



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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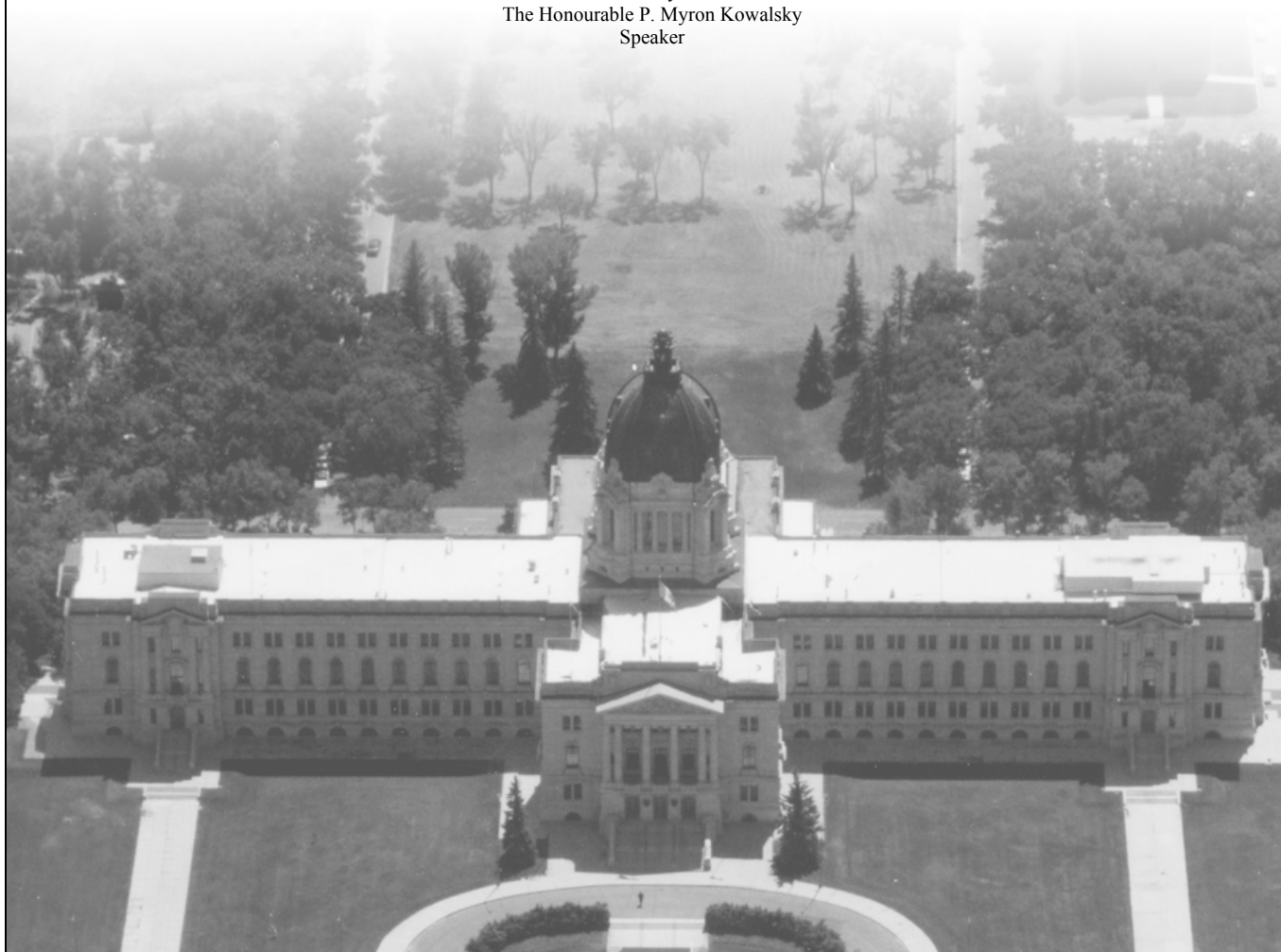
**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(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:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Cypress Hills.

**Mr. Elhard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In view of the ongoing concern regarding the condition of Highway 32 that runs from Swift Current to Leader, I present the following petition:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 32 in order to address safety and economic concerns.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, these two full pages of petitions contain signatures from the community of Abbey, Lancer, and Cabri. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Swift Current.

