



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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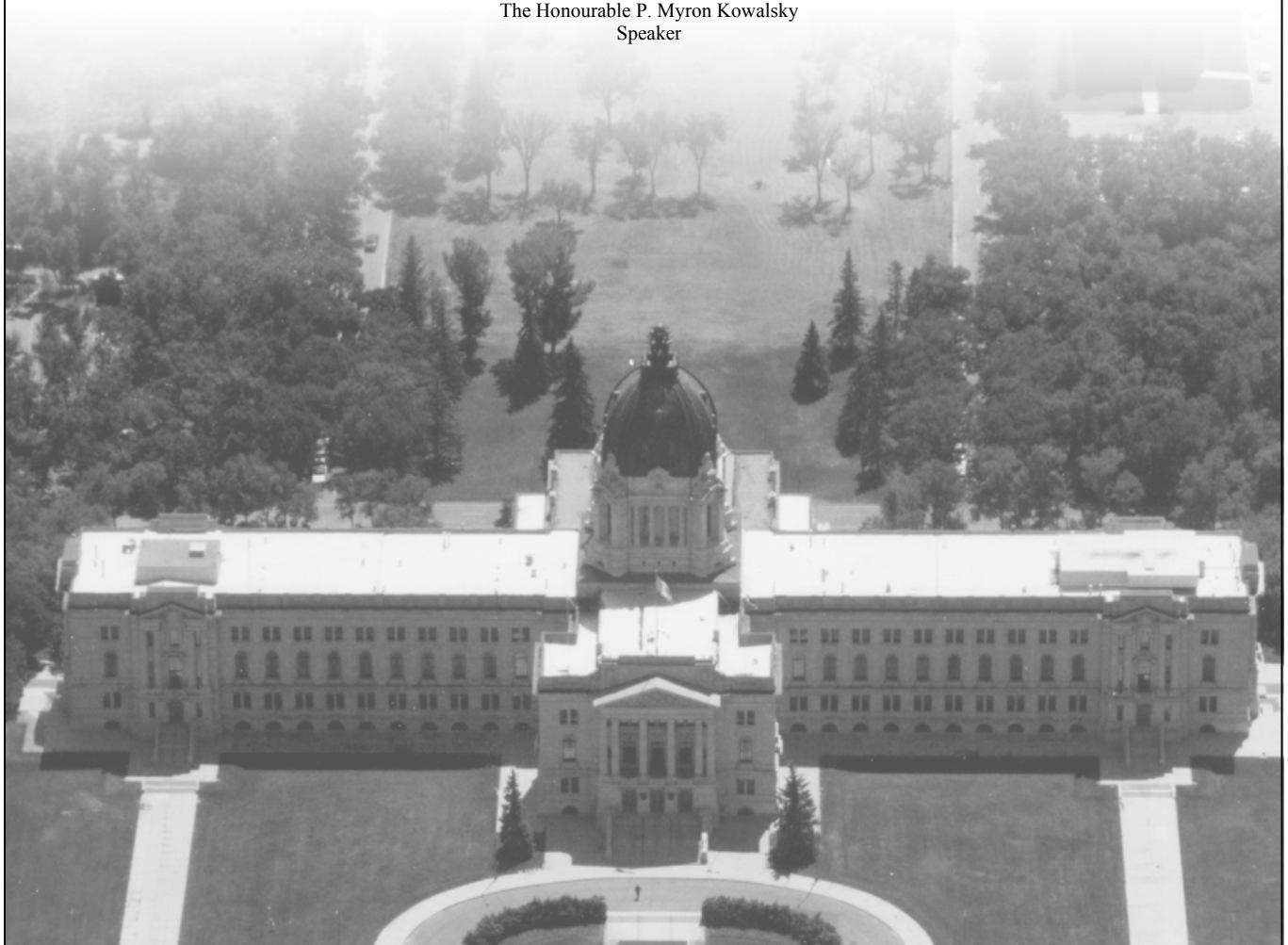
**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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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

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Addley, Graham	NDP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Hon. Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Bakken Lackey, 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 Moosomin.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition today signed by a number of people from the Saskatoon area addressing the contract of former CEO [chief executive officer] Jim Fergusson of the Saskatoon Regional Health Authority. And I read the prayer:

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 consulting contract is immediately terminated.

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

I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise today with a petition from people concerned about the contract of CEO Jim Fergusson. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause this government to take the necessary action to ensure that the consulting contract is immediately terminated.

The people that have signed this contract are from Saskatoon.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member from Melville-Saltcoats.

**Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition to do with the former CEO Jim Fergusson, receiving monthly payments of \$13,000. The petition 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 consulting contract is immediately terminated.

The signators, Mr. Speaker, are from the city of Saskatoon.

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure again to rise on behalf of my constituents and some from a few other ridings, actually, of individuals concerned about the deficiency in residential support for people who have long-term disabilities. Here's the prayer of their petition:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to provide the funding required for additional residential spaces for Swift Current residents with lifelong disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, the petitioners today are from the communities of Vanguard, Ponteix, Waldeck, Swift Current, and the great town of Wymark, Canada. I so present.

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

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition regarding the contract that was offered to Jim Fergusson at \$13,000 a month. 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 consulting contract is immediately terminated.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by people from Saskatoon and Warman. I so present.

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

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, have a petition to present on behalf of those concerned about the contract of Jim Fergusson, 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 consulting contract is immediately terminated.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by citizens of Saskatoon. I so present. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition for citizens that are concerned with the exorbitant money that was spent to pay for consulting from Mr. Jim Fergusson, 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 consulting contract is immediately terminated.

The signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from the city of Saskatoon. I so present.

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

**Ms. Bakken Lackey:** — 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 health care facilities in our area, 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 facilities providing health care services in the constituency of Weyburn-Big Muddy are not closed or further downsized.

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

And the petition is signed by residents of Radville. I so present.

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present a petition on behalf of residents of Saskatoon who are outraged at the obscene consulting contract of former Saskatoon Health Region CEO, Jim Fergusson. 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 action to ensure that the consulting contract is immediately terminated.

The petition is signed by residents of Saskatoon. I so present, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Wood River.

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise with a petition from citizens that are very upset about the contract of Jim Fergusson. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that the consulting contract is immediately terminated.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by the good folks of Saskatoon. I so present.

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

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition here where citizens are calling on this government to resurface Highway 15 from the junction of Highway 11 east to the junction of Highway No. 2:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that this portion of 15 Highway be repaired or resurfaced immediately so as to remove the safety hazard to all motorists who rely on this vital road for transportation and economic purposes.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by good citizens from Hanley, Regina, Sedley, some residents from Alberta, Kenaston, Imperial, and Warman. 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.

As is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens of Vanscoy and Delisle and area. I so present.

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

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today as well regarding the outrageous contract of Jim Fergusson. I would like to read from the prayer for relief:

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 consulting contract is immediately terminated.

This petition, Mr. Speaker, is signed by good citizens from a variety of constituencies in Saskatoon, all of whom identify themselves as former NDP [New Democratic Party] supporters, Mr. Speaker. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. I would like to bring to the attention of the member from Saskatoon Southeast the rule 14(3):

On the presentation of a petition no debate on or in relation to the same shall be allowed.

I recognize the member for Kindersley.

**Mr. Dearborn:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to stand in the Assembly today and put forth a petition on behalf of citizens of west-central Saskatchewan concerned with the rerouting of Highway No. 51 to bypass the town Kerrobert. 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 steps to ensure that Highway 51 is rebuilt to go through the town of Kerrobert so that local businesses

may be given the opportunity to promote themselves to, and gain business from, patrons passing through Kerrobert.

Mr. Speaker, I have a large pile of these petitions, but today these ones are signed by citizens of both Kerrobert and Kindersley. I so present.

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

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of the people that are against the forced amalgamation of schools. 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.

As is duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good people of Love, Saskatchewan.

#### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Deputy Clerk:** — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed, and pursuant to rule 14(7) are hereby read and received:

A petition concerning the consulting contract of Jim Fergusson — that's sessional paper no. 800;

And addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional paper nos. 97, 639, 640, and 798.

#### NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 106 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for SaskPower: for the year of 2005, how many staff members in SaskPower were working on the issue of the Kyoto accord and its impact on the province of Saskatchewan? If these employees were not employed strictly for this purpose, what percentage of their time was spent on developing a plan to help Saskatchewan meet its Kyoto objectives?

Mr. Speaker, I have similar questions for the year of 2004, 2003, and 2002. And, Mr. Speaker, I also have a similar set of questions for the Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy.

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

**Mr. Dearborn:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 106 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Health: in the long absence of a representative from Kindersley on the Heartland Health Region, when will a representative from this community be appointed to the board?

Further, Mr. Speaker, I give notice I shall on day no. 106 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Finance: what portion of the Municipal Employees' Pension Plan pension liability is currently unfunded, and what portion of the pension liability is currently funded?

Mr. Minister, I have a great deal of questions similar in nature around pension liability. And I so present.

