



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

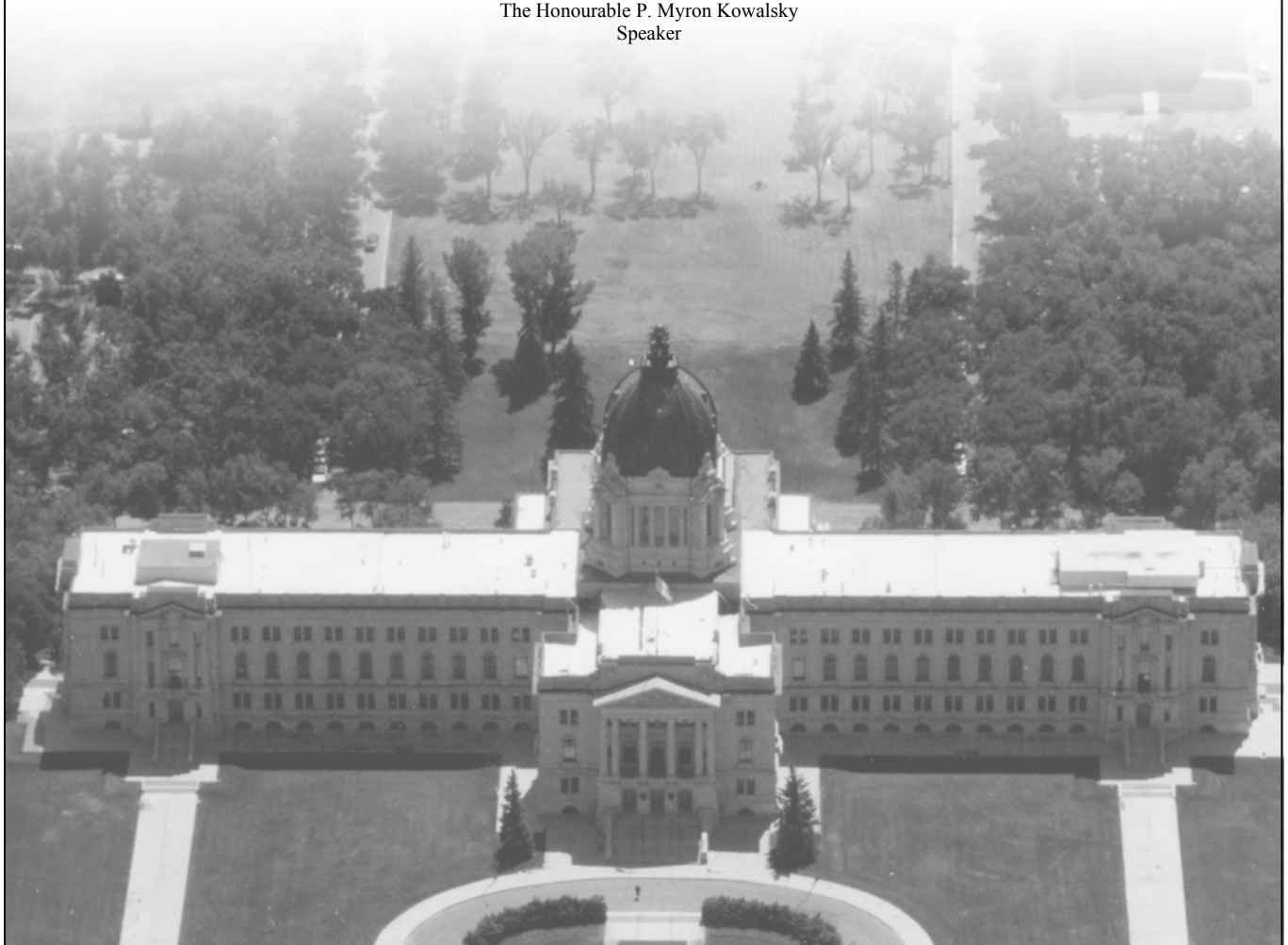
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**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 Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In view of a large community meeting held in the town of Climax last night, it gives me pleasure to present a petition on behalf of residents from that community as well as the community of Frontier. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary actions to ensure that the Border Health Centre in Climax remains a 24-hour facility.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

I so present, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to rise again today on behalf of people from my area who are concerned that there should be legislation that allows people who are involved in health care to bring forward any safety or quality of care issues.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to introduce and support whistle-blower legislation.

The people who have signed this petition are from Kylemore, Wadena, and Lintlaw.

I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition signed by citizens concerned with the possible downsizing or closure of the Craik Health Centre. And the prayer reads:

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 Craik Health Centre is not closed or further downsized.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by individuals all from the community of Craik.

I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition to present on behalf of the citizens around the Claybank Brick Plant. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to reconsider the decision to reduce funding to the Claybank Brick Plant.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by people from Avonlea and Briercrest.

I so present.

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 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 and Lake Alma.

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 the reductions of 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 the Davidson, Imperial health centres be maintained at the current level of service at a minimum of 24-hour acute care, emergency, and doctors' services available, as well as lab, public health, home care, and long-term care services available to users from the Davidson, Imperial areas and beyond.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens from Davidson, Liberty, Chamberlain, Saskatoon, and Craik.

I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition from constituents opposed to the closures and conversions of our health care services. 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 ensure the closures and conversions of our health facilities and services and long-term care beds not be the way the government attempts to solve our health care crisis.

Signed by the citizens of Asquith, Grandora, and Saskatoon.

I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Kindersley.

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again in the Assembly today to present a petition on behalf of residents of west central Saskatchewan concerned with the loss of ambulance service. And the prayer 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 Dodsland and Luseland ambulance services are not discontinued.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by residents of Luseland and Major.

