister, why won't the Premier just admit it? They knew that they would be closing long-term care beds. They knew they would be closing acute care beds long before the election, but they chose to hide that from the people of the province in the last election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I think we see an example of a little bit of information being very dangerous. Because what we have here, Mr. Speaker, is a process that we announced a year ago or more that what we were going to do was make sure that the regional health authorities had their budgets looked at with a group from Finance, a group from the Executive Council, which is the Premier's department, the civil service side of the department, and from the Health officials. The goal in doing that was that we had one point six billion plus dollars that were being spent in the regional health authorities, and we wanted to have more accountability.

Mr. Speaker, that was part of our action plan in December, 2001. We're continuing on that plan to make sure that we have ongoing discussions about how the budgets are spent right across the province. That process continued during an election while we were on the campaign trail, and that's entirely appropriate because health care has to be provided during that time as well.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we've also received the appendices to this particular document. And, Mr. Speaker, the minister's words ring very, very hollow to those who will be listening to them in those communities that face closures under this NDP government's health care plan. Because in one of the appendices it's quite clear what health authorities are to do in terms of their submission to the Department of Health, Finance, and the Premier's office, Executive Council. There is a list of acute-care bed staff with operation long-term care beds under various capacities — health care authority, affiliate capacity — and there are blanks for the officials to fill in and submit to the government and submit to the government last fall, Mr. Speaker, before the election. That's when plans come in.

Yesterday on an open-line show the Premier, when asked by a gentleman from Herbert if his hospital was going to close, the Premier said, and I quote:

Number one, we're only now in the process of having the plans returned to government from the various health regions around the province.

Mr. Speaker, to this government, to this minister, why did they campaign, Mr. Speaker, why did they campaign without letting anybody know of these plans to close beds? Why did they hide this fact from the people of the province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, it looks as if the Leader of the Opposition should spend a little more time before the mirror before he gets up and puts on that hat. What we are doing, Mr. Speaker, is continuing to work and provide the health care. When you're doing that, you need to plan not just one year, two years, five years out.

What we did last year is we set out and said okay, if there was a 5 per cent increase in your budget, what would you get? We gave them a whole range of the options that were there. We need that information when we go into the budgeting process and look at how we allocate the money across the whole provincial government expenditures.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that the members of this government after looking at all of that decided that health care was clearly the number one priority. They allocated \$160 million extra to that area, and that allows us to work with this. Now the regional health authorities have the dollar amounts. They're working on what that effect is in their particular region, and we're working with them, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health. We just heard evidence that the NDP has been planning to close acute-care beds and long-term facilities since before last fall's provincial election. And the blame for this devastating attack on health care in Saskatchewan can be laid right at the feet of this NDP

government.

Mr. Speaker, between 1991 and 1996, the NDP's plan closed hospitals, fired nurses, and cut the nurse training spots in half. As a result there are more than 200 vacant nursing positions in the province today.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister admit that the health care cuts made by his NDP government have resulted in massive shortages of nurses? And now a new plan by the NDP to close even more acute care beds is going to make the longest waiting lists in Canada even longer.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the people of Saskatchewan are extremely relieved, pleased, and very positive about the kinds of plans that we on this side of the House have for health.

And the reason I say that is, that we know that the plan of the members opposite, which hasn't been revised in any kind of policy conference that I've heard about, was to freeze the funding for health, and go and look and see if they can audit all over the place and find money to do some things that they're talking about.

That's not what people wanted; they wanted careful planning. They wanted people across the province to work at sorting out how we can do this. We're going to continue to do that.

As well, Mr. Speaker, we have our bursary programs. We have increased the numbers of seats for educating nurses. We have brought in appropriate contracts for providing for the health care providers throughout the province. And, Mr. Speaker, we're working very diligently on the whole health human resource issue, and I'm pleased to say that it's working. There are many more people working in this whole area and we have to continue to make sure we have the health care that we need.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in 1992 more than 500 students graduated from nursing programs in Saskatchewan. Then the NDP closed 52 hospitals and started firing nurses. In 1996 the NDP cut the nurse training seats in half. By 1999 the number of nurses graduating in Saskatchewan had fallen to just 115.

And today, Mr. Speaker, the minister is trying to cope with the devastation he's created in the nurse education program in Saskatchewan. And now they're planning to cut more beds again, repeat the same mistakes of the past, which will again result in displacing nurses in Saskatchewan.