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

**Hon. Mr. Wartman:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the rest of the Assembly — actually somebody that needs no introduction — former member of this Assembly who was with us at the CPA [Commonwealth Parliamentary Association] dinner last night. In your gallery, Walter Jess, and accompanied by his wife Ellen Woods, who was a classmate of mine at St. Andrew's College.

Walter, as many may well know, is a farmer, raises cattle and we're glad to have some time with him last night. But he reported to me something that I was quite concerned about and I probably should be informing the rest of my colleagues about this. That he did report that this past while he had a case of angry cow on his farm. And it was such an angry cow that they couldn't — when they were taking it to market — they couldn't even get it out of the trailer. They had to finish the cow right there in the trailer. But I think it's probably the only case of angry cow we've got here, and Walter is doing a great job in keeping a lid on that.

So thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to introduce him and I ask all members to welcome him here. Thank you very much.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to all members of the Assembly two people sitting in the east gallery. One of them is Dorothee Neibuhr, a German exchange student from Rheinbach, Germany. She is 16 years old and is currently attending Luther College. She will graduate this June. She studied her first semester in Quebec and is now in Regina to try and improve her English language skills. She is the youngest of three children. Her mother is a teacher and, unfortunately, her father is a lawyer — something that I can relate to, Mr. Speaker. And she is accompanied today by Elaine

Courchene, who is a resident of Regina. Elaine is my CA's [constituency assistant] sister; my CA is Rita Flaman Jarrett.

And I would like to ask all members to welcome Elaine and Dorothee to the House today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

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

**Hon. Ms. Beatty:** — Mr. Speaker, I am so honoured to introduce to you and all of the people in the Assembly here 20 exceptionally good-looking young people from La Ronge, Churchill School. They're in grade 9 and they're sitting in the west gallery. And they're accompanied by their teacher, Christine Ravenis, and also chaperones, Susan Greene, and Frank Clinton. And I might also point out, Keewetin Trottier, who is one of the best cross-country skiers in Saskatchewan — for sure in the North.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to have everybody join me in welcoming the students to the House today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this House, 16 beautiful students from the Three Lakes School at Middle Lake, Saskatchewan which happens to be the school that I attended.

So they're being led today by Michelle Daubenfeld their teacher. And chaperones are Shirley Ann Hauser, Murray Hauser. Murray in his younger days, him and I spent a lot of time on the road with show cattle so I know him well — good to see you here — Colette Hauser and Irene Giesbrecht. So if you'd all welcome them. Thank you.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery this afternoon are 38 grade 7 students from St. Philip School in the constituency of Saskatoon Nutana. These grade 7 students are joined by their teachers, Ms. Prins and Ms. Levesque, along with their principal, Mr. Jelinski. In addition they are joined by two teaching assistants, Ms. Trager and Ms. Bender. They also have accompanying them today, because it is a large group of students, three chaperones. I'd like to welcome Randy Epp, Amy Layton and Bev Shivack to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the students enjoy their time here and I will be meeting with them directly after question period for refreshments and pictures.

So I'd ask all my colleagues to welcome these students and their chaperones, teachers, and principal to the Legislative Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the Assembly I would like to introduce two people that are sitting in your gallery, Joan Corneil, who is the economic development coordinator from the North Battleford area, and Joseph Esquirol, a small-business person from the same area.

We had a very interesting meeting this morning talking about the proposed High Gate dam in the North Battleford area and it was a very interesting discussion we had with them and the other members of the committee. So please join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join my opposition colleague in introducing and welcoming Joe Esquirol, the president of Empire Welding and Machining in North Battleford, and Joan Corneil, who is the economic development director for the city of North Battleford.

Members on this side this morning also had a very interesting and enjoyable presentation on the dam project in the Battlefords area. We were very pleased with the information that we received and the effort that they made to come and talk to us.

So I join my opposition colleague and ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Members, it's my pleasure to introduce three exchange students who are here today, and they are good friends of one of our Pages, Shanna Schulhauser. The exchange students are Daniela Cedillo, who is an exchange student from Mexico, and she is studying marketing; Sandra Ruiz, who is also an exchange student from Mexico, and she is studying journalism here in Regina. And they are also accompanied by Verena Osieck, who's an exchange student at the University of Regina, and she is from Germany.

So I welcome these students to this Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job

**Ms. Morin:** — Mr. Speaker, 17 years ago Saskatchewan

became the first jurisdiction in all of Canada to make today, April 28, a statutory day of mourning for people who were killed or injured on the job.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say it was my colleague, the member for Moose Jaw North who, at the request of Nadine Hunt, then the president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, introduced the private member's Bill proposing this very legislation. And, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that this Assembly passed the Bill unanimously. Now the day of mourning is recognized all across the entire nation.

Mr. Speaker, it was on April 28 that Canada's first workers' compensation Act was passed. It has now become a day to share the grief of those who have lost a loved one, and it is also time to renew our commitment to ensuring the safety of workers.

It saddens me to note that in the last 12 months 21 people have lost their lives to a work-related injury or illness here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, it is the responsibility of every one involved in the workplace to identify and control health and safety hazards on the job. It is our responsibility as members of this Assembly to support workers' rights and safety with the legislative tools at our disposal.

This is a sad and special day, Mr. Speaker. I ask this Assembly to recommit to keeping our occupational health and safety legislation strong and all laws that regulate conditions in the workplace. I ask this Assembly to recommit to ensuring the health and safety of all Saskatchewan workers.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Canora-Pelly.

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the official opposition to acknowledge the National Day of Mourning and to remember and pay tribute to the workers who died on the job or were injured in any manner.

Last year in Saskatchewan 26 people died on the job. One life lost is one too many. Although every job has its risks, it's important for us as legislators to do everything possible to provide safe and healthy workplaces.

Education and training is key, particularly for young employees who are perhaps enthusiastic about a first job but not that knowledgeable about the risks and safety precautions. It's important to educate both employers and employees about workplace hazards and it is important to practice safety first.

As legislators we must not only set good examples as community leaders, but we must encourage safe workplaces through legislation. We must make efforts to improve health and safety standards. And we must take steps to ensure that the workers' compensation system is working for employees when they need it most.

Today is an appropriate time to renew our commitment to safety in the workplace. It is important that this Assembly pay tribute to Saskatchewan workers who lost their lives this past

year, and to the families, friends, and loved ones that they left behind.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Women of Today Awards

**Ms. Eagles:** — Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was honoured to attend the seventh annual Women of Today Awards luncheon at the Beefeater Plaza in Estevan.

These awards are sponsored by SaskPower and Quota International of Estevan with funds raised through this luncheon supporting the violence intervention program and also the placement of sound field FM [frequency modulation] systems within Estevan schools. These systems amplify the teachers' voices through speakers to allow children to hear more clearly and consistently.

Winners of the 2005 awards were: the Ida Petterson Memorial Award for outstanding entrepreneur, Lorna LaChambre; the SaskPower Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Workplace, Lori Carr. And incidentally, Mr. Speaker, the recipient of that category in 2004 was Margaret Duncan, who later on this afternoon will receive the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal.

The Shirley Orsted Memorial Award for Young Woman of Today went to Kayla Seipp, and the SaskTel Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Community went to Tressa Friess.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating all recipients and nominees. They are truly women of today. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### La Ronge and District Citizen of the Year

**Hon. Ms. Beatty:** — Mr. Speaker, as we all know, Saskatchewan's volunteers are an integral part of the health and vibrancy of our communities. Every day people from across the province generously donate their time and skills to ensuring that we all live in a better place.

Mr. Speaker, one of these people is Lynnette Merriman from my constituency of Cumberland, who was recently named La Ronge and district's Citizen of the Year, sponsored by the Kikinahk Friendship Centre.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Merriman has been the driving force behind several community and parent groups in La Ronge. She is the president of the La Ronge Figure Skating Club, head of the parent committee for the La Ronge Air Cadets, and is involved with Precam and Churchill parent councils. On top of all this, Mr. Speaker, Ms. Merriman is currently operating a

home-based business and co-parenting five children, who are equally as active and community minded as she is.

Mr. Speaker, in her nomination Ms. Merriman was described as a dedicated, hard-working, reliable, fun, creative, and gracious woman. And although she is humble about receiving her award, she is a worthy recipient and an excellent role model.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all my colleagues will join me in congratulating Lynnette Merriman and the other two nominees, Flora Roberts and Mary Anne Baxter, on their achievements, and in thanking them for the important work they do in strengthening their communities. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Saskatchewan Population Statistics

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, we regularly hear from government members who are very quick to point out any favourable bond rating or other positive statistic. Most of these things happen in spite of — and not because of — the NDP government.

I've got some very sorry statistics that I would like to point out today to see whether the NDP are going to take the blame for. Statistics Canada reports Saskatoon and Regina top the list of Canadian cities for brain drain. Regina lost 1,300 students or 7 per cent more of its 2001 grads than it gained in return. Saskatoon lost 1,400 students or 6 per cent more than it gained in 2001.

Sask Learning has responded by saying that the data is dated and the real situation is improving.