I so present.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

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

A petition concerning the gravel portion of Highway No. 99, sessional paper 187;

Kelvindell Lodge, sessional paper 188;

Invermay Health Centre, sessional paper 189;

Kelvington Hospital, sessional paper no. 190;

And addendums to previously tabled petitions, being sessional paper no. 63, 96, 97, 146, 161, 167, 170, 171, 175, 180, and 182.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Committee on

Crown and Central Agencies.

Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies to report Bill No. 8, The Gas Inspection Amendment Act, 2004 without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration of this Bill. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted.

When shall this Bill be read a third time? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 8 — The Gas Inspection Amendment Act, 2004

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — Third reading of this Bill.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of committees.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies

Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies to report Bill No. 20, The Land Surveyors and Professional Surveyors Amendment Act without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister of Industry and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Industry and Resources has requested leave to waive consideration of Committee of the

Whole of this Bill 20. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. When shall this Bill be read a third time?

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 20 — The Land Surveyors and Professional Surveyors Amendment Act, 2004

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Industry and Resources that Bill 20 be now read a third time and passed under its title. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk — Third reading of this Bill.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on House Services

Clerk Assistant (Committees): — Mr. Gantefoer presents the third report of the Standing Committee on House Services which is hereby tabled.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Chair of the House Services Committee.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move, seconded by the member from Regina Dewdney, that the third report of the Standing Committee on House Services be now concurred in.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Deputy Chair of the Committee on House Services, the member for Melfort, seconded by the member for Regina Dewdney, that the third report of the Standing Committee on House Services 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 Arm River-Watrous.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 49 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Health: in the year 2004, did the administration, CEO, all vice-presidents, chief medical officers, etc., of Heartland Health Region receive any increase in salary, benefits, or other gratuities? If so, what were the increases?

Also while on my feet, I will submit similar questions for 2003 and 2002. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 49 ask the government the following question:

To the minister responsible for the Highway Traffic Board: for fiscal year 1999 to 2000, what was the total number of appeal applications made to the Highway Traffic Board? And of that number, how many were approved, how many were rejected, and how many of the approved applications resulted in a successful appeal?

And I have similar questions for 2000 and 2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003, 2003 and 2004.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition, the member from Swift Current.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly, a group that have gathered in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. They are child care providers, early childhood educators, and parents.

Mr. Speaker, joining us today — and I ask them to stand if they would when I introduce them — is Kathryn Cooper, the Normanview Child Care in Regina; Lana Olson, of Transcona Park Child Care in Regina; Gail Szautner, Children's Choice, Prince Albert; and Nona Laird and Susan Ryhg, from Family Child Care, Regina; Nonnie Nast, early childhood educator and parent; and, Mr. Speaker, Jenna Gelowitz and Charlene Mironuck, Child Care Centre Co-op in Regina.

Mr. Speaker, we're all grateful for the work that these ladies do in our province on behalf of the entire province in caring for children, and I'd ask all the members of the Assembly to join with me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you 23 public servants that are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. The public servants are part of a tour and day where they spend some time in the Legislative Assembly meeting with a member of the

opposition along with myself, Mr. Speaker.

The participants come from the following departments: Agriculture, Food and Rural Revitalization; Corrections and Public Safety; Culture, Youth and Recreation; Environment; Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs; Industry and Resources; Justice; Labour; and the Legislative Assembly.

I'd ask all members to welcome public servants, these public servants to the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Chisholm: — Mr. Speaker, it is my honour through you to also welcome our visitors from the public service of our province. I see that they have a full day of tours and meetings today and we welcome them to their Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature, a couple in your gallery. Bob Freidel is a citizen of our great neighbour to the south, the United States of America. He is a veteran of the Second World War, served as a veterinarian in private practice and then with the state of Wisconsin for a number of years, and I think we can all appreciate what an important role a veterinarian is in that state. He now winters in Florida but has spent a number of summers in Saskatoon and is interested in all matters Saskatchewan.

With him is his wife, Shirley Faye Freidel, who also happens to be my mother. And I hope that all members of the legislature will welcome both my stepfather and my mother to the legislature here today. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I'd like to introduce a group sitting in the east gallery. There's a group of 19 pretty sharp-looking students from the Vanguard Community School that are visiting with us today. And these students are grade 7, 8, and 9 students.

And, Mr. Speaker, they are accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Beth Reynolds and Mr. Gordon Clark. Also chaperones with the group is Arlene Deg and Esther Ruten and Mr. Dale Johnson.

And I would ask . . . I'll be meeting with them immediately after question period and I'm sure they'll have lots of questions after question period for me. So I'd ask, Mr. Speaker, that all members would join me in welcoming them to their legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(13:45)

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly 39 grade 10 students from the Melville Comprehensive high school and their teachers, Perry Ostapowich and Shannon Schick. And I ask all members to welcome them here today and hope they enjoy their tour of the legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to welcome the child care workers here today. We had a wonderful opportunity to meet them a short while ago and the education they provide to us in our meetings is always invaluable. And I'm really happy to see them here today and hope they enjoy their time in the House.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to introduce to you a woman seated in your gallery and maybe she can stand . . . she could stand up. Her name is Angela Kee. And she's a sessional researcher with us in this session.