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again on behalf of constituents concerned about the deficiency in residential support for people with long-term disabilities in southwest Saskatchewan. The prayer of 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 steps to provide funding required for additional residential spaces for Swift Current residents with lifelong disabilities.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petitioners today are from the city of Swift Current — three full pages of them from Swift Current — Waldeck, and Herbert. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have another petition about the forced amalgamation of school divisions signed by people who are concerned that the changes will not prove to be cost-effective. The prayer of the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

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

Mr. Speaker, all of the signatures on this particular petition are from the community of Eston, and I'm pleased to present it on their behalf.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm putting in a number of petitions all at once. I guess it'd be the final brick as far as petitions are concerned regarding the Claybank Brick Plant, unless I get another load, that is. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read the prayer. And 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, these petitions are signed anywhere from . . . well really, people from all across Canada, as I've been presenting on their behalf before. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Estevan.

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition here from people in my constituency regarding the forced amalgamation of school divisions. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this is signed by folks from Midale and Goodwater. I so present. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes 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 concerned about the inadequate program called CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization]. 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 CAIS program receives adequate provincial funding, the funding formula is changed to ensure equal access to compensation, and to contribute funds to the latest BSE assistance package released by the federal government.

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

And the petition is signed by residents of Kayville and Bengough. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm River-Watrous.

**Mr. Brkich:** — A good constituency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition that the citizens want to reverse forced school division amalgamation. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

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

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present another petition to revisit the effects of the TransGas Asquith natural gas storage project. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately address the concerns of all individuals affected by this project, pay 100 per cent of the costs involved to rectify disruptions to water supplies, produce an environment assessment study encompassing a larger area outside the scope of the project, disclose the project's long-term effects on these areas, and consider alternative sources of water for the project.

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

Signed by the good citizens of Grandora and Saskatoon. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too have a petition to present on behalf of citizens who are being adversely affected by the TransGas natural gas storage project in the Asquith area. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately address the concerns of all individuals affected by this project, pay 100 per cent of the costs involved to rectify disruptions to water supplies, produce an environment assessment study encompassing a larger area outside the scope of the project, disclose the project's long-term effects on these areas, and consider alternative sources of water for the project.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, signatures to this petitions come from the communities of Asquith and Vanscoy. I so present.

## READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Deputy Clerk:** — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed, and pursuant to rule 14 are hereby read and received as addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional paper nos. 106, 180, 637, 638, 670, 715, 716, 720, and 730.

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm River-Watrous.

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 96 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Rural Development: could the minister provide the expected date of the release for the next ACRE report?

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce through you and to you and all members of the Assembly a group of 11 grade 5 students that are seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. They are accompanied today by their teacher, Ms. Shirley Fowler, chaperones Rick Wuchenny, Bob Thomas, Doreen Carrier, and Laura Berezny.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be meeting with them later and we'll be having our photograph taken on the steps. And we'll have our meeting in 255 after they've toured our beautiful Legislative Assembly. And I'd ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Sutherland.

**Mr. Addley:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my great pleasure to introduce four guests seated in your gallery. And I think these are the guests that have travelled the furthest, the greatest distance, that I've been able to introduce in the House. If you could just give a wave as I introduce you — Brian Foley, Lori Foley, Ken Kavanagh, and Alice Kavanagh.

Mr. Speaker, I met Brian Foley about six years ago in Costa Rica while we were on a co-op development tour. Members from all across Canada spent 11 days touring Costa Rica and learning about the co-ops that they have there. And he's here today, as Ken is, to visit Regina and Saskatchewan as delegates to the Co-operators' convention. So they still maintained his time in the co-operative movement. He heard a great speech by the Premier yesterday at their banquet.

And I can see — I haven't met him yet, I'll go up and have a visit with him in a minute — but I can see that while I've aged in the six years, Brian definitely has not. So if all members could please give a warm welcome to our guests from

Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm River-Watrous.

#### Drake Canucks Win Provincial Championship

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well it seems that my constituency just keeps producing championship hockey teams, Mr. Speaker. The latest awards go to the Drake Canucks, who captured the SHA [Saskatchewan Hockey Association] intermediate B provincial championship in Kyle . . . provincial C, sorry about that, in Kyle on Thursday, March 24.