Mr. Speaker, the unfortunate reality is that our population is flat or in a decline. The most recent Statistics Canada information shows that between October 2004 and January 2005 this province has lost nearly 1,000 people, or point one per cent of its population. Only Nova Scotia has done worse than Saskatchewan. Manitoba's population is now almost 20 per cent higher than Saskatchewan's. This NDP government . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Order, please. Order, please. Order, please. I just ask members to allow the statements to be read, and I remind members also that these statements are not debatable. They are statements that are standing on their own and ought not to be responded to. I recognize the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should go and start again from the beginning, but I'll pass on that. Manitoba's population is now almost 20 per cent higher than that of Saskatchewan. This NDP government has become a group of old, tired CCFers [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation]. In Saskatchewan, NDP unfortunately now stands for either never-ending departing people or never-ending decline of population, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Corner Gas Wins Screenwriting Award

**Mr. Borgerson:** — The *Toronto Star* has hailed it as sheer genius. The Halifax *Daily News* called it absolutely, gut-wrenchingly funny. It was labelled a comedy coup by the *Winnipeg Free Press*, and wickedly funny by the *Leader-Post*. Mr. Speaker, I'm talking of course about the television hit series *Corner Gas*.

Mr. Speaker, this widely acclaimed sitcom recently won a Writers Guild of Canada award for best screenwriting. Brent Butt, Mark Farrell, and Paul Mather won the award at the 2005 Canadian Screenwriting Awards for a *Corner Gas* episode they wrote called *Comedy Night*.

Mr. Speaker, since its premiere in 2004, *Corner Gas* continues to rank among the top most watched television series in Canada. Every week about 1.3 million viewers tune into the sitcom, starring Gemini nominee and renowned comedian Brett Butt.

Mr. Speaker, *Corner Gas* is entirely filmed in Saskatchewan — specifically in Rouleau — and at the Canada-Saskatchewan Production Studios in Regina, and it's just one example of the province's vibrant, competitive, and flourishing film industry. The sound stage has proven to be a good investment and has contributed significantly to the growth experienced in the film industry in the past year.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in congratulating everyone involved in the making of *Corner Gas* and particularly the recipients of the Canadian Screenwriting Award. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

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

#### Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Meeting

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night was the annual meeting and report of the CPA. This is a very special occasion for elected members, former members, and the legislative staff. Of special interest was a presentation of the Centennial Medal to Mr. Bernard Korchinski, a former member of the Assembly from Redberry. Mr. Korchinski was born in the year this province, Saskatchewan, became a province — 1905. And it was a pleasure to see that former politicians do not lose their ability when a podium and microphone are placed in front of them. Well done, Mr. Korchinski.

Mr. Speaker's report on the Ukrainian election was also very interesting. It shows that each of us can play a role in bringing a functioning democracy to nations around the world.

The pièce de résistance, however, of the evening was the Hansard report. I'm sure a number of members in this Assembly resemble the depictions in the Hansard report. The



role of government should not be to interfere, but rather to assist and help out in a time of need or crisis. To this end, Mr. Speaker, I offer the following to Hansard for use as needed during any verb drought: rate, select, implant, elect, typify, butt, vanish, ban, furbish, participate, theorize, venerate, eject, abate, cling, cleave, sicken, meander, and the one I'm about to use now, Mr. Speaker, sit. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### ORAL QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

#### Treatments for Drug Addictions

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, as the opposition Saskatchewan Party, we've always said we'll congratulate the government when they do something right. Today the NDP government has finally followed up on what we've been saying for the last year about crystal meth and other addictions, including targeting education programs in our schools, public awareness campaigns, voluntary meth watch program, and a helpline for families.

We also understand that the minister again is directing his officials to improve in-patient services for young people with addictions, as he did in the budget. Can the minister tell us today where the services will be provided and how quickly will they be provided? What is the specific plan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank all members of the community, especially the businesses that are involved with the meth watch program; the member who is the Legislative Secretary, who is looking at this; members opposite; all the people who have contributed various ideas to things that we're doing.

The specific question here relates to treatment beds, and we specifically are expanding the mental health treatment beds for young people at the refurbishment or renewing of the Hantelman Building in Saskatoon. That will deal with the multiple diagnosis where there's addictions and mental health.

We also have probably about another 12 beds that we're now looking at where they should be across the province. We anticipate some of those will be in Regina. They may be in some other communities as we proceed to do our analysis.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That really wasn't a specific plan. It's still looking at a lot of things, and we don't have anything . . . we don't have the question when answered. Another thing we have not heard this government talk about today is help for families whose children are already addicted.

On Monday we heard a grandmother who was pleading with this government to give her the tools to get her granddaughter back. Mary, her granddaughter, has been living with a known drug trafficker for almost a year, and that family has no recourse to get her into treatment.

Yesterday I introduced a Bill that will help fix this problem and will help many families get their Marys back. Will the government allow this Bill to proceed to second reading today?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Mr. Speaker, I think it has been contention of the member opposite that the government should set aside politics and allow this Bill to go forward. I would have to say that I would be irresponsible if I did not look thoroughly at the content of the Bill, its implications for both the children, their responsibilities and freedoms, as well as the parents' rights and freedoms.

And we do have a section 18 of The Child and Family Services Act which I am currently testing in regards to its ability to fulfill this objective. And I think we need to be careful as we proceed with legislation.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, that section of that Bill is something that I want to talk about today. Mary's grandmother has written us a letter about her meeting with the minister and the government officials on Monday. And here is what she had to say:

We explained our situation and after my husband (Ken) broke into tears, the Minister of Community Resources and Employment indicated to us that she was in favour of moving towards the apprehension of our granddaughter, at which point Marilyn Hedlund [an official] . . . basically squashed the ability for this to happen. [The question is] . . . who runs this show?

Mr. Speaker, if the minister doesn't have the power to act then, we need different legislation. Again, when will the government allow this Bill to go to second reading?

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

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I do believe . . . And I don't want to be too contentious because I am very sympathetic to the plight of families who stand by and attempt to intervene and have very little control over what's happening with their children.

Now for children under 16, the law is quite specific; they can be apprehended. For children over the age of 16, they're considered to have more adult rights, and they are asked

voluntarily to make decisions.

We now are looking at — through this strategy that was announced earlier today through our Legislative Secretary and through the work of my department — we're looking at whether that is sufficient and what other measures legally need to be taken. And I can assure you I take this most seriously. And if the member opposite had been sincere in her efforts to move this forward, she might have provided me with some discussion of this Bill at an earlier time.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, let's talk about sincerity. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Richard Rosen is a researcher at the UCLA [University of California, Los Angeles], and he is the leading expert on forced treatment programs. This morning at CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] radio he said that involuntary treatment is necessary. He said, and I quote:

At the time they are using, it may not be really possible for them to make a voluntary decision to enter treatment. However, once they are put in treatment and they don't have any choice, the treatment process can often take hold and motivation can emerge where it hasn't before.

He adds:

The research literature is very clear that people will respond to treatment if coerced into treatment at the same rate that they will if they enter into treatment voluntarily.

In fact this morning he told the CBC radio that involuntary treatment can sometimes work better.

Mr. Speaker, the experts have talked about it. We don't have to look at this any longer. We have to act. There are families that are demanding help right now from this government. When will this government do something for the children in this province?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ignore that highly offensive comment . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Order, please members. I would ask members, including the member for Regina Rosemont, to make an effort not to have any comments tossed across the way that may be personal. Let's stick to the issues, members. The Minister of Community Resources and Employment.

**Hon. Ms. Crofford:** — Mr. Speaker, I am working in all sincerity with the family. And I have to say I find this misrepresentation of the Alberta Bill, which will not come into effect until July 2006 which suggests that even when you are in fast-forward, you have to carefully consider the number of

children you are locking up under what circumstances and to what end.

So I will say that we are considering this . . . [inaudible] . . . I have huge sympathy with the parents and grandparents. No parent could help but. And I will do everything I can to assist them in their efforts to bring their daughter back into their fold.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Behaviour of Health Official

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, six weeks ago the Minister of Health promised to look into allegations regarding his department and officials, that they made insulting comments to a woman who was seeking reimbursement for an out-of-province MRI [magnetic resonance imaging].

Brenda Goulet of Moose Jaw called the manager of medical support, Mr. Jim O'Carroll, to ask about coverage. What she received was nothing more than a deplorable response. She was asked as to whether she smoked, whether she was premenopausal, whether her mother was laying in a hospital somewhere. That's the response she received. Brenda said Mr. O'Carroll told her that if she threw in a few tears, maybe they would review her file. After that, she decided not even to send in her claim because she was intimidated.

To the minister: has he conducted the investigation to these deplorable comments made by Mr. Jim O'Carroll?

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, the directions were given to the deputy minister to deal with this matter in the department. It's a personnel matter, and they are working at it.

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

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been six weeks and his department has been looking at it. Brenda Goulet, to this date, has heard nothing from the government — not a letter, not a phone call, not a word in six weeks. And the minister stands there and says, his department is working on it. That absolutely is unacceptable.

Mrs. Goulet is afraid to put in her claim because she feels this minister probably supports the disrespectful behaviour put forward by Jim O'Carroll.

Mr. Speaker, here's a quote from the minister when we brought this up the last time:

Every citizen of Saskatchewan deserves . . . [the] respect in the care that . . . is provided.