And with her is also James Burton. Perhaps James could stand up as well. And he's our caucus communications, computer, Internet, all round sort of guy. He is also a member of the Regina Walsh Acres constituency and I'm very proud to have both of them here today. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Swift Current.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, with the indulgence of my colleagues, I missed an introduction of the child care providers and educators and parents that are joining us today in your gallery. I'd also like to introduce to the legislature Melanie Lightfoot, who's the board president of the Normanview Day Care. She is a Normanview Day Care parent as well as president. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to stand and introduce to you and through you, seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, 11 grade 7, 8, and 9 students from the Pasquia Hills Christian School at Carrot River, Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, they're accompanied today by their teacher, Mr. Gladwin Loewen and his wife Pauline Loewen, and chaperons David and Jeannie Isaac.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to note that these folks left Carrot River this morning at 5 a.m. to spend a day in Regina. And on

behalf of the legislature, I would like to wish them a good day here today and a safe trip home.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

Child Care Week in Saskatchewan

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is Child Care Week here in Saskatchewan, a week set aside to celebrate quality child care and our dedicated child care workers.

On any given day, thousands of Saskatchewan parents entrust the care and safety of their children to others. These trusted others may be called early childhood educators, day care providers, even babysitters. Whatever they choose to be called, they provide a service that has a tremendous impact on the health, safety, success, and happiness of our children now and into the future. Child care is a profession that is as challenging as it is rewarding. Our child care providers deserve all the thanks and recognition this government can give them.

This government has a plan to provide all Saskatchewan parents who work or go to school to have access in their community to high quality early learning and care services for their children. As part of this plan, this government is committed to opening 200 more child care spaces this year — the largest increase of spaces in the history of this province. This is part of the 1,200 spaces that will be opened over the next four years as part of the child care initiative.

Mr. Speaker, we're extremely pleased to recognize the child care workers and volunteers of this province and we're extremely proud to be part of a government that is working with them to ensure that our children are well cared for. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Wadena Licensed Practical Nurses Win 2004 Chapter Award

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many factors play a role in quality health care. One of the vital areas is qualified individuals who provide compassionate care to patients.

Recently one such group, the LPNs (licensed practical nurse) of Wadena Hospital, were recognized by their peers at the annual meeting of the Saskatchewan Association of Licensed Practical Nurses. This group was honoured with a 2004 Chapter Award which recognizes those members which demonstrate a significant interest in furthering their education and improving their competency in the workplace.

The Wadena chapter is involved not only in their community but also at the provincial level of the LPN organization. They

are also active in bettering their community and their workplace. This group of 15 LPNs actively promote health and healing independently and in partnership with other health care professionals and providers to individuals and families and groups in all areas of health care. They are a valuable addition to the health care professionals who labour to provide Wadena and area with quality care.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask this Assembly to join with me in congratulating and thanking Cyndi Gutek, Bobbi Flanders, Penny Doratti, Annette Thevenot, Marie Thom, Lisa Lupien, Glenys Harley, Donna Kulyna, Kim Norris, Loretta Kaminski, Christina Haskey, Darla Gallant, Shelley Berlinic, Tracy Mamer, and Bonnie Scrimbitt for their hard work and initiative in furthering their education and improving their competency in the workplace. Their community and patients are the beneficiaries.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Dewdney.

Public Servants Honoured

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan public servants are among the best in the world and are committed to providing excellent services and programs for the people of this province. And in many ways they contribute to the quality of our lives, Mr. Speaker.

Today the Premier announced the recipients of the Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Service. This year 21 individual employees or teams were nominated in the categories of innovation, quality of service, and leadership.

Mr. Speaker, this year's recipients in the category of Leadership are: Dennis Sherratt, from the Department of the Environment; the mineral exploration incentive program of Industry and Resources; and Action Swift Current, also of Industry and Resources.

The winners in the category of Innovation are the Aboriginal Employment Development Program of Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs; and, the Regina auto theft strategy of Justice, and Corrections and Public Safety.

This year's winners in the category of Quality Service is Ernestine Starr of Community Resources and Employment.

Mr. Speaker, these awards will be presented to recipients during the National Public Service Week in June.

And I'm sure all my colleagues will join me in recognizing this year's recipients and all public servants across the province for their hard work, dedication, and excellence in the field of serving those of us in the province of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

90th Anniversary of the Davidson Co-op

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House today to talk about the recent 90th anniversary celebration of the Davidson Co-op. On April 14 over 200 people attended this event, marking the actual date of incorporation back in 1914.

Mayor Jim Cross congratulated the co-op for its key role in the development of the Davidson district in the early years. He recalled they worked at the co-op delivering groceries with a black gelding named Prince. He said:

"I have a soft spot for the Co-op after working for the Co-op all those years . . . They've been part of our growing community for 90 years and without them we wouldn't be the success we are," Mayor Cross said.

Co-op manager, Peter Barry, said 2003 was a difficult year for the co-op with BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy), low grain prices, and loss of the Tempo franchise. Despite these challenges, Barry said that the co-op had a 2.1 increase in overall sales and did 8.9 per cent better in 2003.

Recently I received a letter from Mr. Barry expressing concern about the recent changes to the farm fuel tax rebate program restricting card-lock users to a rebate only on amounts purchased above 200 litres. Mr. Barry explained that this may severely reduce the annual sales of the card-lock fuel at their co-op station.

So it seems as if the present government is taking aim at the co-operative system of Saskatchewan.

I would ask all members join me in congratulating the Davidson Co-op on its 90th birthday. Thank you.

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

Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program Graduation Ceremonies

Mr. Borgerson: — Mr. Speaker, last Friday, May 21, I had the pleasure of attending the SUNTEP (Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program) Prince Albert graduation at the Performing Arts Centre in P.A. (Prince Albert).