After a 6-5 overtime win in Drake on Sunday, March 20, the team bus loaded and headed to Kyle. The entire team was playing at the top of their game with a very strong performance from goalie, Andy Bushman. The forwards and defence combined to play a patient and defensive game leading the team to a 5-2 victory.

This is the first provincial C title for the Drake Canucks; that goes with a total of seven provincial D titles that this team has produced over the years. This fine Drake team defeated teams from Allan, Hague, Kerrobert, and Kyle in this year's playoffs. It is always great to see the high calibre of hockey being played across our great province. The NHL [National Hockey League] should look to the fine quality grassroots hockey as their example in rural Saskatchewan.

I would ask that all members join me in congratulating the players and coaches of the Drake Canucks upon their championship season. Thank you very much.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Elphinstone.

#### Stepping Stones Youth Rally and Career Fair

**Mr. McCall:** — Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the pleasure of attending the 2005 Stepping Stones Youth Rally hosted by Scott Collegiate in my constituency of Regina Elphinstone-Centre. Mr. Speaker, about 300 enthusiastic young people — mostly Aboriginal — attended today's rally. It's the first part of the Stepping Stones Career Fair, which will complete later this month.

Mr. Speaker, the rally and career fair are about providing positive role models for First Nations and Métis youth, about helping them bridge the gap between education and employment, and about demonstrating the big opportunities wide open to them.

It was great to be there with the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation, herself a huge role model for young Aboriginal people. And it was also good to see the member from Swift Current there. And the former member from Cumberland was

also there, and I have but one response to the barnburner of a message he delivered, and that is, egosi, egosi.

Also with some fine words to say were elder, Lily Daniels; mayor of Regina, Pat Fiacco; File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council Vice-Chair, Myke Agecoutay — himself a living embodiment of the bright future for young Aboriginal people, being all of 24 years old. There was Chief Glenn Pratt, Gordon First Nation; Chief Connie Big Eagle, Ocean Man First Nation; Chief Todd Cappo, Muscowpetung First Nation; and Chief Alphonse Bird, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations.

The powerfully well-spoken role models were Gino Odjick, Wavell Starr, Terrina Bellegarde, Chris Ross, Laurie Gosselin, Joely BigEagle-Pasapa, and Kerrie Ahenakew. A big shout-out to the break dancers Tyson Shepard, Allister Crowe; to the Scott dance team; to the wildly popular Scott Blues boys basketball team; musicians Terry Anne Strong Arm, Miles and Rochelle; and MC [master of ceremonies], Linda Anderson.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank everyone that had something to do with putting on this great event. Cheers.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

#### Centenarian Recognized as Elrose's First Honorary Citizen

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to tell members about another centenarian from the Rosetown-Elrose constituency. Jessie Wilson from Elrose is 105 years old and remains a whirlwind of enthusiasm as she anticipates reaching 106 in September. Born in 1899, Jessie came to Canada from Aberdeen, Scotland with her family in 1907 and lived in Moose Jaw. She married Jack Wilson, a World War I pilot, in 1924 and they moved to a farm near Wartime. In 1951 she moved to Elrose.

I wish all of you could meet Jessie Wilson. She enjoyed the party held in her honour at the Elrose Health Centre where Mayor Mills declared her Elrose's first honorary citizen. After receiving her medallion and certificate she said:

"I don't hear very well anymore, but what I don't hear I don't miss. I have no idea why I lived to 105. God knows; I don't."

Jessie's daughter told me Jessie started the bad habit of smoking at about 50 years of age, but she quit when she was 100 because she realized it was bad for her health. She is proof that you're never too old to stop smoking.

Jessie Wilson is an encouragement to all including this MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly]. When I arrived at her party the other day she looked up at me, smiled, wagged her finger, and said, "I voted for you." So much for the myth that the Saskatchewan Party doesn't attract support from females and seniors.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all colleagues in the Assembly to join me in

congratulating an outstanding 105-year-old Saskatchewan pioneer who has contributed much to Saskatchewan. Congratulations to Jessie Wilson of Elrose.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

#### **White Fox Credit Union Celebrates 60 Years**

**Mr. Borgerson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday night I had the pleasure of attending the 60th anniversary of the White Fox Credit Union in the northeast corner of my constituency.