Six weeks later, Mrs. Goulet hasn't heard a word from his department or from this government, Mr. Speaker. Does this

minister stand up and support the conduct that the Department of Health has shown Ms. Goulet?

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I will stand on my reputation as a person who cares about people and works with people, and I am offended when a member of this House casts aspersion on my reputation.

And so what I would say, Mr. Speaker, is that this legislature is not the place where you attack civil servants, which we hear on a regular basis. Mr. Speaker, they are people who are doing some very difficult jobs, and they are not always doing things that we would condone. But, Mr. Speaker, we have appropriate procedures within the department to deal with this particular issue, and, Mr. Speaker, they are working on this particular matter.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the member and all of those people across the way to just remember how they treat our very good, professional, civil servants.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Brenda Goulet would like to file her claim to Sask Health, but she doesn't believe she'll get fair treatment both because of the disparaging remarks made by Mr. O'Carroll and the fact that she's gone public. That's what people that access this system, that run up against the health system and don't feel they've had proper treatment . . . That's what people feel after listening to this minister, that they'll get unfair treatment, Mr. Speaker. Is that what he wants people to think of him and his health care system?

After six weeks, I think it would be the very least that he would instruct his department to at least get in touch with Mrs. Goulet and show her that they have listened to what she had to say and are going to act on it, Mr. Speaker. And once they do act on it, I'd be very interested to know what he plans on doing if the allegations are true with Mr. O'Carroll, because this isn't the first time his judgment has come into question.

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I think that member knows that I respond to these particular concerns in very appropriate ways, using the procedures that we have to deal with disciplining of these people. And, Mr. Speaker, that information and those challenges will be dealt with.

I also reject the perspective that people are afraid to send in their applications. Those things should go forward. And we actually do have procedures whereby matters are appealed or dealt with at other levels, and that's entirely appropriate as well, Mr. Speaker.

And so what I would say is, I encourage that member to temper his criticism of our civil servants and watch how he describes

these people who provide services across the province.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

[14:15]

### SaskTel's Investments

**Mr. Kerpan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this NDP government, through SaskTel, has made five major out-of-province investments in the past few years: Navigata, Craig Wireless, and Soft Tracks in BC [British Columbia]; *tappedinto.com* in Nashville; and *Retx.com* in Atlanta, Georgia. An interesting aside on Retx, Mr. Speaker — the name was recently changed to Nokomis Holdings. And I doubt very much that the government consulted with the folks up at Nokomis about this because I'm pretty sure that they would not want to have their community's name attached to this stinker.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, the total invested in these three companies is \$103.5 million — 103.5 million Saskatchewan taxpayers' dollars, Mr. Speaker, invested in BC, Nashville, and Atlanta. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the minister could please advise this House what these five companies are worth today.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for SaskTel.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Mr. Speaker, we reported this in the tabling of the annual reports to the end of 2004. Mr. Speaker, the external investments, the amount of money invested was, I believe, the exact number was \$152 million. The estimated value of those companies right now, Mr. Speaker, is estimated at between 255 and \$300 million, an appreciated value of about \$100 million, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

**Mr. Kerpan:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister's figures are somewhat different than what I read in the report. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the net worth of Navigata, in which the NDP has invested \$56 million, is now worth \$13 million. *Tappedinto*, the NDP invested \$7 million, and it's now worth \$300,000. Soft Tracks, the NDP invested 5.2 million, and it's now worth 15,000. Craig Wireless, the NDP invested \$10 million. Mr. Speaker, it's bankrupt. Zilch.

And Retx in Atlanta, Georgia, is also bankrupt. The NDP invested 24.6 million, and if you can imagine, Mr. Speaker, it's now worth less than nothing. They lost their entire investment, and they still owe \$100,000 in legal fees.

Mr. Speaker, that means the NDP's \$103 million investment portfolio is now worth \$13.5 million. That's a loss of \$90 million, Mr. Speaker. Why has the NDP lost 90 million

Saskatchewan taxpayers' dollars in BC, Nashville, and Atlanta?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for SaskTel.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well again the opposition Conservatives say one thing, and the facts say another thing. Here's the difference, Mr. Speaker. Here is the difference. I read the whole report, as did the people of Saskatchewan. I read the whole report, not the items that that member is referring to, Mr. Speaker. Again you can look at this any way you want, and the opposition Conservatives can look at it the way they want, Mr. Speaker.

But let me try and describe it at least for the people of Saskatchewan, with the facts, if the opposition doesn't want to listen. You can look at this as an investment, a basket of investments like a mutual fund, if you will. Not every single investment always makes money. At the end of the day, what you want to be concerned about and what you want to be sure of is that you make a profit at the end of the year.

I assure, Mr. Speaker, to the people of Saskatchewan, the external investments that SaskTel has made — \$152 million — is now worth estimated 255 to roughly \$300 million, good investments for the people of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

**Mr. Kerpan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions, Mr. Speaker, to the minister were about these five stinkers. And I would ask him to stand in this House and to tell this House that Retx is worth more than zero, that it's worth \$24.6 million that this government has invested in Retx. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it's worth less than nothing.

Mr. Speaker, this government's lost \$90 million on bad investments. That would hire roughly 1,500 nurses right here in Saskatchewan. It could mean that 215,000 low-income earners would pay less income tax, and 70,000 low-income earners would pay no tax, or that \$90 million could go a long ways to fully funding the CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization] program or help struggling farm families right here in Saskatchewan. But that's not going to happen, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want somebody from that side to stand in their place and tell me why they can justify losing hard-earned profits from our Crown corporations that would be better spent right here on services and programs right here in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for SaskTel.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I'll review *Hansard*, but I think I heard that member say, don't tell

me the whole story. I don't want to hear the whole story. I think that's what he said. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's almost laughable. That's what has been going on with those opposition Conservatives for the last quite a few years, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when I say that you can compare this to a mutual fund, I think it's an excellent comparison with this one noted exception. Mutual funds — their sole purpose is bottom line, Mr. Speaker. SaskTel goes beyond that, Mr. Speaker. Their service, their additional item that they need to provide, Mr. Speaker, is they also want to provide service. Like every other company, and I note here as an example, Mr. Speaker, a recent article, "Shaw Communications enters the phone market." As it relates to Navigata, that was an item they just referred to, they're entered into voice over Internet protocol, like many other companies across North America and across the world, Mr. Speaker. It's important that we let SaskTel do the work so they can provide service to the people of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **Agreement Between Federal Liberals and Federal New Democrats**

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week when the Prime Minister of the country went on national television, he was followed by the Leader of the Opposition, and then by the leader of the current provincial governing party here, Mr. Layton. Mr. Layton, even on that occasion, began to at least intimate that he would be interested in a deal to prop up the federal Liberal government. We know over the weekend that there were media reports saying he was going to negotiate such a deal. He was going to offer to prop up the federal Liberal government down in Ottawa.

The question to the Premier is simple: did the Premier call his federal counterpart then on the weekend or late last week while this agreement was being negotiated, and did he let Mr. Layton know about the priorities of the province of Saskatchewan? Did he specifically request that Mr. Layton make Saskatchewan priorities a part of this deal to prop up the federal Liberal government?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, in answer to the question, the answer is yes. I spoke to the Leader of the federal New Democratic Party as he went into a negotiation with the Prime Minister about Saskatchewan's priorities and about Canadians' priorities. And, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the federal Leader of the New Democratic Party has achieved for Canadians what the Leader of the Conservative Party failed to achieve, Mr. Speaker.

Now you see, Mr. Speaker, they say one thing, but here's the fact of the matter. We have a situation in the nation's capital today where the Leader of the Conservative Party is willing to climb together with the separatists of Canada to force an

election, where they are willing to join the separatists, these Conservatives, willing to join the separatists. For what reason, Mr. Speaker? For one reason only — political opportunism, political expediency. The Leader of the New Democratic Party has forged an arrangement with the Prime Minister of Canada for the good of Canadians.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question to the Premier: did he then ensure that more assistance, more agriculture assistance for Saskatchewan producers and an energy accord for our province were part of that deal Mr. Layton made with Mr. Martin?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, again the opposition is saying one thing, but here are the facts of the matter. His colleagues in Ottawa, the Conservative colleagues of that leader and that party in Ottawa, had an opportunity when the budget was presented to the House of Commons to speak on behalf of Saskatchewan people — to speak and act on behalf of the farming people of Saskatchewan, the producers of Saskatchewan. And what did those Conservatives in Ottawa do when they had the opportunity? They sat on their hands. I ask the Leader of the Opposition, has he been in contact with his leader? Has he talked to the leader of the Conservative Party in Ottawa to ask why they are not supporting the producers of Saskatchewan?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — So we know then that the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan phoned his federal leader, Mr. Layton, while Mr. Layton was going into the back rooms of Ottawa with Buzz Hargrove to negotiate a deal with Paul Martin to prop his government up.

We also then know, we also know, however, that that deal includes nothing for Saskatchewan farmers, Mr. Speaker. It includes no energy accord, no long-term agreement for a better equalization deal, Mr. Speaker, which leaves us with the sad spectre that the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan not only has no influence with the leader of the Liberal Party. He apparently has no influence with the leader of his own federal party, Mr. Speaker.