Mr. Speaker, the first SUNTEP centres were opened in 1980 and 1981 in Regina, Saskatoon, and then Prince Albert. In the past 24 years, SUNTEP has graduated 692 Métis and First Nations teachers with degrees from the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan. These teachers are employed in schools all over this province, in rural, urban, reserve, and northern schools as well as in other provinces and other countries.

At a conservative estimate of 20 students in each of their classrooms, this means that the lives of nearly 14,000 students are touched each day by a SUNTEP teacher. Mr. Speaker, nearly half of those teachers are from the SUNTEP Prince Albert program which has earned widespread recognition for the quality of its program and the sense of community that

exists there with students who are rural and urban, from the north and south, Métis, Cree, Dene, and Dakota.

On Friday night, 26 graduates were honoured for completing their B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education) degrees, and a highlight of the evening was the SaskEnergy Share the Warmth Award which recognizes one graduate's contribution to community. This year's award went to Diana Smith.

Mr. Speaker, we congratulate the SUNTEP faculty for a job well done, the families of the graduates for their support and guidance, and the 2004 graduates from all three SUNTEP centres. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Child Care Week in Saskatchewan

Ms. Bakken: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, May 24 to 28 is Child Care Week in Saskatchewan. This week recognizes the importance of quality child care and the work of those who provide care for our children in private homes, daycare, schools, and other settings. Our children are our future and we need to ensure that all children receive the best possible care so that they can develop into confident, healthy adults that then become positive members of our communities. We must also remember the very important role that child care workers play in the care of our children.

These workers, whether they are babysitters, daycare employees, volunteers, or those providing training to early childhood development all work extremely hard for the betterment of Saskatchewan children. They help develop and shape the future of Saskatchewan by providing loving care, leadership, and a positive experience for our children on a daily basis.

This week is our opportunity to thank them for the excellent care they provide and for the contribution they make to our youngest citizens. Communities and child care groups are planning events and activities all across Saskatchewan to celebrate this important week. I would like all members of the Assembly to join with me in applauding the work of child care providers and the importance of child care in our province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Prestigious Scholarship Awarded to Judy Boychuk Duchscher

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A nursing instructor from Saskatoon has recently earned a prestigious scholarship to conduct research into how graduating nurses fit into their new job. Judy Boychuk Duchscher is a faculty member of the Nursing Education Program of Saskatchewan and is working toward her doctorate. She will receive \$105,000 over three years from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research

Council of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Boychuk Duchscher's research will focus on the successes and struggles of recent graduates as they integrate into new jobs as registered nurses in hospitals. She plans to sit down with these nurses in order to learn what it's like to practise as a new nurse in Saskatchewan hospitals today.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to teaching at SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) and the U of S (University of Saskatchewan), Ms. Boychuk Duchscher has been working on her Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy) through the University of Alberta as a flex student. She is also taking classes on-line at the University of Saskatchewan and through the University of Sydney in Australia.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure my colleagues will join me in acknowledging Ms. Boychuk Duchscher for delving into this important area of research and for her commitment to improving working conditions for nurses in the province. I congratulate her on winning this award and I wish her the best of luck in her continued studies.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Martensville.

Member of the Legislative Assembly Celebrates a Birthday

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there exists a special society as a subset of the MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) of this legislature known as the OWLS, standing for the order of wily legislative sexagenarians. It has two basic criteria: one is you must be an MLA and the other one is that you must be over 60. It would also be of passing interest to note that when a group of owls gets together they are called a parliament of owls, so it is very suitable.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we have the privilege of having one more individual join this auspicious group — the MLA from Wood River.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

Allocation of Federal Funding for Child Care

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this year's federal budget, which came down a week before our own provincial budget in Saskatchewan, provided an additional 2.3 million in federal funding for child care. At the time the provincial budget was released, this new money had yet to be allocated. In fact, the minister in charge said spending of this \$2.3 million would be determined through public consultations.

Mr. Speaker, a significant number of child care providers and organizations in the province have some concerns as to whether or not those consultations have taken place as thoroughly as they should have, but a fact sheet being sent out to those invited to some of the meetings that have occurred says that only

900,000 remains uncommitted.

So the question to the minister is this: what did happen to the additional \$1.4 million worth of federal funding for child care, and what is going to happen in terms of the consultation process moving forward on the remaining 900,000?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Community Resources and Employment.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First of all, there's actually 12.8 million that's uncommitted. There's a total of 32 million in the pool, of which 21.8 million was already committed through the commitment to the largest expansion of child care in the history of the province, when we added 1,200 new spaces over four years. Five hundred of those spaces were added last year. This year there's another 200 being added.

And that first amount of money, the 21.8 million, will sustain the existing centres that are started because you don't just fund them once. Once you set them up, they are funded over the long term. So the purpose of the consultation is to determine the allocation of the other \$12.8 million.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:00)

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I think the concern is — and I invite the minister to clarify — but I think the concern is that, notwithstanding additional federal dollars, the net amount from the province this year is not increasing. It's actually going down in terms of this 2.3 million in federal funding.

Mr. Speaker, between '96 and 2002 the current government did increase direct funding for licensed child care centres by \$500,000 annually — not insignificant, Mr. Speaker. But in the most recent budget, 2004, when the NDP (New Democratic Party) actually got more money, significantly more money from Ottawa, the increase was \$100,000 only compared to the 500,000 notwithstanding over 2 million more in federal funding.

So again, to the minister, the question is simple: what has happened to the \$1.4 million? What happened to that federal funding for child care? Why now is only \$900,000 available for consultation with child care providers in the province of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Community Resources and Employment.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, as much as we like to hear announcements of millions of dollars over five years, the fact is we don't get the millions up front. They are slowly allocated year by year.

