



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

---

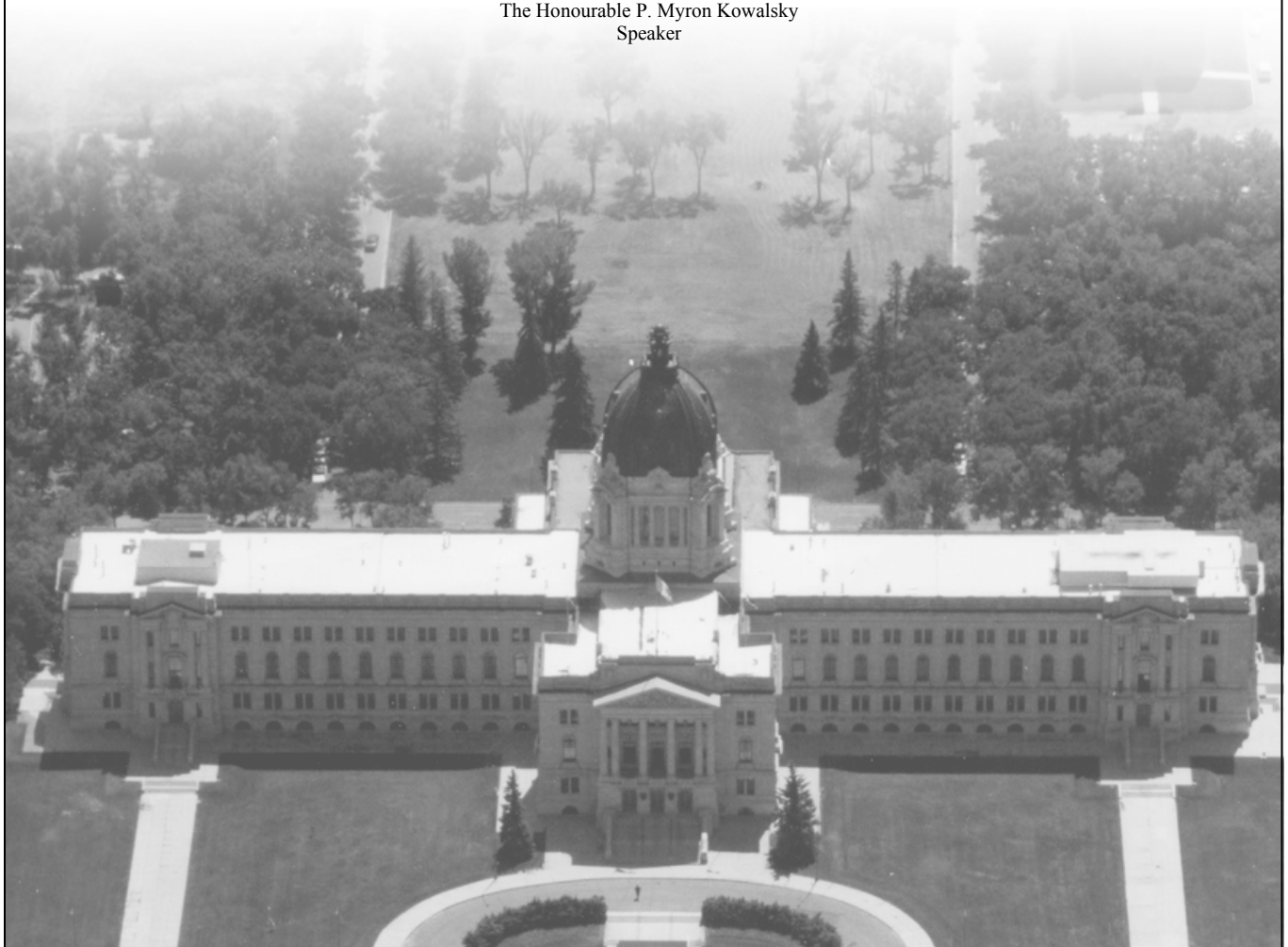
**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

---

(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of

The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

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

<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 Cypress Hills.

**Mr. Elhard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to present a petition on behalf of constituents primarily from the community of Leader very concerned about the continuing deterioration of Highway 32. The prayer reads as follows:

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

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

I so present.

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

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to present a petition regarding 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.