If he raised these concerns with Mr. Layton, why are they nowhere in this deal with the devil to prop up the federal Liberals? Where is the support for producers in Saskatchewan? Where is an energy accord for our province?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — In terms of an energy accord for the province of Saskatchewan, real progress is being made in real substantive ways — real progress that doesn't require rhetoric or the political opportunism that's being expressed by the Leader of the Opposition today in this House, the same kind of political opportunism that characterizes Conservatives in this country no matter where they sit, whether they sit in Saskatchewan or they sit in Ottawa.

Imagine, Mr. Speaker, a political party, the Conservative Party of Canada, willing to align itself with the separatists — with the separatists. For what reason, Mr. Speaker? For what reason? Simply because they enjoy a small bump in the polls, they're willing to sign up with the separatists for their political advantage.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Jack Layton, leader of the New Democratic Party, went to the Prime Minister of Canada and worked a deal for the people of Canada. This deal will mean, this deal will ensure that the continuation of the monies for Saskatchewan producers will be on. This will ensure new resources for the municipalities of Saskatchewan. It will ensure new child care funding and new resources for the students of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier talks about political opportunism. If the question to the Saskatchewan Party is, would we take every single opportunity to fight for better and improved aid and assistance for farmers in a time of crisis, the answer is, yes. If the question . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please, members. Order. Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Wall:** — If the question is, would we take every political opportunity we could to fight for an energy accord and for a better equalization deal for Saskatchewan, the answer is yes, Mr. Speaker. Imagine this. We have this Premier, the leader of the . . .

**The Speaker:** — Sorry. Order, please. Let's just allow the question to be put in a manner that's befitting of this Assembly. The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, imagine the spectre of this Premier's national leader propping up a government that is sagging under the weight of the biggest political scandal in the country's history — under corruption, Mr. Speaker. We know that the Premier of this province actually phones Mr. Layton and presumably makes the case for Saskatchewan, but it's nowhere in this deal with the devil, Mr. Speaker. It's nowhere in this deal to prop up the federal government. Why doesn't he have any influence even with his own national leader, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition knows full well that in conjunction with the federal New Democratic Party we have stood on behalf of Saskatchewan people and the people of Canada. The question today, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan is, what exactly is the position of the leader of the Saskatchewan Conservative party? The question today is, has he phoned the leader . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. And now the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Now the question is, has the leader of the Conservative party in Saskatchewan phoned the leader of the Conservative Party in Canada? Does he support this unholy alliance between the Conservative Party of Canada and the separatists of Canada for their political advantage? Has he talked to the leader? Does he support that position?

And let me say this, Mr. Speaker. I'll tell you why he's asking this kind of question today — because he is a leader and they are a party who cannot stand good news. You know, you'd think they'd be up on their feet today talking about the GDP [gross domestic product] results for the people of Saskatchewan. The results that say, Saskatchewan real GDP, third highest in the country. The result that says, personal income growth, second highest in the country. The result that says, nominal GDP growth, first in the country, Mr. Speaker. It's funny they don't want to talk about good news.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

##### National Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today is the National Day of Mourning For Workers Killed Or Injured On The Job. On average almost four workers are killed every working day here in Canada; hundreds of thousands more are injured, some permanently.

[14:30]

Last year 21 workers from Saskatchewan died as a result of injury or illness suffered on the job and more than 14,000 others were injured seriously enough to need time off work. In fact, Mr. Speaker, since 1999 more 160 Saskatchewan men and women have died on the job and over 86,000 have been injured. The toll of these deaths and injuries has been staggering.

Mr. Speaker, today is indeed a day of mourning. We mourn the working men and women who have lost their lives building our province and our country. With the families left behind we grieve the loss of mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters. And on this day our heartfelt sympathy and prayers go out to all who suffer the pain every day of knowing a loved one will never return home again.

Mr. Speaker, today is also a day of renewed commitment, a day

to renew commitment to ending workplace deaths and injuries, a renewed commitment to work for the day when all workers will return home safe every evening.

Mr. Speaker, this evening there will be memorial ceremonies across the province, and I would ask that everyone take time to honour the memory of the 21 Saskatchewan workers who have died as a result of job-related injuries or illness in the last year. And, Mr. Speaker, at the end of my comments I would ask that we observe a moment of silence in this Assembly.

But first, Mr. Speaker, it is my duty to read aloud the names of those Saskatchewan workers who have died over the last year as a result of job-related injury and illness to put their names on the permanent record of our Legislative Assembly and this province and for us all to commit to renew our efforts toward safe work places.

Daniel Shalley, Wesley Wheeler, Kade Anderson, Denis April, Lonny Renas, Jeffrey McAleer, Albert Parker, Robert Ripka, Blake Vance, Leslie Stratton, John Hennessey, David Bannerman, Richard Marx, Robert Campbell, Susan Hoffart, David Williams, Robert Shackleton, Robert McKay, Daniel Sidloski, Neil Fraser, and Donald Poisson.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — By leave of the Assembly would all members please rise for a moment of silence.

[The Assembly observed a moment of silence.]

**The Speaker:** — I thank all members. Please be seated.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### Bill No. 118 — The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority Act, 2005

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

**Hon. Mr. Forbes:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 118, The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority Act, 2005 be now introduced and read the first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Environment that Bill 118, The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority Act, 2005 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? I recognize the Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Forbes:** — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting. I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — With leave to introduce guests.

**The Speaker:** — The Premier has requested leave for introductions. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. I recognize the Premier.

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — On behalf of all members, to welcome to your galley, a number of the family of the late Gordon MacMurchy. In your gallery, Mr. Speaker, Gordon's daughter, Joyce MacMurchy of Regina, his son, Mark MacMurchy of Regina and his wife Caroline, who many of us know from her work here in the building and MacMurchy's grandson, Todd MacMurchy of Minot, North Dakota.

I would ask all members to welcome the family members who are here today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes 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 responses to written questions 1,016 through 1,021 inclusive.

**The Speaker:** — Responses to questions 1,016 to 1,021 inclusive have been submitted.

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

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

#### CONDOLENCES

**Hon. Mr. Calvert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today at the close of my remarks, I will make a formal motion of condolence to note the passing of Mr. Gordon Samuel MacMurchy. The motion will be seconded, I believe, by the Leader of the Opposition.

Before making the formal motion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make just a few personal comments. As all members in this House know, we mourn the loss this week of Gordon MacMurchy, long-time member of this legislature and long-time servant of the people of Saskatchewan and his own community and family.

Mr. Speaker, at services that were held this past week for Mr. MacMurchy, his friend and his colleague, former premier Allan Blakeney called Gordon, quote; "a true son of the soil". The *Leader-Post* story, Mr. Speaker, that ran on the weekend hailed Gordon MacMurchy as a champion, "a champion for rural

Saskatchewan."

Mr. Speaker, as a school board trustee, as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], as a member of cabinet, as the mayor of Semans, as Chair of the Living Sky Health District, and in many other roles, Gordon MacMurchy spent 40 years — 40 years in public service.

The athlete that we knew in Gordon was a self-described black and white politician. Few shades of grey in Gordon's opinions. His decisiveness was legendary. The same decisiveness that was behind home plate when he was umping a ball game. The same decisiveness, toughness, and determination that was honed in the hockey arena characterized his work in public service and his work in this legislature.

His contributions and accomplishments resonate right across our province.

During his term in Education, Gordon MacMurchy was an innovator. His legacy in Education includes introduction of physical education to the core curriculum, publicly supported rural kindergartens, teacher collective bargaining, and the community college system. All of which, all of those initiatives still serving well the people of Saskatchewan and those involved in learning.

In Municipal Affairs and Housing Gordon made lasting contributions, establishing the municipal revenue sharing and community capital funds. He was extremely instrumental — and I well remember this — in expanding senior citizens low-rental housing.

But perhaps above all, in terms of Gordon's service in this legislature, he is remembered as minister of Agriculture. And his impact on agriculture and rural Saskatchewan was indeed profound. He was instrumental in a number of important initiatives: the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation, the Beef Stabilization Board, the farm lab program shared between farmers and the University of Saskatchewan. He had a deep devotion to the farming community of Saskatchewan and to the agricultural base of this province.

Now I have to say, Mr. Speaker, on a personal note that Gordon also played a very active role in the United Church of Canada. He found much time to serve in his own local congregation in Semans United Church. I know that Gordon presided over many services of worship as a lay leader and a lay preacher I know he spent years teaching Sunday school and leading youth groups.

And, Mr. Speaker, I had the honoured pleasure to have a few words with Gordon on the telephone just days and hours before he passed away. And I so deeply appreciated that conversation. His vibrant interest yet in public affairs and political affairs in the province. But I am told by members of his family that after that conversation, Gordon appreciated that I had called. But not that a politician had called, not that a premier had called, but in fact that a United Church minister had called, because he was keeping tally. And his hunch was the more United Church ministers that would phone in that last week, the better chances he had in getting past the Pearly Gates.