It was a well-attended event with over 250 credit union members coming together for their annual general meeting followed by a meal, presentations, and a retrospective slide show. And then we all enjoyed a concert by our centennial youth ambassador, Theresa Sokyorka.

Mr. Speaker, credit unions are an integral part of our history, especially for rural Saskatchewan. In response to the Depression, legislation was passed here in this Assembly in 1937 giving communities the ability to create their own officially chartered credit unions, and the movement spread from there. Today there are over 300 credit union branches in this province and nearly 600,000 members.

The White Fox Credit Union was formed in 1945 and eventually joined with the Choiceland credit union. Founding members of both credit unions were honoured with gifts last Saturday night. They were James Mollison, Cliff and Thelma Kelsey, Mae McTaggart, Neil McTaggart, Marion McBain, Hedwig Lessing, Clarence Long, Alvin and Stella McBain, and Betty McBain.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating these pioneers of the White Fox Credit Union, as well as the present staff and board for organizing a very successful 60th anniversary and congratulations to the people of White Fox, Love, Choiceland, Garrick area for their community spirit and longstanding support of their credit union. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

#### **Appointment of Honorary Lieutenant Colonel of the North Saskatchewan Regiment**

**Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to ask members to recognize the appointment of Saskatoon lawyer, Bob Stromberg, to the position of honorary lieutenant colonel of the North Saskatchewan Regiment.

This regiment has history back to April 1912 and has a proud service record in both world wars. The position Mr. Stromberg is appointed to is more than a merely honorary position. It

serves as an important liaison representing the needs of the military and presenting those needs to the government and to the private sector. Mr. Stromberg will raise the profile of our armed forces and be able to put forth the needs of the military to the civilian population.

He is well suited to this role. Mr. Stromberg has been extremely active in community affairs. He has played very active roles with Persephone Theatre, Saskatchewan Place, Pride Canada, the Mendel Art Gallery, and most recently as chairperson of the Saskatoon Airport Authority. His wide of range of connections in the public sector will serve the regiment and the military well.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Stromberg has practiced law in Saskatoon since 1969, a period of over 35 years, frankly something which I have some serious doubts about. He originally practiced law with Sherstibitoff Hrabinsky Stromberg and Young which later evolved to what is now known as Robertson Stromberg and Pedersen. I note that the current Justice minister articulated and practiced with that firm; and his predecessor, Chris Axworthy, is now an associate of that firm.

I would ask that all members recognize the achievements of Mr. Stromberg and congratulate him on his appointment as honorary lieutenant colonel of the North Saskatchewan Regiment.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

#### **10th Anniversary Celebration of Francophone School Governance**

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday evening the member from Rosemont and myself had the pleasure of attending the 10th anniversary gala of Francophone School Governance in the province of Saskatchewan.

It was a wonderful event, Mr. Speaker, celebrating the history and achievements of this important moment and component for the Fransaskois community. Over 400 people were there, including representatives from every local and provincial francophone association and from francophone associations outside our province.

It was an evening filled with singing, fiddling, lots of music, showcasing the incredible musical talents of Fransaskois students past and present. There was even a 10th anniversary francophone education theme song called “Dix Ans de Bon Moments” or in English, “Ten Years of Good Times,” written by a class of grade 11 students from Zenon Park.

Mr. Speaker, there were testimonials from a graduate from 1995, and from this year’s graduating class presentations featuring students from the past and a series of historical reviews chronically the story of Francophone School Governance.

Mr. Speaker, the Fransaskois are a vibrant and a dynamic part of the Saskatchewan community. Mr. Speaker, we were

incredibly pleased that we had the opportunity to be part of the 10th anniversary celebration of francophone education in our province.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Estevan.

#### Estevan Area Centenarians Honoured

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too have had the pleasure of presenting centenarians in my constituency with centennial medals, certificates, and flowers. Those honoured today are Florence Melton, age 100, who resides at St. Joseph's long-term care facility in Estevan; Ole Ryan, age 103, who resides at Mainprize Manor in Midale; Mildred Good, age 100; Mary Ehrmantraut, age 100; and Emma McColl, age 102 — and these three ladies reside at the Estevan Regional Nursing Home.