And in fact, last year when this new announcement occurred, the federal government only put in 800,000, and we put in the other 2.8 million. So we did that to enable getting those spaces

out there sooner into the community. And if you look at the rollout this year from the federal government in this budget year, we are expecting 900,000. But a substantial amount of that money doesn't come till the out years of the program.

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the federal budget, the federal government provided 2.3 million more for child care funding in the province of Saskatchewan. The minister's department sent out a fact sheet for some of the meetings that she's having, highlighting the fact that they're interested in the views of child care providers on the expenditure of the remaining \$900,000. That leaves a gap of \$1.4 million in federal funding that apparently the government has already spent, this provincial government has already spent.

If that's the case, would the minister explain to those health care providers in the province and the taxpayers what has happened . . . what has happened to the \$1.4 million? And is the government taking credit for federal funding as provincial funding when we know it's coming from Ottawa?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Community Resources and Employment.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Well I'm not quite sure what the member's point is. Does he support child care or doesn't he? Does he think that the amount of money that Ottawa is putting in is the right amount or not? These kinds of detailed questions we certainly address in the Human Services Committee.

But that being said, Mr. Speaker, I'll address this in the way I would if we were in committee on it. In 2003-04 the federal government put in 800,000; the province put in 2.8 million. In 2004-05 the federal government put in 4.7 million, and the province 3.8, and keeping in mind that we had advanced the money in the year previously. And over the whole course of the thing, there will be \$32 million in total of which 21 million has already been allocated to licensed child care, wages, and parent subsidies. And what is at discussion right now is 12.4 million over five years.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

Amber Alert Program

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Corrections and Public Safety. On Tuesday, Missing Children's Day, the provinces of British Columbia and Nova Scotia announced that they were implementing the Amber Alert program. It's a system that gives law enforcement officers the ability to quickly notify the public about a reported missing child. This notification is done in co-operation with broadcast outlets.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is the only province in Canada that does not have the Amber Alert system in place. To the minister: when can we expect the NDP government to endorse the Amber Alert program?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased that the member asked the question today. I share his appreciation for the Amber Alert program. We think it's a very important program. I'm glad it's being implemented across the country. I also share his concern that it's taken so long to implement it in Saskatchewan. I am pleased to announce that we are implementing it July 15 of this year.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I do appreciate the answer that the minister gave today, the forthright answer. And we will look forward to the implementation day.

Mr. Speaker, last year about 2,300 children were reported missing in Saskatchewan, and of those that went missing, nine were abducted by parents.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party certainly endorses the Amber Alert program but, Mr. Speaker, I am perplexed by something. It seems as though when a new program that's bad for Saskatchewan comes down the pipe, the NDP government is quick — well quicker than the NDP on a new tax hike — to jump onto a bad program. And yet when it comes to a good program like the Amber Alert program, we are the last in Canada.

And my question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister is, why were we the last in Canada to implement this program?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, again I share the member's appreciation for the program. It's a program that requires the co-operation of media, police, and the government. We wanted to make sure that the program, when implemented, worked in Saskatchewan, worked properly. It's important that notifications get to the public within hours of the child going missing.

We are confident that the program implemented in Saskatchewan — I cannot speak for other jurisdictions — will be effective in Saskatchewan, and it will be implemented, as I said, on July 15.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company Litigation

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just last week the minister of Sask Water stood in this House and boldly defended the NDP government's counterclaims in the SPUDCO (Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company) lawsuit.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the minister said, and I quote, “. . . if the member is somehow implying that the counterclaim is inappropriate, let him say that . . .”

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't have to say that; the judge said that. In a 41-page ruling released yesterday, Justice Ball threw out most of the NDP government's counterclaims, saying that they were contradictory, without merit, and just short of being frivolous and vexatious.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP has wasted hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars on these groundless counterclaims. Who made the decision to launch this counterclaim?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Sask Water.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to answer the member's question.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, let me be direct about the answer. We are very careful, Mr. Speaker, with respect to legal matters to not have these legal matters launched by politicians. But there's political oversight, Mr. Speaker. In the case of the counterclaim, political oversight was provided by the Deputy Premier. But the final decision about launching the counterclaim was made by the deputy minister to the Premier on the basis of legal advice, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to add, Mr. Speaker, that the heart of the matter with respect to the SPUDCO lawsuit is the defence. And the defence of government is not impacted in any way by the results of this application today.

I also want to point out to the member, Mr. Speaker, that the countersuit is being allowed to proceed as it applies to Judith River Farms Ltd. and Judith River Farm and Water Limited Partnership. So part of the application has indeed been approved. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, let me quote from the judge's ruling yesterday where he said:

I have found that the proposed counterclaims are to a considerable extent contradictory. They do not satisfy various rules with respect to pleadings, and they are not supported by the documents on which they depend.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP's lawyer said that they had the evidence to prove their case. The minister said that the government had a strong counterclaim, and the judge said the NDP's claims are contradictory and without merit. Mr. Speaker, how many times does the NDP have to be told they were wrong on the SPUDCO file?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Sask Water.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, we are respectful of the court's decision and . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, we've said all along, Mr. Speaker — members opposite laugh — but we've said all along that this matter is one to be resolved before the courts, and we stand by that, Mr. Speaker.