Will the minister recognize and admit that his plans are going to chase out more nurses from this province?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has a theory that he has been working at for a number of years; in fact, I think it's about nine years actually. And what he is trying to show is that there's been some major challenges around the numbers of nurses. I don't disagree with that.

But he forgets to mention that, in Saskatchewan, we ended up with a program which has four-year nursing degrees and we have a time period when, sure, there were fewer graduates. But I'm pleased to say that in the year 2003, there were 233 graduates of the nursing program that were registered with the SRNA (Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association) in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that number is going to increase again this year and it will continue to increase as we have more of the graduates come through the four year program. This is a part of our overall plan to make sure that we have the appropriate workers doing the work within the system and we'll continue to do that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefer: — Mr. Speaker, the minister talks about a so-called health care plan. Well here's the plan. First, what they're going to do in their new plan is cancel construction of a new academic health sciences facility in Saskatoon for at least three years. Then, they're going to close even more acute care beds in Saskatchewan this year and that's going to result in nurses being displaced and being lost to the province.

Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order please, members. Order. Order. The member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefer: — Mr. Speaker, that's some plan. It seems obvious that the minister's new health care plan that won't work is the same plan as the old NDP plan that didn't work, Mr. Speaker.

Albert Einstein once said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different outcomes. Mr. Speaker, when will this government stop the insanity? When will they realize that this new plan is going to have the same devastating effect on Saskatchewan as the old plan did?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, we have been working with the people in the province. We've been working with the professionals who provide care in this province. We've been working with our educational institutions to make sure that we have the right opportunities for our young people to enter into the health care field.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased with the progress that we've made. We've got more things that we need to do, but this year we anticipate that we'll have 400 nursing students in the nursing education program. That's a great step forward, Mr. Speaker.

We are directing our bursaries, as I announced last week, towards those particular professions and job skills that we need within the health system and we're continuing to do that. We will continue to work with the people in the system. I ask the member opposite to get on board and help us build this province, not tear it to pieces.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

Surgical Waiting Lists

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Rick Hyatt is one of the people negatively affected by the decisions of the NDP government to reduce health care services in Saskatchewan. Rick is 45 years old and he needs both of his knees replaced, and he's needed this surgery since May of 2002 — that's almost two years ago. He still has no definite date for surgery.

I ask the Minister of Health to visualize a man in the prime of his life who cannot work because he needs a walker and a cane, and he is in a great deal of pain, and he is heavily medicated.

When can individuals like Rick Hyatt expect to get surgeries done under the NDP government's new health reform system with the government's plan to close even more acute care beds?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I obviously feel the concern of a individual and a family any time there's a problem. As I've said before, I encourage the members opposite to raise these cases with the appropriate authorities or with my office, so that we can deal with them there, and I will in fact, look at this particular case at that point.

But what I would say, Mr. Speaker, is that we are working very diligently with the orthopedic surgeons and with all of the surgeons on our Saskatchewan surgical registry and all the related tools that go with that.

We are leading the country in providing the information that we need to manage so that we can deal with the particular concerns that we have about some of the people who have waited a long time. But, Mr. Speaker, that's the way we need to solve this problem and work together, and if the member opposite will give me the information, like he normally does, then I would deal with it that way.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is also for the Minister of Health. Anne Pilkey of Assiniboia is waiting for back surgery. Anne had an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) in January of this year and that MRI showed an urgent need for back surgery. Anne was told by staff at the surgical registry that although she was on a priority list, she would still have to wait at least one year for this surgery — and I repeat, at least one year.

Mr. Speaker, specialists generally want another MRI done prior to surgery if it's a long time between the MRI and surgery, since the condition may have changed considerably.

(14:15)

To the minister: what plans does he have to address the gaps and poor coordination of services in our health care system so that diagnostics do not have to be repeated, creating longer waiting times for MRIs?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that question from the member opposite. In the budget this year we have put some specific money to get another MRI in Regina. That also includes money for training people and making sure that they're on there. But it also . . . the more important thing that it does is exactly what the member's asking, which is to have more staff working on the MRI in Regina and the two MRIs in Saskatoon so that those cases where the doctors say that they are . . . it's necessary for it go ahead, people can get their MRIs.