Mr. Speaker, after a brief ceremony at each of these facilities, we socialized and had refreshments. It was wonderful hearing about the experiences of these people who've built our province. Everyone was so gracious.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned before, the Estevan Regional Nursing Home is home to three of the honourees. The staff there did a wonderful job in dealing with a situation that has been plaguing them for some time. They had to manoeuvre the wheelchairs around buckets placed throughout the facility to catch water that was entering the building because of a leaking roof. And that in itself probably brought back many memories for these people.

But, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating and thanking these centenarians. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### Potential Federal Election Issues

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if you've heard, but the federal Liberal government seems to be having their share of political challenges at the moment, and the likelihood of a spring election is increasing across the country. What better time to press for a better equalization deal for our province than right now?

Yesterday the Premier of Ontario, Premier McGuinty, began to make the case for that province's fiscal imbalance. He's asking for \$23 billion. I think by any reasonable account the case that we can make is much more compelling. This should be a major issue in any upcoming federal election campaign here in the province.

Today I'll be writing to the national leaders of the three major parties, Mr. Speaker, and I'll be asking for their position on a new equalization deal and an energy accord for Saskatchewan. I intend to let the people of the province know the responses I receive so Saskatchewan people clearly know which parties have the interest of Saskatchewan at heart.

The Premier of Ontario plans to make this an election issue, federally, if one is called this year. I certainly plan to make it an issue, Mr. Speaker. This is no time to dither. Will the Premier join us in our efforts?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, I have in a file letters from the three respective leaders of the federalist parties, each declaring their position around a fair equalization deal for Saskatchewan. We have that. I trust that the word of the Leader of the Conservative Party in a letter to me is a word that stands. I trust the word of the Leader of the New Democratic Party. And I have also the opinion that was provided to me by the current Prime Minister.

You bet, if there is in fact a federal election in this spring season, it will be a very significant issue for the people of Saskatchewan, for the Government of Saskatchewan, for this legislature because achieving a fair energy accord for the people of Saskatchewan has a great deal to do about the future of this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Wall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the positions of the different parties in the last election and even since the last election have been highlighted by the leaders of those parties in different materials. The point is that during an election campaign, and it looks like we may be on the brink of a federal election in the nation, during an election campaign the federal parties will make clear their position.

The Premier of Ontario isn't going to wait. He is starting now; he is making his case for Ontario today. We would like to do the same thing. We would offer for the Premier to join us in the effort today to get an update on the positions of each of these federal parties. This issue is too important to wait. The Premier of Ontario understands that. Does the Premier of Saskatchewan understand that, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, the Premier of Saskatchewan, the Government of Saskatchewan understands this very, very well. And that's why very recently we have been prominently featured in the *Western Standard* magazine over this, in *The Globe and Mail*, and the *Maclean's* magazine, Mr. Speaker. The position of Saskatchewan is being advanced at

every level. We have enjoyed the support of the opposition in our campaign to get a fair equalization deal, an energy accord for the province of Saskatchewan.

Now if the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting today that I need to write Stephen Harper to find out if his position has changed or not, I trust the man. I trust the man when he says he'll support our case. I don't think I need to write another letter to him today unless he's suggesting that perhaps they no longer support Saskatchewan's case.

The fact of the matter is, I have them on record, Mr. Speaker. I have them on record and we're waging this campaign right across the country.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Wall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the difference is, for the time being the Government of Canada is the Liberal Party of Canada. That's who is forming the government. The Premier of Ontario, in the press reports I have made, has indicated pretty clearly that he will use the pending election and the importance of votes and seats in his province as leverage to get a better deal on equalization from the federal Liberal Party.

The Premier will know, if his file is full as he says it is, that the federal government, the Liberal Party of Canada, has not yet come onside with the position of his party and our party that we need a separate energy accord.

So the question still remains. Will he now use this pending election, will he join us in our efforts to communicate to the federal government — to all the federal parties, but to the federal government — the importance of an energy accord and the impact of an energy accord with respect to a pending federal election?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, there is no confusion in the nation's capital about the position of this Premier or this government when it comes to an energy accord. There is no confusion about that. And there have been, Mr. Speaker, some very significant discussions ongoing between senior officials of this government and senior officials of the federal government working towards a fair energy accord for the people of Saskatchewan.

Let me say again, I have on record the leadership of the three federalist parties in Canada. We are lobbying, we are pushing, we are taking every venue possible to get a fair accord.