And this is signed by citizens of Estevan and Steelman. I so present. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have a petition with citizens concerned about the consulting contract that was signed with 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.

And the signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from Viscount, Clavet, Allan, Watrous, and Martensville. 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 deplorable state of Highway 35 south of Weyburn. And the prayer reads:

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

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

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

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise today to present a petition on behalf of concerned parents in the constituency of Saskatoon Silver Springs regarding a much needed elementary school in the Arbor Creek area of Saskatoon. 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 implement an allocation of financial resources to build an elementary school in Arbor Creek.

The petitioners today live on Peters Cove, Wright Crescent, Overholt Terrace, and Kucey Terrace in northeast Saskatoon. I so present, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition here that's calling on the government to repair or resurface Highway 15.

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 No. 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 Bladworth and Kenaston. 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 from constituents opposed to possible reductions of the health care services in Biggar. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Biggar Hospital, long-term care home, and ambulance services maintain at the very least their current level of services.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

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

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

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to rise today and talk on the excessive contract of Jim Fergusson, the Saskatoon Health Region. 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.

Signed by the good people of Clavet and Viscount.

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

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present another petition regarding the contract of Jim Fergusson. I will read 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.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from Clavet, Bradwell, and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

**Mr. Dearborn:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise today in the Assembly to present a petition on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan outraged at the excessive contract to Jim Fergusson. 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.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from the town of Clavet and Bradwell.

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

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise with a petition from the people that are upset with the Jim Fergusson contract. 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.

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

Mr. Speaker, it's signed by the good people of Saskatoon, Viscount, and Clavet. I so present.

### 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 as addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional paper no. 72, 97, 637, 640, 666, 715, 730, 800, and 808.

### NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 115 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Agriculture: what was the cost of issuing the Farm and Food Report for 2004?

And I have the same question for 2005.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Mr. Elhard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege for me to introduce to you and through you to all the members of the Assembly here today, a young man sitting in the gallery directly behind me. This gentleman is Kevin Wasko who is working in my office, my constituency office, for the summer. Kevin is a soon-to-be-graduated honours student in political science from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, but he is a constituent of mine by birth, by birthright, and by duty, Mr. Speaker.

Kevin's family ranch in the Eastend area, and he spent his entire schooling at the Eastend high school. He went far afield to get his advanced education. We're glad to give him an opportunity to show how the real world of politics operates as opposed to the book learning that he's had to date.

Kevin is going to be the valedictorian of his graduating class. That happens on May 30. We're very proud of him in our community, and I'm especially pleased that he's working with me and has the opportunity to be here today. Would you please help me welcome him.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Ms. Beatty:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to the members of the Legislative Assembly Gary Tinker of Pinehouse — and they're sitting on the west gallery, by the way — George Ward and Randy Stomp. And they're all members of the Gary Tinker Federation in La Ronge. And we just had a very pleasant lunch at noon along with the member from Athabasca.

As most of you know, the Gary Tinker Federation is a non-profit organization that exists today because in 1989 Gary Tinker, a young man with cerebral palsy, took it upon himself to make the 650 kilometre walk from La Ronge to Regina on crutches to raise awareness about the needs of people with disabilities in northern Saskatchewan. For us in the North, Mr. Speaker, he's a great role model and an inspirational leader. And we're also very proud of him.

And a few weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I had the pleasure of attending the Gary Tinker Federation 15th anniversary celebration and disability conference in La Ronge where Gary was also awarded the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal.

And on a personal note, Mr. Speaker, I know that Gary had another goal, and that was to meet Her Honour Dr. Lynda Haverstock. And he had the chance to do that yesterday. On top of that, he had the opportunity to meet a whole bunch of classy First Nations and Métis women who were all after him because he had such a great jacket and he smelled good, one of them said, because of the tanned moose hide.

So, Gary, welcome to the House. And I hope that all of you have a pleasant trip back to La Ronge. I envy you that you're heading back North. Thank you.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming Gary Tinker, George Ward, and Randy Stomp to the legislature in the west gallery today. And I also would like to commend the strength and determination that Gary had to make the trek from the North down to Regina to bring forward the plight of people with disabilities. I really admire his courage. So please welcome the three gentlemen from the North to their Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to introduce to you, through you, and to all members of the Assembly four visitors seated in the west gallery today, Mr. Speaker.