We're continuing to look at, though, the whole issue of diagnostic imaging and how we do the assessments. And we intend to use some of the good work that we've been able to do with the medical doctors to also look at the need for diagnostic imaging.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Doreen Gourlay of Regina has been waiting one and a half years for knee and hip surgery. To date there has been no date set for her surgery.

Mr. Speaker, Doreen Gourlay cannot walk because of her condition. In the year and a half she has been waiting, Doreen has been forced out of her home into a special care home. Her independence has been taken away. Mr. Speaker, she cannot walk and care for herself.

Mr. Speaker, I thought the NDP's plan was to keep seniors independent and in their homes as long as possible, but this is what's happening to seniors under the NDP's health care system.

Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health: how will the current nursing shortage that has backlogged surgeries help Doreen Gourlay get her surgery sooner so she can once again live independently?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would encourage that member as well, like he normally does, to provide this information to me beforehand so that we can resolve this without the necessity of a question in the legislature.

But what I would say, Mr. Speaker, is that we continue to work with the regional health authorities and with the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and there are some times where we have identified cases that are taking too long. And that's exactly what we want to find out because if you don't have the reports about some of the problems, you don't fix the problems.

And, Mr. Speaker, we know that the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Authority has been working on a number of the orthopedic cases related to some of the waits that are happening in this area and that they have been making sure that they allocate extra O.R. (operating room) time to deal with some of these things. We're going to continue to do that, and in fact in this budget this year we have allocated money to do that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Chisholm: — Mr. Speaker, decisions made by this NDP government to cut nursing education seats have led to overcrowded ERs (emergency room), more code burgundies, and the cancellation of surgeries. This untenable situation is costing people their lives.

Tony Osterman of Glaslyn recently had a heart attack, was rushed to Royal University Hospital, and needed a shunt. Mr. Osterman was prepped for surgery three times. And three times it was cancelled because of overcrowding of the ER. Mr. Osterman finally got his surgery but died shortly thereafter.

Mr. Speaker, some people's surgeries can't wait; and if they do, it can sometimes cost them their lives.

My question to the Minister of Health: what plans does the minister have to address the overcrowding in ERs that is causing surgeries to be cancelled three and four times?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, it's clearly unfortunate when there are deaths in the health care system, but there are many times that that does happen.

Mr. Speaker, what we are working with is all of the health authorities, with the doctors, with others, to look at the appropriate procedures. Some of the things that we have in this province that actually deal with the type of case that the member opposite has raised include the careful review of deaths when they do happen in circumstances where they may be preventable. And that is a very crucial part of the health care system.

What we have been now doing and what we have implemented in Saskatchewan is a Health Quality Council which will take the broader perspective and gather even more of this information so that we can have very detailed information about the challenges so that we can make some of the resource allocations and other changes that are needed in the system. We're going to continue to do that because we think Saskatchewan people want that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

National Water Supply Expansion Program

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the members opposite asked a question. They referred to the PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration). They were actually referring to the national water supply expansion program. And they were asking with regard to an agreement that is to be signed with the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, we have been, we have been working on this agreement now. And each province has a unique agreement with the federal government. Manitoba's agreement is different from what ours is. This is also quite unique in that the PFRA has actually been handling the issues of water, on farm water issues for decades.

And that is changing as we're now looking into provincial-federal agreements. And, Mr. Speaker, we will see this agreement move forward. We have provided significant dollars in the past, and those dollars will be available to our producers in this province just as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Estevan.

Surgical Waiting Lists

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of my constituents, Annie Ternes has been waiting one and a half years for knee surgery. She has now been told that she will have to wait another one and a half years. Mr. Speaker, Annie Ternes has waited so long her leg is bowed and needs to be broken in order to straighten it. The longer people wait, Mr. Speaker, the greater the complications, the pain, and the suffering.

Is this the best the NDP can do after 12 years of tinkering with the health care system? And what guarantees can the Minister of Health give to Saskatchewan people that the NDP's new health reforms will help people like Annie Ternes get her surgery?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, we are working for people like the person who was mentioned opposite. We're trying to make sure they get care in the most appropriate time and the most appropriate place and with access across the province. That's our goal. We continue to work at that. And we will work with the professionals; we'll work with the people who are running the system.