I was pleased to phone Gordon as one who deeply, deeply admired the individual; deeply, deeply admired his conviction, his determination, his decisiveness; deeply admire the contribution that he made to the people in the province of Saskatchewan. And so, Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, I move, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition:

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

**Gordon Samuel MacMurchy**, who passed away on April 20, 2005, was a member of this Legislative Assembly from 1971 until 1982. He represented the constituencies of Last Mountain and Last Mountain-Touchwood for the New Democratic Party.

Mr. MacMurchy was born on July 4, 1926 in Semans. He received his early education at Alexandra School and later graduated from the Semans High School. Mr. MacMurchy married Jean Neff on September 7, 1949, and together they raised three children.

Mr. MacMurchy volunteered his time with a variety of local organizations, ranging from community boards to his church. He was a prominent supporter and participant in amateur sports such as hockey and baseball. He was inducted into the Saskatchewan Baseball Hall of Fame in 1989, and awarded their Special Merit Award in recognition of his years as an athlete, coach, and referee.

Mr. MacMurchy's concern for the well-being of the communities in which he lived was evident in his lengthy record of public service. He was first chosen to represent his community as a trustee on the Govan School Board. Later, Mr. MacMurchy served as mayor of Semans for 15 years and as chairman of the Living Sky Health District board from 1982 until 2002. In his private life, Mr. MacMurchy was a farmer. This background led him in 1982 to set up the Family Farm Foundation, which encouraged research and public education on family farming issues.

Mr. MacMurchy's dedication to a life of public service was recognized by his investiture into the Saskatchewan Order of Merit in 1999. He was also awarded a lifetime membership in the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association.

Mr. MacMurchy was first elected to this Assembly in 1971, and successfully retained his seat in the following two elections. He served in the cabinet of Premier Blakeney throughout his tenure in this House. He was responsible for a number of portfolios, including Education, Continuing Education, Municipal Affairs, and Agriculture. Mr. MacMurchy's interest in politics extended beyond elected office. He was active in the New Democratic Party and served in several capacities, including director and president of the party.

In recording its own deep sense of loss and bereavement,

this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathy with members of the bereaved family.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion of condolence with respect to Gordon MacMurchy, moved by the member for Saskatoon Riversdale, the Premier, seconded by the member for Swift Current, the Leader of the Opposition. Is the Assembly ready for the question? The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today on behalf of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition to offer our sincerest condolences to Gordon MacMurchy's family, friends, and former colleagues.

I did not have the opportunity to know Mr. MacMurchy personally. It's clear though that he was a very dedicated and hard-working MLA, community leader. He was well respected by all of his constituents, I am told, in Last Mountain-Touchwood, including those who didn't vote for him necessarily. And that is an achievement, to be sure.

Mr. MacMurchy's community reaped the benefits of his persistence as a politician, volunteer, and community leader. A few of his outstanding achievements in provincial politics include the passage of mandatory seat belt legislation, which has saved thousands of lives over the years; the founding of the community college education system; and the founding of the Family Farm Foundation, as the Premier has just alluded to, which encouraged research in public education on farming issues. He was dedicated to agriculture and was a strong advocate for producers and for agriculture issues.

As the members of this Assembly know, public life isn't necessarily easy. It can be rewarding, but it's not necessarily easy. It takes a tenacious and dedicated individual to serve his constituents for one term, let alone three — 11 years in the case of Mr. MacMurchy as the MLA for Last Mountain-Touchwood from 1971 to 1982. Our province is a better place for his efforts. And that is a claim I think that all of us here in this Assembly and frankly anyone from across the province would like to be able to make.

Outside of politics, I understand that Mr. MacMurchy was an avid sportsman, dedicated his time to hockey and baseball. Not only did he participate in amateur sports, but he coached and officiated. His involvement in sports over the years resulted in his induction in the Saskatchewan Baseball Hall of Fame in 1999.

We thank him for his commitment to his community and to this province that we love. His achievements will no doubt long be remembered, and not only by his family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition, Saskatchewan Party, and all the members of the Legislative Assembly, it's a pleasure to second the motion just put forward by the Premier and to express our sincerest condolences to Gordon MacMurchy's family and friends.



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

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a real honour for me to stand today and to recognize just a terrific politician, a terrific person, a person that I first became aware of in about 1970. Those were exciting times.

Before I go into those exciting times I do want to say it's a bit intimidating to have some of Gord's family — who I welcome here, welcome their presence here — but it's intimidating to speak of such a great man in front of family, knowing that we want to say all of the appropriate and truthful things about Gord, and we want to say them to the best of our ability. It's also a bit extra intimidating because I worked with Caroline directly for 13 months, and those were 13 happy months from my perspective. And I want to share that I went canvassing with Mark MacMurchy in my constituency, and I was darned glad he wasn't running against me because I'm not sure that I would come out on top of that. But he was a great person to have on my side, with me, and working.

The '70s were just a tremendously exciting time. The Premier has talked of, spoken of some of the accomplishments of that era and of Gord MacMurchy. So has the Leader of the Opposition. And as we stand here today on this April 28, the National Day of Mourning for injured workers, I can't help but be appreciative that Gord MacMurchy was part of the group that brought occupational health and safety legislation here to Saskatchewan. He brought Bob Sass here. And many of us will remember Bob Sass going around the province saying, workers have the right to know, workers have the right to refuse dangerous work. And of course they still have that right.

Gord MacMurchy . . . I have not heard anyone mention land bank yet, and I know that Gord would have been proud of his part in introducing land bank for Saskatchewan farmers. It's a program, I think, it's indicative to me of the Gord MacMurchy that I will always remember. And that is the Gord MacMurchy that was part of a large group, a government caucus, that discussed issues and then took a stand. And Gord MacMurchy was always . . . You could count on Gord MacMurchy to be front and centre supporting whatever the decision was. And it's truly the mark of the man, a mark of that time, if I can describe it that way.

I also know him on a bit of a personal level in that the very first time I ran, Gord MacMurchy ran for this very legislature. I was a little more fortunate than Gord was in that 1986 election in that I was elected, and he was rejected at that time. I think the province would have been better had the decision been made a little different, but that's history.

I know that Gord MacMurchy respected all people, and he respected people of all political stripes. I know that he respected people that took a stand, even a stand that he didn't agree with. But for Gord, many things were black and white. And he enjoyed the vigour of the debate, and he enjoyed reaching conclusions that were usually for the betterment of all of our province and all of the people.

I know that he respected action. And I also know that he had a very deep and long-standing sense of duty, Mr. Speaker. That's

clear from Gordon MacMurchy's record of service that certainly started in his community long before he was elected to this Chamber and continued in his community. Just by way of one quick example, he was the mayor of Semans for 15 years from 1982 to 1997. And that's a real tribute to the people of Semans for recognizing his tremendous abilities and his desire to serve and be an integral part of his community.

I know that he had a huge commitment to his family because for 11 years while Gordon MacMurchy was a member of this Legislative Assembly, he would get up in the morning in Semans, drive to Regina, complete his daily task, and drive back to Semans, where he spent virtually every night in Semans, as opposed to . . . I know the easy way would be to just find an apartment or take a motel room in Regina on the busy days, but my understanding was that Gord cared deeply about the community and family and the sense of belonging and his commitment there.

I also know that he had very, very strong co-operative ideals, believed very, very strongly in the co-operative movement. In that I think it's fairly safe for me to say that the MacMurchys and the Trews, if I can draw that parallel, are fairly kindred spirits.

Make no mistake — Gordon MacMurchy knew he was a New Democrat and never wavered, never vacillated from that position. And he had a deep commitment to his family.

Mr. Speaker, there was more than 500 people gathered out at Semans the other day. My regret . . . I'll start with my joy. My happiness was when they had a Gordon MacMurchy appreciation event some years ago when it was clear that he was not going to be seeking re-election into this Chamber. I drove out to Semans and it was just amazing to be with a huge crowd of well-wishers and people that clearly respected, liked, admired, and wanted to say thank you, faithful servant, for doing your job so well. That's a happy memory.

A less happy memory for me is our inability to attend the funeral which was on Wednesday, a day when this session is on and simply the numbers in the Chamber are too tight to allow all of us who would have wished to be at the funeral to be there. But such is life.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express my condolences to Gordon junior and Carol, to Mark and Caroline, Joyce, and grandchildren Todd and Kari, Tyler, and as well as Gordon's sister, Margaret, and his special companion, special friend, Edna McPherson.

Mr. Speaker, it's been an honour to express my condolences to the family and friends and relatives of Gordon MacMurchy. I say to them, congratulations on being part of the support group that allowed Gordon MacMurchy to live such a full and complete and honourable life. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm certainly pleased to be able to rise in this Assembly and pay tribute to a former member of this Assembly, Gordon

MacMurchy, who represented the constituency that I now represent, that being Last Mountain-Touchwood.