As a commemorative gesture, I'm wearing a German tracht

jacket today, which is one of the costumes that one wears in Germany. And I'm doing this out of respect for the 50th anniversary celebrations that the German Canadian Society Harmonie is currently celebrating. And I'd like to introduce these four guests to you and ask them to stand as I introduce them, Mr. Speaker.

Our first guests are Winfried Schlosser and his wife Stephanie Schlosser. They have both been active members and organizers of the German Canadian Society Harmonie since its inception. One of my fondest memories is of Winfried playing the role of St. Nikolaus with the full traditional garb, for as long as I can remember. And now it is my daughter sitting on his knee every Christmas.

Our next visitor is Mr. Charles Mutschall. He and his wife have also been very active members and organizers of the German Canadian Society Harmonie and have initiated very many projects over the years.

Next we have Ray Fichter and his wife Ute Kocks. Ray is the current president of the German Canadian Society Harmonie, and both he and his wife are very active members of the organization as well.

And last but definitely not least we have Ingeborg Schlichtmann. She is the current principal of the German Heritage Language School of Regina and has been the driving force behind it for many, many years. My mother had the great pleasure of working with her as the vice-principal of the German Language School for ten years and enjoyed it immensely.

I welcome you to the House today and thank you very much for joining us in the proceedings. And I ask all my colleagues to do so as well.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the member from Rosetown-Elrose, I would like introduce to you, and through you to the members, 33 grade 8 students seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, from Rosetown Central High School. I would also like to introduce teachers Ken Boyd, Todd Weinhandl, Tana Brown, chaperones Jodi Slocombe, Wendy Wiens, and Jackie Krchov. I look forward with meeting with you later and having a visit and also getting our picture taken together. So please join me in welcoming the grade 8 students from Rosetown Central High School.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the Assembly sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, Terry Zahorski. Now Terry was just elected the new president of the Regina and District Labour Council about six or eight weeks ago. So I'm sure he's been learning his new role and keeping everything in order here in

Regina. And I would like all members to welcome him to the Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the Assembly, I would like to introduce 7 grade 11 students seated in the east gallery from the 33 Central School which is straight down Highway 33 to Fillmore, Mr. Speaker — and I do mean straight.

Mr. Speaker, along with the students is their teacher Andrew Kidd, bus driver Melvina Treble and chaperone Vernna Wiggins. I would ask the members to welcome them here today. I look forward to meeting them after question period.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if my eyes aren't deceiving me, I think I note in your gallery a former member of this Assembly, member for Turtleford, a former minister of the Crown, Mr. Colin Maxwell. And we want to welcome him back to his Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

##### Saskatoon Achievement in Business Excellence Awards

**Mr. Addley:** — Mr. Speaker, last night the Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce held its annual awards gala to honour businesses and entrepreneurs for their outstanding achievements.

Mr. Speaker, the winners of the 2005 Saskatoon Achievement in Business Excellence Awards are, for new business venture, Dakota Dunes Golf Links. In the growth and expansion category, the award went to Golden Opportunities Fund. For innovation, the winner was Today's Technology Marketing Group. The award for new product went to Display Systems International.

In the export category, the award went to Nu-Fab Burton. For customer service, the winner was Centennial Plumbing Heating and Electrical. The award for community involvement went to Brainsport The Running Store. The award of innovation went to Dr. Marianna Foldvari in the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition. The winner of the Athena Award was Gerlinde Sarkar. The Business of the Year is West Wind Aviation and Early's Farm and Garden Centre was inducted into the Hall of Fame this year.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all members will join me in congratulating the 2005 SABEX [Saskatoon Achievement in Business Excellence] winners and nominees on their achievements, and in thanking them for their significant and ongoing contributions to the strength of the economies of both Saskatoon and Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

##### Celebrate Success

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recognizing business excellence is an important element in creating a better business climate in our province, and it is a way to create a city of opportunity.

Last night the Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce and Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan presented Celebrate Success to recognize and celebrate the many successes of the business community. The member for Saskatoon Massey Place and I were able to attend this event to help honour the nominees and award winners.