The decision about whether to proceed with the elements of the counterclaim that have been approved will be taken shortly, Mr. Speaker, on the basis of consultation with legal counsel. But the heart of the matter, Mr. Speaker, the question of the government's defence, has not in any way been negatively impacted by the judge's decision today.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to just point out to members of the opposition, in fairness we acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, that mistakes were made on SPUDCO. And yes, Mr. Speaker . . . well, we've acknowledged this before. Members say oh, oh, but, Mr. Speaker, we've acknowledged before that mistakes have been made on SPUDCO, and I acknowledge that again today on behalf of the government. But what I ask members opposite to acknowledge . . .

The Speaker: — Order. The member's time has elapsed. I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP has accused the accounting firm of Kenway Mack Slusarchuk Stewart of negligently or wilfully misrepresenting financial statements. Mr. Speaker, these are serious allegations made against a respected accounting firm. And according to the judge they were completely false.

Mr. Justice Ball said, and I quote once again:

I find that the proposed counterclaims against KMSS and its partnership have no prima facie merit. It's only because the pleading is so difficult to decipher that I stopped short of finding that all of the proposed counterclaims against KMSS and its partners are frivolous and vexatious.

Mr. Speaker, those are strong words from a judge, and they may open the government up to even further financial exposure. Mr. Speaker, why was this decision made to have these serious allegations proceed in court when they were shown to be without merit and completely found less?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Sask Water.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a complex case, and I want the member to bear in mind the context. I want the member to bear in mind the context, and I'd appreciate quiet from the members opposite while I'm speaking. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order please, members. The member may start over.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that first of all this is a complicated

case. We are confident, Mr. Speaker, in the grounds for our defence.

The Lake Diefenbaker Potato Corporation's position was that the government did not do enough to support them, Mr. Speaker, in the potato industry. And we stand by on the grounds, Mr. Speaker, that we did everything reasonable to support the Lake Diefenbaker Potato Corporation in terms of establishing a viable potato industry in the Lake Diefenbaker area, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, we . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order. The member may proceed.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We invested substantial dollars in developing potato sheds, Mr. Speaker. And the result today is a very significant expansion in the irrigated acreage for potatoes in the Lake Diefenbaker area. We now, Mr. Speaker, have 7,000 acres — irrigated acres — of potato production that are generating a gross value of about \$35 million a year, Mr. Speaker. And that should not be forgotten. Now . . .

The Speaker: — The member's time has elapsed. I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, somehow the defence of the minister provided to the House today is that losing \$28 million of taxpayers' money is somehow good for the province. That won't wash, Mr. Speaker.

Time after time, Justice Ball said there is no factual or legal basis for the government's claims. He says they were without merit and are just short of being frivolous or vexatious. It makes you wonder, Mr. Speaker, why would the NDP launch all of these groundless counterclaims?

Well Justice Ball answers that question too. He says they appear to have been taken by the applicants:

“without reference to financial costs or benefits and solely for the purpose of making it as difficult as possible for the plaintiffs to ever have their day in court.”

Mr. Speaker, in other words, this was nothing more than a taxpayer-funded stalling tactic.

Mr. Speaker, the lawyer said he was not under any political instruction to move forward. Will the minister tell us who made the political decision?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:15)

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister for Sask Water.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well the decision-making process on this matter is very straightforward. We acted on the basis of good legal counsel. The final decision on the launching of the counterclaim was

made by the deputy minister to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. This was not a decision that came to cabinet; it's not appropriate that such legal decisions would be made by cabinet, Mr. Speaker.

The purpose in this decision-making process is to depoliticize it as much as is possible. And, Mr. Speaker, we accept the decision of the judge with respect to KMSS (Kenway Mack Slusarchuk Stewart), and we have to be respectful of the court ruling, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to point out, we have acknowledged the mistakes that we have made, Mr. Speaker. But I ask members opposite to acknowledge that there have been very substantial benefits to producers in the Lake Diefenbaker area from the investment that was made, and we'd never see \$35 million gross value of potato production today in the area, Mr. Speaker, if it hadn't been for the investment. So this . . .

The Speaker: — Once again, the member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Elhard: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the NDP's SPUDCO strategy is clear — deny, deny, deny and then delay, delay, delay. That's exactly what they did in the . . .

The Speaker: — Order please, members. Order on both sides. The member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, that's exactly the same strategy this same government employed in the Klausen-Kvello case. They denied any wrongdoing for years and then they delayed the court proceedings for additional years. And when all was said and done, it turned out the NDP government was dead wrong, and it cost taxpayers millions upon millions of dollars. What did they learn from that, Mr. Speaker? Absolutely nothing.

Mr. Speaker, Justice Ball pretty much calls this a taxpayer-funded stalling tactic. Why was this effort undertaken?

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister for Sask Water.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well, Mr. Speaker, let me say to the member that if government is being advised by legal counsel that in fact there is evidence to suggest that taxpayers' money can be recovered, it would be irresponsible of government not to seriously examine that. Now Justice Ball has made a decision, and that is fair enough. This decision is appropriately made in the courts. But, Mr. Speaker, there has never been any advice or direction given to legal counsel by this government to delay this case.

This is a complicated case, and I look forward in the fall, Mr. Speaker, to the opportunity for the government to fully provide the defence to the case, which I want to point out to the member is the heart of the matter. The counterclaim, Mr. Speaker, is important but it is in effect a bit of a sideline. The heart of the case is the defence of the case, Mr. Speaker, and this is not to, this is not to understate the importance of the counterclaim, but I'm just saying that the heart of the matter is the defence to

come.

And I think taxpayers deserve a vigorous defence, and that's what they will receive in the courts in the . . .

The Speaker: — The member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, I have another quote for you from Justice Ball's ruling. And it reads:

. . . in a dispute between a private sector plaintiff and a public sector defendant, the latter's deeper financial pockets may allow it to pursue its goals relatively unconstrained by monetary limitations . . .