Mr. Speaker, a year ago we started on this challenge to right some of the equalization wrongs, and we were successful a year ago, Mr. Speaker. We were successful, even though members opposite call \$360 million in new money table scraps. That's what they called it while, in fact, we don't see it as table scraps. We see it as a step and we intend to complete this journey for a

fair accord for the people of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

### Tobacco Control Act Litigation

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we were very surprised to hear the Minister of Health was adopting a new policy — education through litigation. The minister said part of his strategy with The Tobacco Control Act was to get sued. Well it appears his strategy has worked.

Mr. Speaker, I must have missed that day in law school. Can the minister tell us why he prefers to be sued instead of consulting with people — something he promised but failed to do?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't think we want to go into talking about my learned friend's attendance at law school.

But I think what we do want to talk about is that tobacco kills people. It leads to cancer. We know from the report yesterday that lung cancer is the number one killer of women in Canada. And, Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to work and make sure we use every method we can.

And as far as it relates to litigation, Mr. Speaker, it's an opportunity to present our position — which we think has the support of the people right across this province — that we want to reduce the use of tobacco in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, here's the incredulous statement that the minister made yesterday: we know from experience in the United States that a lot of the lawsuits down there ended up changing the tide on the use of tobacco.

Mr. Speaker, in the United States there was one huge difference — the government was the one that was suing the tobacco companies. In Saskatchewan, it's the government that's being sued.

Mr. Speaker, some of us on this side of the House voted for this legislation based on the minister's promises that he didn't keep. Instead of consultation, his strategy was to wait for the litigation. To the minister: why would we ever believe this minister again?

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, the nature of litigation, and I think that member should know about this, is that it raises the public attention around public issues in society. And, Mr.



Speaker, we don't like to be sued. We work hard to make sure that we have laws that will stand the test.

But, Mr. Speaker, if we are, we use that opportunity to educate the public. We use other opportunities through our school system and other places. We make sure we use the federal marketing laws and complement them with things that we do in this province — all with the goal of reducing the use of tobacco, because we know that tobacco kills.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm waiting for the next election where I can see the member opposite's brochures that'll say, we'll educate you by suing you or waiting until you sue us — new method of campaigning, and I'm waiting to see that.

Right now we've got a minister that wants to get sued. We have the hotel association granting that wish. We have First Nations angry with the fact they were never consulted. Now we've got individuals forming a corporation to circumvent The Tobacco Control Act. This legislation has more holes than a golf course, Mr. Speaker.

The minister did not live up to his commitments on consultation. He misled the Assembly. People are angry, betrayed, or doing an end run on this legislation. Mr. Speaker, why doesn't this minister go back to square one and actually talk to people about a smoking ban that could work and might have some support, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I told the Assembly yesterday about how the Leader of the Opposition changed his mind over the weekend when he got a little pressure on him. And, Mr. Speaker, that is . . . The will of the people of Saskatchewan is that they want this law to go forward. And it is here now, and we're going to live with it; we're going to work with it.

Mr. Speaker, we know from every jurisdiction in the world that the tobacco companies don't like it. And they use every method at their fingertips to try to challenge what we're doing, Mr. Speaker. We will respond in a measured way at every level, but our goal is to protect the people of Saskatchewan, reduce the use of tobacco, and stop the number of people that it's killing.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Cannington.

#### Information Services Corporation

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's our

Minister of Health — I've made up my mind and don't tell me anything that might try and change it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to recognize the fine efforts of the people who work for Information Services Corporation. And I'd like to thank them for posting their very first profit, Mr. Speaker. They've done the very best they could with . . . to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear that the NDP government gave them.

Mr. Speaker, this NDP government is doing a little misdirection play, though, with its books. They raised the fees for the services provided. They decreased the staff. They stopped paying the dividend money that was supposed to be going to this government from the old system. Why is the government's books not telling the whole story about ISC [Information Service Corporation]?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Industry and Resources.

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, you know the Saskatchewan Party is unhappy when ISC doesn't make money; they're unhappy when ISC makes money. But what the report said that was released this morning, Mr. Speaker, was revenue is up, expenses are down, the corporation is making a profit for the first time. They paid down debt — almost \$12 million, Mr. Speaker — and surveys show that the vast majority of customers are happy with the service.