The Premier and the Leader of the Opposition and the member from Regina that just spoke about Gordon had mentioned some of Gordon's attributes as a sports person and as a political person. And I guess my first remembrance of Gordon MacMurchy and the first time or one of the first times that I met him was when he represented the constituency that I live in and now represent. Marlene and myself and our young family were just starting farming in the mid-'70s. And I remember one sunny afternoon, a hot afternoon in July, and a car drives into the yard — and I was busy hauling malt barley that day — and this individual gets out of the car and walks over to the bin and it was where I was loading this grain, and here it was Gordon MacMurchy. I mean that was the first elected official that ever drove on to our yard, and so I took . . . you know if he took the time to drive out to our farm I thought it would only be respectful and proper for me to stop what I was doing and stand and discuss the issues that he came to talk to me about.

The issues that we talked about that day were issues relevant to agriculture. At that period of time in agriculture, Mr. Speaker, we had problems of getting our product from the farm to the ports. There was a shortage of rail capacity to deliver our products. We had customers willing to buy our products at the ports and pay good prices for our products but the railroads, for whatever reason . . . part of the reason was the structure of the freight rate and perhaps it was some of the . . . part of the reason was their inability to make initial investments. And so therefore we had that bottleneck. And that was of great concern to many young farmers such as myself as to the viability of our farming operations.

So I discussed this matter with Gordon. I believe he was the minister of either transportation or Agriculture at that time, I'm not sure. But he certainly had a keen interest in those problems. So we discussed it at length. And I urged his government to get involved in solving this problem. At that time the federal government had decided as a solution to that problem was to make an investment in buying some hopper cars. And I believe Alberta, the province of Alberta, was either considering it or had done that. So I suggested that the Government of Saskatchewan do that. Well some time after that the province did buy 1,000 hopper cars. Now I'm not sure and I certainly wouldn't stand in this House and take credit for any of that, but I remember that was an issue that we discussed.

And what I remember is that Gordon MacMurchy listened intently. The reputation that he had as an MLA in Last Mountain-Touchwood is that Gordon MacMurchy would listen to the constituents' concerns and take them forward and see if they could be solved. And that was the reputation that followed him throughout his political career and to this day. As a matter of fact, I spoke to one or two community leaders after Gordon had . . . that we got word that Gordon had passed away, and that invariably was the message . . . well basically two messages. Gordon MacMurchy was very concerned about rural Saskatchewan and he was a good MLA for his constituents. And this, Mr. Speaker, came from constituents who didn't necessarily vote for him. And I think that's a tribute that each one of us would like to have paid us when we're done with our time here in this legislature, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

And I think some of that came from Gordon's great love and involvement in sports. He was known . . . I certainly am not an athlete and have very few athletic abilities, but I have many good friends and neighbours who were good athletes — baseball players, hockey players — and who, particularly in baseball, who participated in baseball when Gordon MacMurchy was officiating. And he was known as a tough but fair official in that sport, Mr. Speaker. And I think that speaks well of any individual.

And so therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say to the family that although many of us, including myself, disagreed with him politically and some of his political policies, I think we all respected him as an individual, Mr. Speaker, and I think that is a legacy that the family can take great comfort in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Prebble:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very honoured to be able to rise and say a few words about Gordon MacMurchy. I had the great privilege of serving with Gordon in the Blakeney government from 1978 to 1982, and Gordon MacMurchy was a pillar of strength in the New Democratic Party cabinet and caucus as well as in the legislature. And he was a very good mentor for those of us who had just been elected, Mr. Speaker, in terms of displaying what a strong cabinet minister can accomplish.

My colleagues have made reference to many of his accomplishments in government. When I think about Gordon's record, I think of it first in terms of the very broad range of interests he has. The Premier has made reference to his contribution to the community college system. I think about his very strong interest in seeing improved health coverage for Saskatchewan residents, and of course those were the days where the Saskatchewan drug plan was expanded, the children's dental plan was introduced.

Gordon had a deep, deep knowledge of transportation issues, Mr. Speaker. He was the most knowledgeable member of the caucus on matters of transportation. And of course, as has been referenced here this afternoon, he played a very important role in the establishment of the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation and improving access to port for grain commodities.

Mr. Speaker, when I think of Gordon I think of somebody who also had a very, very deep passion for the family farm and preserving the family farm and putting in place public policies that would ensure the long-term viability of the family farm in this province. And Gordon spent a lot of time thinking and working and consulting with others in terms of advancing this work in our province.

Gordon MacMurchy, Mr. Speaker, had a very kind heart. He was an interesting combination of kindness and toughness — of the willingness to listen and also the desire at the end of the day to be decisive. And he brought a very special mixture of qualities to this legislature that served the people of this

province very well.

My colleague, the member for Regina Coronation Park, has made reference to the fact that Gordon would travel each day back to Semans and he treasured the time with his family. He would often arrive of course home late at night. He also valued the driving time as time for thinking. And Gordon would compose some of his best speeches and conceptualize some of his best public policy while he was driving back and forwards on the road. And he valued that time, Mr. Speaker.

I think clearly today, Mr. Speaker, we're honouring a great public figure in our province and I would say a great Canadian politician, Mr. Speaker. And I'm very, very glad to have had the opportunity to serve with him, and I want to join with others in expressing very sincere condolences to his family. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Brkich:** — It's a great privilege to get up and talk about Gordon MacMurchy, for he was a constituent of mine. He became one in the election of 2003 when they changed the borders. I guess my only regret is that I didn't get the time to sit down and talk to him because I think he'd have had a lot of stories from his time here, sitting here as a former MLA . . . which when I've talked to other former people that have served here, I found that quite interesting. In fact I was looking forward running into him when I campaigned in the town of Semans, but that day he wasn't around that day. So I was sorry I missed him.

But one thing I did find when I did campaign around the town of Semans was, you know, we talked about politics, and he was very respected, a very respected man in the community. They were very proud that he had come from there and proud of the work he had done, not only in his political life here, but also mayor of Semans. Being a mayor for 15 years goes to say that the people of that town respected and put their trust in.

And also, I see he was also a school trustee, so he was a man that believed in public life, that dedicated his life to public life. And when, I think, each and every one of us leaves here, I think we would like the people of our hometown to talk about us in the same way that the people of Semans had talked about Gordon MacMurchy when I campaigned around there. And I think that's what we are all striving for. And I know that each and everyone one of us is working towards that. It would be an honour that if they would talk about us as well as the things that I'd heard about Gordon when I campaigned around there.

I won't touch on too many of his accomplishments; they've been talked about here. They are many of them, looking at . . . But I will touch a little bit on the seatbelt legislation, for when that came on, I was a teenager then when that particular piece of legislation was . . . And it was talked about quite a bit by myself and peers. But I can see that he had the foresight to put it through because it was a bit of a contentious legislation at that particular time, you know, for mandatory seatbelt use. But that particular piece of legislation, like my colleague has mentioned here, you know, has saved thousands and thousands of lives along there. So that was one of the things that he can be, you

know, remembered for.

I will talk a little bit . . . I can see that he also received the centennial medal just before he passed away, and I believe that he rightly deserved that. I know that he will be remembered as a strong, dedicated humanitarian for the work he's did and for the public life. So on behalf of the residents of Arm River-Watrous, I want to wish the family our deepest sympathy and our condolences.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Yorkton, the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too am honoured this afternoon to rise and just say a few things about my recollections and my association with Gordon MacMurchy. I had the opportunity to attend the funeral along with my colleague, Mr. Hart, and . . . or the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood, Mr. Speaker. And I listened carefully to some of the words that were mentioned during the eulogy and they described Gordon as a man who has left a long legacy.

He was a true humanitarian. He constantly strove to improve people's lives and to improve his community and to improve his province. And he was always a team player, a man of action, a doer, someone who had initiative, initiated ideas that would effect positive change in someone irrespective of what their political interest or affiliation was, as others have spoken of today.

And Gordon wanted to enrich the lives of those with whom he came into contact. And he felt a sense of duty to his community and for sure to the province. And many described that today as how lasting it has been and many have described the many, many contributions that he has provided through 40 years of public service.

And I came to know Gordon about 20 years ago, well before I had an opportunity to know much about what the activities of this Assembly were all about. And as we . . . as I came to work in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, along with the various different portfolios that I've had, I noted, as he did, that much of the work that he did in government are portfolios of which I as well carried. And I must say, Mr. Speaker, that he has become my mentor.

And on many occasions whether it was in the ministry of Agriculture, or in the ministry of Education, or that of Municipal Government, it would be Gordon from whom I could have a conversation with because he'd had first-hand experience in dealing with many of the issues that were unchanged as we dealt with them over the last 10 years.

As we were working away on our farm Bill nationally, I had a conversation with Gordon about some of the positions that the province should be taking. And he said to me one day, you need to stay firm in your conviction. You need to get those dollars for Saskatchewan producers and farmers. And you could work hard in convincing your colleagues to do that, I know, he says.

And he told the story that the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood touched on just briefly. Because when the farmers were needing to transport their grain because our

old wooden hopper cars weren't working very well, Gordon went about to make his own decisions. And so what he did is he went out and bought a fleet of his own, a thousand hopper cars for Saskatchewan. And not only did he ensure that we had 1,000 hopper cars for Saskatchewan, he at that time spoke with Hugh Horner, who was the Alberta deputy minister . . . or deputy premier of Agriculture and convinced the Alberta government that they should too buy hopper cars for their producers as well. And they did.