Mr. Speaker, that tells you all you need to know about this NDP government. It's not their money, so they don't care how much of it they waste. That's exactly the kind of thinking that lost us 28 million taxpayers' dollars on SPUDCO in the first place. And has the NDP learned anything from that experience? The answer is no. They're prepared to spend millions more trying to justify their gross mismanagement in the SPUDCO debacle.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why did your government undertake this counterclaim?

The Speaker: — Would the . . . Order. Would the member state his question to the Speaker, please?

Mr. Elhard: — I'm sorry. Mr. Speaker, why did the Premier have his government undertake this counterclaim, and what will it ultimately cost the taxpayers of this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister for Sask Water.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I expect that the primary costs that are associated with this counterclaim will be additional legal expenses, which there will be, Mr. Speaker.

But first of all, I want to point out to the hon. member that not all aspects of this counterclaim have been dismissed. The counterclaim can proceed with respect to two of the parties, Mr. Speaker, and therefore the judge has not dismissed the entire counterclaim as the member is somehow implying. If the judge had believed that there was no merit to the counterclaim, Mr. Speaker, he would not have allowed the counterclaim to proceed against any of the parties. And I just ask the hon. member to acknowledge that, Mr. Speaker.

And as I pointed out earlier, Mr. Speaker, we have done our best as a government — and we're not suggesting perfection in this area — but we've done our best to depoliticize the decision around pursuing legal matters, Mr. Speaker, before the courts. And therefore, Mr. Speaker, the decision about proceeding was made by the deputy minister . . .

The Speaker: — The member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, I would wonder if the minister has actually read the judge's decision, because the counterclaims that are being allowed to go forward are miniscule compared to the stuff he threw out, the stuff that he thought might almost border on vexatious and frivolous.

Mr. Speaker, Justice Ball said the NDP's counterclaims were without merit. He said they were contradictory. He said they did not satisfy the rules of law. He said they were not supported by the documents. He said . . . he stopped just short, as I mentioned earlier, of calling them frivolous, only because they were so difficult to decipher. And he said that these actions were undertaken by the NDP government without reference to financial cost, to make it as difficult as possible for the plaintiffs to ever have their day in court.

Mr. Speaker, Justice Ball has exposed the NDP's counterclaims for what they are — a poorly conceived, taxpayer-funded, stalling tactic. On top of the \$28 million cost of this debacle, how much more will it cost the taxpayers of this province to fund this counterclaim?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister for Sask Water.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well, Mr. Speaker, obviously there are legal costs involved in the counterclaim and I accept that, Mr. Speaker. I ask the hon. member opposite to accept the fact that obviously the counterclaim had some merit, or Justice Ball would have struck it all down, Mr. Speaker. Portions of it will be proceeding.

Mr. Speaker, there is no desire by members of this government to delay the process beyond the need to address the complex issues which are involved in this case. And I'm looking forward, Mr. Speaker, to the court date in October when the plaintiffs in the case will have the opportunity to present their case and where government and Sask Water will have an opportunity to present their defence.

And I think when the time comes, Mr. Speaker, it'll be very clear to taxpayers that there is a very firm defence that government has. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, this NDP government has learned nothing. This government has spent six years hiding the true nature of its phony SPUDCO partnership from the people of Saskatchewan. And they only admitted to it after — Mr. Speaker, after — they were caught. For six years, the NDP refused to take responsibility. They hid the truth from the people of Saskatchewan.

And what are they doing now? They're refusing to take responsibility, and once again they're trying to hide the truth from the people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, Judge Ball has completely dismissed the NDP's efforts in this case. They're

trying to blame others and stall this case even further.

Mr. Speaker, \$28 million is a substantial loss. The government would not appeal this without some understanding of what the potential further losses might be. How much money, Mr. Speaker, is the NDP going to spend trying to hide the truth and cover up their responsibility for the 28 million . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I just want to caution the member in his questioning not to imply wrongdoing in terms of intent in the question. The member for Sask Water.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well I want to say to members opposite, bear in mind what . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order. I want to be able to hear the response. The minister for Sask Water.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — The Lake Diefenbaker Potato Corporation is essentially saying to government, you didn't hang in with us long enough, and therefore we went down, Mr. Speaker. And I just want members to think about what government did do, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a potato shed was sold to the Lake Diefenbaker Potato Corporation. And government, realizing their financial situation, asked for nothing down so that we could try to help them succeed, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, when \$1.5 million in rent and revenue that had been collected from potatoes that had been sold, that were owned by government but had been sold by the Lake Diefenbaker Potato Corporation, when that money, Mr. Speaker, that \$1.5 million that government could have collected from the Lake Diefenbaker Potato Corporation — we could have — but we said to them we want to try to help you be viable; we'll turn that into a long-term loan.

And now what LDPC (Lake Diefenbaker Potato Corporation) is saying to government is you didn't hang in with us long enough. And what we're saying, Mr. Speaker, to the opposition, to the people of the province, and to the courts, Mr. Speaker, is we did not want to put any further taxpayers' dollars at risk, but we did our best to hang . . .

The Speaker: — The member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 60 — The Public Service Amendment Act, 2004

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 60, The Public Service Amendment Act, 2004 be now introduced and read for the first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission that Bill No. 60, The Public Service Amendment Act, 2004 be now

introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be read a second time?

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Next sitting.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a first time and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 61 — The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Amendment Act, 2004

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 61, The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Amendment Act, 2004 be now introduced and read the first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 61, The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Amendment Act, 2004 be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be read a second time?