So revenue up, expense down, profit up, customer satisfaction up. Only the Conservatives could find bad news in that story, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Cannington.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When ISC was created, this NDP government said it would continue to pay the nearly \$12 million dividend that was provided by the previous land titles system. This is no longer happening.

This is a heck of a way to run a business, Mr. Speaker. You don't pay the bills as promised, you increase the cost of service to your customers, you fire a bunch of employees right after the last provincial election.

Mr. Speaker, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan are no better off. Why must the taxpayers of the province continue to pay for the incompetent way this government changed the land titles system?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Industry and Resources.

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, I announced to the public two years ago that the dividend payable to the

General Revenue Fund would be cancelled until the corporation was in a position to pay a dividend because we announced, Mr. Speaker, two years ago that we would amortize the cost of the corporation over the longer term.

Now the member must have nothing to complain about, Mr. Speaker, if he's dragging up something that occurred two years ago. The reality is this is a corporation, Mr. Speaker, that is well managed, that is making a profit, and that is providing good service to the people of Saskatchewan.

The only issue here, Mr. Speaker, is that the Saskatchewan Party refuses to recognize good news.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Cannington.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue here is this government's inability to keep a promise. Mr. Speaker, the government made a promise ISC would cover the amount of the dividend normally paid by land titles, almost \$12 million. But like every other promise of this NDP government, it's turned out to be worthless.

Let's talk about some of the other promises, Mr. Speaker. They promised to sell this technology around the world. Mr. Speaker, how much money was spent marketing ISC around the world? We know they travelled to do this. And what, Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, was the dollar value returned for those around the world sales?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Industry and Resources.

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the annual report was released today. And again, I announced to the public through the media, two years ago, that it was not a priority of ISC to do marketing around the world, Mr. Speaker. So there was nothing in the annual report released today about marketing around the world, but I do want to report what the report said, Mr. Speaker.

It said that ISC had a net income of \$8.3 million compared with a loss last year of \$5.8 million. Revenue is up from 36.7 million to 44.1 million. Expenses were down from 39.5 million to 35.8 million. And, Mr. Speaker, they made a profit and they paid down debt.

The customers are happy. The system is working. Only the Saskatchewan Party is not happy with these results, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

#### Funding for Community-Based Organizations

**Ms. Bakken:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the

Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres, better known as SARC, says that low wages are driving staff to other sectors, causing a high turnover rate and hurting some of the most vulnerable people in our society — disabled people.

Last fall, SARC presented the government with a human resource plan which dealt with compensation, recruitment, and retention for staff. But the NDP's recent budget failed to deal with their concerns. Mr. Speaker, SARC says the crisis in staff turnover will at best remain at 28 per cent but, in some facilities, the turnover rate is as high as 40 to 50 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why did his NDP government fail to deal with SARC's human resource plan in this year's budget?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Community Resources and Employment.

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I want to commend SARC on the work they've done. They've done a very thorough job on not only wage issues but training issues, recruitment issues, and a range of other things that are important to community organizations that provide services.

We have been working with SARC. In fact, we helped to fund the study that illustrated the kind of structure that they would like to see in the province.

We have some other partners in the CBO [community-based organization] funding question. One of them is early learning and child care centres, one is SARC, and the other is the other CBOs funded by government. Over this next year, my staff is working with these people to put together a go-forward plan on the CBO funding package.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what SARC's member agencies want is funding from the NDP to establish a baseline salary for this sector. SARC agencies continue to lose staff to health and education sectors because they cannot offer competitive wages.

SARC estimates it would take about three and a half million dollars to provide all current employees with a competitive salary that would meet minimum standards. But in the budget there is only \$500,000 allocated, not three and a half million dollars. Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why is the amount required by SARC short by \$3 million in this year's budget?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Community Resources and Employment.

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to just outline some of the progress that's been made on this issue in previous

budgets, and I'm sure we'll get to what happened in this year's budget.

In the 1994 budget, 2 per cent; in 1995, another 2 per cent; in 1996-97, child care wages and group homes were addressed; in 1997, 5 per cent; in 1998, another 5 per cent; in 1999, another 5 per cent; in 2000, 2 per cent; 2001, 6 per cent; 2002, 4.5 per cent; 2003, 3 per cent; and 2004, 1 per cent.