They spent \$55 million, bought a hopper car fleet for Saskatchewan and then went to their cabinets respectively and said, we've got a good deal for you boys and girls. And Gordon had a way of doing that. Now, I don't suggest that that's a good practice, Mr. Speaker, but I can tell you that from time to time it works. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you from time to time it works.

Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to speak with some of the family members. And we all know what a wonderful sports participant Gordon was, a competitive rival both on the baseball field and in hockey and our associations were similar in terms of who we supported. And the Toronto Maple Leafs of course are a wonderful, wonderful Canadian team of which Gordon had a strong affinity for, as did his family members — just a couple.

Mark is a strong fan, wears the maple leaf proudly today, Mr. Speaker. His son Gordon and Mark's brother, Gordon, is a Montreal Canadian fan. And so, it's left now to Mark to carry the maple leaf tradition within the MacMurchy family. And from time to time he can call on me, if he chooses and I'll help him support the cause once the Maple Leafs are back in the field again, or back on the ice again.

My most vivid recollection of Gordon MacMurchy was in 1990. I was at that time, Mr. Speaker, working in my office for a public agency in Yorkton called SIGN [Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours]. It was about 9:30 at night and of course, in October, it gets dark earlier. And there's this knock on the window. Of course, it's quiet all over the place and there's a knock on the window and it startled me, I have to say. Because as I turned around to look through the window, here's this large face and hands peering into my window. And it's Gordon MacMurchy saying to me, let me in, let me in.

So I let Gordon into my office and we have a conversation. And he was there recruiting members for the New Democratic Party for the election campaign of 1991. And I have to say that I was so startled, Mr. Speaker, by his presence, I could not say no to run in that election campaign, Mr. Speaker.

But it says something about who Gordon was. He continued his work in his community, as many have mentioned; continued his work for farm communities and farm families across the province; was a mentor to many of us in the work that we do in this Assembly; and continued to serve his own community in the capacity of the mayor's work. And for sure, Mr. Speaker, had always worked hard to make sure that the work and tradition of the NDP was well recognized and ensured that his presence was visible.

[15:15]

In fact as I said to the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood, when we were at the funeral on Thursday, or on Wednesday, that we should hold an election today in Semans because I think we would probably win today with a large majority if we held that election in Semans, Saskatchewan. There were many, many people there, Mr. Speaker, from all across Saskatchewan because they recognized the tremendous accomplishments and commitments that Gordon has made to our province.

And so today I want to extend to the family of the MacMurchys my personal condolences, and to thank them for giving us your father and your grandfather for the period of time that you have, in making Saskatchewan a far better place to live and raise our families and work. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Hamilton:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to be able to enter into the tribute and the celebration of life of a great man who served Saskatchewan well through his position here in the Saskatchewan legislature.

SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and New Democrat conventions are not going to be the same without Gordon MacMurchy at the mike. Anyone watching could hear, quietly at first, a very logical, thought-out debate. And as the mood went on and the tone raised, you could gather information from Gordon, and he could sway the crowd to his point of view through his debate and dialogue at those microphones.

And when you wanted to know how to touch people and get them on your side or just to go out and reach others, you could follow Gordon MacMurchy and he would show you how to work a crowd, Mr. Speaker.

For me it's been a privilege and an honour also to have had some time to work with someone I'm very proud of, Gordon MacMurchy's niece, Michelle Oussoren. Michelle's mom, Marg, has been mentioned here earlier today in the debate, and her dad, John. Marg and John have always opened their home, which was once their cottage but now their home, at Crystal Lake to anyone who came near, and that's myself included.

And those times that I was able to get near the MacMurchy family in action it gave me a window to a warm and a loving family who were always in action. And, Mr. Speaker, when you had the chance to look through that window into the life, the family life of Gordon, you would also be able to see in evidence the pride he had in Caroline and Michelle and any of the family that he loved so well.

Many, many years ago as a young woman aspiring to political life, Gordon in his quiet and loving way was a staunch supporter. People have mentioned mentor — he would offer that to anyone. But he was also very encouraging and very respectful of a young woman who wanted to enter public life. He always took the time when you came close to give you that hug.

As my colleague and member from Regina Elphinstone and I

were talking, he wanted someone to mention not only through the travels and the ball teams and the sports events, that Gordon took time and was always in close relationship with the File Hills and the Touchwood First Nations and the First Nations members that he visited with. The people who touched his life and he touched theirs had a high regard and respect for the work of Gordon MacMurchy. And I know that all members would want to know of his work in putting forward the issues and concerns of First Nations.

Today I offer my words of condolence in honour of a wise, quick-witted, hard-working social democrat who touched the lives of so many, many people. I think as some of us have been honoured to be on our feet and speak for a few moments, others have in their minds been reminiscing about the life of Gordon and the way he touched their hearts as well.

Today I also offer my love and prayers to all his family. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too want to offer my comments in support of my colleagues and Gordon's colleagues in terms of a tribute to a great man.

I have to tell you, Gordon MacMurchy is one of the first politicians I ever remember meeting. It was in about 1978 and he had come to Kindersley to support my father's bid for a seat in this legislature. Now I have to say my father was unsuccessful in that campaign, and obviously could have learned a thing or two more from Gordon. But it was an unusual circumstance as a child for me to come into contact with political people. And one of the things I found remarkable about Gordon MacMurchy is just the physical presence of the man. He was such a strong, powerful, and as the member for Saskatoon has referenced, compassionate person. He was a unique combination in that regard.

I have to say over the last week that I've had the opportunity to travel the province in my work as a member of this legislature, I have had much opportunity to talk to citizens of the province who have shared with me their remembrances of Gordon. And there were, I guess, depending on who it was you were talking to, each would speak to some important issue that he had addressed to them.

I think about having dinner the other night with my mother and stepfather, and talking about Gordon's passing. And my stepfather was reminding me that this was the Education minister who had brought in province-wide bargaining. I was a little concerned when he said, now that's an Education minister. I suspect it was more of a testament to the impressive record of Gordon than a comment on his stepson's current handling of the file. But nevertheless, it was one of those things that he reminded me that the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] council had come and filled this Chamber, to listen to the powerful words of Gordon MacMurchy in expressing why we needed province-wide bargaining for the STF.

I had later an opportunity to speak with Wayne Steen, who is of course now the Chair of the Sask Rivers School Division. He

reminded me of the time as a . . . involved in Birch Hills politics as they were trying to get a community centre built there. And they had decided they would come down and speak directly, speak directly to the minister of Municipal Affairs, Gordon MacMurchy, about this.

He said they went in and Gordon had said, well this is a very interesting proposal you've got as to why you need a facility built. And I accept that and I appreciate that, but the onus is on you to go out and raise some money. Now you go out and raise that money and we'll match you. Wayne says they did exactly that. They accepted that that was the case, went out, raised \$160,000, came back down the next week and said, we'd like your matching cheque. Well Gordon said, okay, of course, that was what the commitment was that he had given and yes, he would make good on that. And I think the program ended later that day.

But he was a man who kept his word. He was a powerful force in Saskatchewan politics. I very much have appreciated knowing Mr. MacMurchy in his time here. He was always very generous with his advice, very kind in his comments, and very sensitive in making sure that his criticisms were expressed to my chief of staff, Caroline, as opposed to me.

He always had a love and an interest in this province. And I share the regret that many of us in this Assembly did, that we were unable to attend the service in Semans the other day. But I think Gordon would have understood and I think appreciated the fact that we were here in this legislature that meant so much to him, continuing with the work years after he left active politics for causes he still so much believed in.

He was a man who changed Saskatchewan. He was a man who represented his constituency, who loved his family, and really is someone that I think we all aspire to be more like. Mr. Speaker, I want to join members of this Assembly in paying tribute today to Gordon MacMurchy.

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker. I want to add just a very few words to this tribute. I had the honour and the pleasure to have many conversations with Mr. MacMurchy, but these words are for my brother, Ralph.

He phoned me yesterday, or on Tuesday actually, the day of the funeral, and said that he wanted me to convey to the MacMurchy family and the people of Saskatchewan from his new role as vice-president of Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

When Ralph started teaching, effectively, social geography and the whole area at the University of Regina, one of the people who was extremely supportive of what he did was Gordon MacMurchy, after he had left politics but was involved in rural Saskatchewan life. And they worked on many different things together related to the Family Farm Foundation. But one project that they did on behalf of the, actually it was the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, The Saskatchewan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, and the Family Farm Foundation, was a study called volunteers in rural

Saskatchewan. And this was published in January 1991 after quite a number of years of work.

And I know that Ralph wanted to thank his family and him for that kind of leadership around this particular issue, which continues to become an area of concern for all of us in Saskatchewan. So my condolences to the family and my respect for a great man.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion of condolence with respect to Gordon MacMurchy moved by the Premier, the member for Saskatoon Riversdale, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Swift Current. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Government Relations.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to move a motion of transmittal.

**The Speaker:** — Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the member from Regina Coronation Park:

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

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member for The Battlefords, seconded by the member for Regina Coronation Park:

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

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, to make way for a very special occasion, I move the 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 15:29.]



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Minister of Crown Management Board  
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