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a first time and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 62 — The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 62, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 be now introduced and read the first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 62, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be read a second time?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Next sitting of the House.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a first time and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

**Bill No. 63 — The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004
(No. 2)/Loi de modification législative de 2004 (n° 2)**

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 63, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2) be now introduced and read the first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill 63, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2) be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be read a second time?

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Next sitting of the House.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a first time and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

**Bill No. 64 — The Post-Secondary Graduate Tax Credit
Amendment Act, 2004**

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Learning.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 64, The Post-Secondary Graduate Tax Credit Amendment Act, 2004 be now introduced and read for the first time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Learning that Bill No. 64, The Post-Secondary Graduate Tax Credit Amendment Act be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be read a second time?

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a first time and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — Before orders of the day, members, I'd like to advise all members that I earlier tabled the annual report for the year 2003 of the Provincial Ombudsman.

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. 437.

The Speaker: — Response to 437 has been tabled. I recognize the Government Whip.

(14:30)

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I am very pleased to stand on behalf of the government and convert for debates returnable questions no. 438 through 440 inclusive.

The Speaker: — Questions 438, 439, and 440 have been converted to orders for return (debatable).

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, to facilitate the work of the Standing Committee on Human Services and the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure, I move this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the 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 is carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 14:31.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Elhard | 1257 |
| Draude | 1257 |
| Stewart | 1257 |
| McMorris | 1257 |
| Bakken | 1257 |
| Brkich | 1257 |
| Weekes | 1258 |
| Dearborn | 1258 |

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Deputy Clerk | 1258 |
|--------------------|------|

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Addley | 1258 |
|--------------|------|

Standing Committee on House Services

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Gantfoer | 1259 |
|----------------|------|

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 8 — The Gas Inspection Amendment Act, 2004

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Quennell | 1258 |
|----------------|------|

Bill No. 20 — The Land Surveyors and Professional Surveyors Amendment Act, 2004

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Cline | 1259 |
|-------------|------|

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Brkich | 1259 |
|--------------|------|

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Harpauer | 1259 |
|----------------|------|

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

| | |
|------------|------------|
| Wall | 1259, 1260 |
|------------|------------|

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Atkinson | 1259 |
|----------------|------|

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Chisholm | 1260 |
|----------------|------|

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Quennell | 1260 |
|----------------|------|

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| Huyghebaert | 1260 |
|-------------------|------|

| | |
|-----------------|------|
| Bjornerud | 1260 |
|-----------------|------|

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Morin | 1260 |
|-------------|------|

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Kerpan | 1260 |
|--------------|------|

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Child Care Week in Saskatchewan

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Morin | 1261 |
|-------------|------|

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Bakken | 1262 |
|--------------|------|

Wadena Licensed Practical Nurses Win 2004 Chapter Award

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Draude | 1261 |
|--------------|------|

Public Servants Honoured

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Yates | 1261 |
|-------------|------|

90th Anniversary of the Davidson Co-op

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Brkich | 1262 |
|--------------|------|

Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program Graduation Ceremonies

| | |
|-----------------|------|
| Borgerson | 1262 |
|-----------------|------|

Prestigious Scholarship Awarded to Judy Boychuk Duchscher

| | |
|-------------|------|
| Junor | 1262 |
|-------------|------|

Member of the Legislative Assembly Celebrates a Birthday

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Heppner | 1263 |
|---------------|------|

ORAL QUESTIONS

Allocation of Federal Funding for Child Care

| | |
|------------|------|
| Wall | 1263 |
|------------|------|

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Crofford | 1263 |
|----------------|------|

Amber Alert Program

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Kerpan | 1264 |
|--------------|------|

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Quennell | 1264 |
|----------------|------|

Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company Litigation

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Elhard | 1264 |
|--------------|------|

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Prebble | 1265 |
|---------------|------|

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 60 — The Public Service Amendment Act, 2004

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Atkinson | 1268 |
|----------------|------|

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Bill No. 61 — The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Amendment Act, 2004 | |
| Van Mulligen | 1268 |
| Bill No. 62 — The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 | |
| Quennell | 1268 |
| Bill No. 63 — The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2) | |
| Loi de modification législative de 2004 (n° 2) | |
| Quennell | 1269 |
| Bill No. 64 — The Post-Secondary Graduate Tax Credit Amendment Act, 2004 | |
| Thomson | 1269 |
| TABLING OF REPORTS | |
| The Speaker | 1269 |
| ORDERS OF THE DAY | |
| WRITTEN QUESTIONS | |
| Yates | 1269 |
| The Speaker | 1269 |

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. L. Calvert
Premier

Hon. P. Atkinson
Minister of Crown Management Board
Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

Hon. J. Beatty
Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation
Provincial Secretary

Hon. B. Belanger
Minister of Northern Affairs

Hon. E. Cline
Minister of Industry and Resources

Hon. J. Crofford
Minister of Community Resources and Employment
Minister Responsible for Disability Issues
Minister Responsible for Gaming

Hon. D. Forbes
Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for the Office of Energy Conservation

Hon. D. Higgins
Minister of Labour
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. J. Nilson
Minister of Health
Minister Responsible for Seniors

Hon. P. Prebble
Minister of Corrections and Public Safety

Hon. F. Quennell
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Hon. C. Serby
Deputy Premier
Minister of Rural Revitalization

Hon. M. Sonntag
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs
Minister of Highways and Transportation

Hon. L. Taylor
Minister of Government Relations

Hon. A. Thomson
Minister of Learning
Minister Responsible for Information Technology

Hon. H. Van Mulligen
Minister of Finance

Hon. M. Wartman
Minister of Agriculture and Food