So, Mr. Speaker, we've been very conscious of this. And in all those years that we've been adding money into this area, this is the first time the opposition has asked a question about this.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a participant impact study which was completed by SARC in the fall of last year says that high staff turnover hurts people with disabilities. It says the problems include an increase in accidents, cancellation of recreational and community programs, an escalation in challenging behaviours, inconsistent delivery of services, continued deterioration of support to individuals with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP's inaction in this recent budget is preventing people with disabilities — some of the most vulnerable in our society — from enjoying their quality of life. Mr. Speaker, their turnover in staff must be addressed. To the Premier, Mr. Speaker: why did your government choose to ignore SARC's comments?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Community Resources and Employment.

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In my budget day presentation to the stakeholders, I explained that we were making some steps on equity between CBOs in this budget. The lowest paid workers are early learning and child care workers; they received 3 per cent. The next lowest paid are SARC workers; they received 2 per cent. And the others CBOs across the province, who are at a better level, received 1 per cent.

At that time I made a commitment to them that we would sit down — because now of course we have the early learning and care sector to add to that package, and we certainly hope that we will continue to receive those monies from the federal government, whatever happens on the political front there — and I urge those members opposite to continue to have their Conservative friends in Ottawa support the early learning and child care funding so we can put a good package together for all the CBOs.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken:** — Mr. Speaker, community-based organizations that provide the services in our communities are invaluable, but they cannot continue to provide these services to some of the most vulnerable people in our society without adequate funding. Mr. Speaker, is it the intent of this government to squeeze the CBOs to the point where they will stop providing these services?

To the Premier, Mr. Speaker: if CBOs cannot continue to provide these services because of a lack of funding, who will provide these services?

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Community Resources and Employment.

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, we work very closely with the CBOs and I have huge respect . . . I've been out around the province to many of the places where they are providing services. There's no question that these are some of the most caring people you would ever want to encounter. They deal with very difficult circumstances, people who are very challenged. And I want to just today publicly thank them again for the work they do.

But I did make a commitment, and we have had an ongoing relationship with them to make improvements in this area. And I think over this next year you will see all of that sector coming together in a very positive way.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken:** — Mr. Speaker, time is of the essence. How can the CBOs continue to provide these valuable services to communities if the government continues to provide inadequate funding? What is the intent of this government concerning community-based organizations? Is it the intent of this government to squeeze them out, to have CBOs throw up their hands and say, I cannot do this any longer because we do not have adequate funding. Mr. Speaker, is it the intent of this government to push the CBOs out and put the services under the Department of Health?

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: if the CBOs do not provide this service in our community, who will provide these services?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Community Resources and Employment.

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that we are very committed to this sector and that's why in every year since 1994 — when we crawled out of the black hole left by the members opposite — we have provided increases.

I have to tell you, if we had that 500 million interest on the debt, it would be a lot easier to make some of these decisions. And so I am not interested in any moralizing from the members opposite.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. The Chair is unable to, the Chair is unable to hear the remarks and then it was doubled up by applause. But the floor goes to the minister.

Order, please. I would like the minister to complete her remarks.

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to say that we have in every year provided improvements — not only to wages but to benefits, to core funding to the organizations, to service contracts that we have with the organizations. I feel this issue deeply, Mr. Speaker, and I have made a commitment with these organizations to try to come to a final resolution in this next year.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again we wonder what the priorities of this government is. This government said that they want to provide quality of life for people with disabilities. They say they value community-based organizations while the evidence does not bear this out.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: will he correct the inadequate funding problem that is faced by SARC and community-based organizations across the province? Will he provide adequate funding for them?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Community Resources and Employment.

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, not only have we made some of the improvements I've talked about, we've also improved labour legislation as it relates to benefits for part-time workers to improvements in the minimum wage.

These folks who claim to be so interested have never expressed an interest in minimum wage improvements. They've never expressed an interest in labour standards that protect people working in any environment. And it's very nice today that, after 12 years of steady improvement, they've developed an interest in this subject.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Government Whip.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I'm extremely pleased to stand on behalf of the government, being a very open and accountable government, and table responses to written questions 976 through 979 inclusive.

**The Speaker:** — Responses to questions 976 to 979 inclusive have been submitted.

The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, to facilitate the work of the Economy Committee and the Human Services Committee, I move the House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that this House do now stand adjourned. 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, pursuant to an order of this Assembly, at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:19.]

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## **CABINET MINISTERS**

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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

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