But also, Mr. Speaker, this is a question about how we provide the resources for health care in Canada. And on that basis, Mr. Speaker, we are working very hard, very strongly, to make sure that the national contribution to what happens to health care matches what we do here provincially and matches what individuals provide in the whole system. That is a crucial question for all Canadians. It's clearly going to be a major question in the federal election which is upcoming, and we are going to make sure that our strong Saskatchewan position for a publicly funded, publicly administered health care system wins the day.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Labour.

National Day of Mourning

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today is the National Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job. April 28 is a day to mourn and a day to remember the working men and women who have given their lives to build this province and this nation. Almost three workers a day die on the job across Canada each year, and more than a million working men and women are hurt on the job every year.

Mr. Speaker, even one death on the job is too many. Today our condolences and prayers are with every person and every family who has suffered the death of a loved one at work. We can never turn back time. We can never bring back those mothers or fathers, those sisters or brothers. But we can work to prevent other families from having to endure such anguish by renewing our efforts to reduce workplace injuries and deaths. And it's a day to renew our commitment to doing everything possible to reduce the terrible toll taken by workplace injuries and deaths.

Twenty-eight Saskatchewan workers have died within the last twelve months as a result of workplace accidents or illnesses, Mr. Speaker. And more than 30,000 more were injured. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to all who have experienced a workplace tragedy.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of my comments I know that the members opposite also would like to make some comments, and when all our statements are done I would ask that we observe a moment of silence in this House.

But first, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members please rise so we can read into the record the names of the 28 people who have died on the job this year.

Raymond Chowen, Regina
Dale Honig, Regina
Donald Gordon Williamson, Regina
Douglas McPherson, White City
Shirley Reynolds, Pilot Butte
Raymond Hay, Regina
Migay Kuhlman, Montmartre
Trevor Collier, Gull Lake
Kurt Deglau, Regina

Gary North, Moose Jaw
Michael Henderson, Elrose
Lester Neitz, Golden Prairie
Tony Reynders, Spiritwood
Malcolm Banting, Macrorie
James Orban, Pilot Butte
Walter Rusinek, Campbell River, British Columbia
Denes Krahn, Estevan
Ralph Geldart, Tisdale
Marvin Reeve, Regina
Adrian Wonsiak, Preeceville
James Knaus, Saskatoon
Dwayne Denouden, Estevan
Sheldon Curr, Blackfields, Alberta
David Camber, Young
William Hamilton, Regina
Stan Sheriff, Strathmore, Alberta
Paul Olesko, Asquith
Brenda Tippett, Saskatoon

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the opposition critic for Labour, the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would join with the Minister of Labour in commemorating this National Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job. This is a special day each year when we remember those who have lost their lives while earning a living and also those who were injured in the workplace.

In the last year over two dozen Saskatchewan workers have passed away due to workplace injury or illness; thousands more were injured. Thankfully most of these injuries will heal, Mr. Speaker, but some won't.

Mr. Speaker, a safe working environment is one of the most important things we can provide for the people of Saskatchewan. And we should point out that the vast majority of employers in Saskatchewan are concerned about the safety of their workers and do their utmost to uphold The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.

But there are times, Mr. Speaker, when the best rules and the best intentions aren't enough to prevent tragedy. And today we remember those who are hit by such tragedy. To all those families who have lost their lives on the job, we express our deepest sympathies. And to those who were injured, we pray for their recovery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to ask now, Mr. Speaker, at this time, that we all join with the Minister of Labour in observing a moment of silence.

The Speaker: — Would the members please rise.

The Assembly observed a moment of silence.

(14:30)

The Speaker: — Thank you very much.

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — Members, before orders of the day I would like to put on record that earlier today I tabled the Saskatchewan Children's Advocate 2003 Annual Report and that I hereby table the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Saskatchewan branch 35th Annual Report for the year 2003.

ORDERS OF THE DAY**WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased today to stand on behalf of the government and table a response to written question no. 236.

The Speaker: — A response to question 236 has been tabled. I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased on behalf of the government to stand today and convert for debates returnable questions no. 237 and 238.

The Speaker: — Questions 237 and 238 have been converted to orders for return (debatable). I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I'm extremely pleased to stand on behalf of the government and table a written response to question no. 239.

The Speaker: — A response to question 239 has been tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, in order to facilitate the work of the two policy fields, the Crown and Central Agency's field and the Economy Policy Committee, I would move that the House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion's carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker: — This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 14:33.

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Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

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Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation
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