Serving as MCs [master of ceremonies] for the event were Rob MacDonald and Teena Monteleone of CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] Saskatoon. Winners of the SABEX awards included Display Systems International in the new product category; Nu-Fab Burton in the export market category; Brainsport The Running Store for their efforts in community involvement. And the winner of the growth and expansion category was Saskatchewan's first and largest labour-sponsor venture capital fund, Golden Opportunities, led by Grant Kook.

The New Business Venture of the Year was the Dakota Dunes Golf Links. Centennial Plumbing, Heating and Electrical won the Customer Service Award. Today's Technology Marketing Group was recognized with the Innovation Award along with Dr. Marianna Foldvari from the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition. The Athena Award went to Gerlinde Sarkar of SIASST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology]. Congratulations also Spencer Early and Joe Bloski on being inducted to the Business Hall of Fame for their work with Early's Farm and Garden Centre.

And the big winner of the evening, the Business of the Year, went to West Wind Aviation. Congratulations to Dennis Goll, Maxine Montgomery and Denis Baranieski. Celebrating success is one way that we demonstrate why Saskatoon shines in so many ways. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

##### Youth Business Excellence Awards

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have seen the future and it is indeed very bright. On Saturday I attended the Youth Business Excellence or YBEX awards and trade show in

North Battleford. The event sponsored in part by Northwest Community Futures Development Corporation is a regional competition that showcases and presents awards to enterprising youth for excellence in business planning and management.

This year's winners list, Mr. Speaker, is extensive and it includes Chantelle Marshall from Macklin School; Taylor Jimmy and Karen Osecap from Moosomin First Nations School; Daniel Drieschner from Spiritwood High School; John David Mulder, Amanda Mulder, Luke Maddaford, Rebecca Macnab, and Carlie Tollifson from Turtleford Community School; Jenna Nemish from Blaine Lake Composite High School; Adam Merkosky, Kyle Esquirol, and Christopher Delainey from H. Hardcastle School in Edam; Nicholas Allaro, Ken Haang, and Tyson Poulin from Rivier Elementary School in Spiritwood; Kelsee Lang from the North Battleford Comprehensive High School; Shelby George from Bready School in North Battleford; Tyler Kaminski from NBCHS [North Battleford Comprehensive High School] in North Battleford; the John Paul II Health Club in North Battleford; and the North Battleford Junior Achievement group sponsored by the North Battleford Rotary Club.

I ask all members to recognize and congratulate these marvellous young people as well as the organizers and sponsors of this extraordinary event.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Provincial Volleyball Tournaments

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the weekend of April 23 and 24 brought some 49 girls' volleyball teams from across Saskatchewan together for the 16 and under women's provincial volleyball tournament in Saskatoon, as well as 18 boys teams from the 16 and under men's provincials.

I had the opportunity to take in some of the competition on Sunday, April 24, and watch my daughter's team, Biggar Club Smash, take bronze in tier 4 of the tournament, placing them 15th out of the 49 teams in the competition. It was a gruelling two days of competition, with the girls playing upwards of 10 games over the course of the weekend.

I'd like to congratulate Biggar Club Smash, which I am proud to mention is coached by my wife Cindy, for their achievement in the tournament. Also thanks to manager Terry Zimmer and coach Edward Young. The team members are my daughter Alex, Britney, Darci, Kaitlyn, Katelyn, Kaitlynn — all spelled differently — Robyn, Sarah, Sam, Shanley, and Shannon. Way to go gals.

I'd like to congratulate all the teams that competed in these tournaments, and special congratulations to the Landis boys team who took silver in tier 2 of their tournament. Way to go guys.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Special Screening of Documentary, *Ted's Story: Honouring Melissa*

**Mr. McCall:** — Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a few words about a documentary film called *Ted's Story: Honouring Melissa* that was recently released at a special screening here in Regina.

It's a film rooted in tragedy, Mr. Speaker. A number of years ago, Ted Gross was driving while impaired, ran a red light, and killed 21-year-old Melissa Hoeving. Ted pled guilty to a charge of criminal negligence causing death and served eight months in the Prince Albert Penitentiary.

Upon his release, he decided to pursue the idea of making a film to pay tribute to Melissa and to make a strong statement about the dangers of drinking and driving. The result is the documentary *Ted's Story: Honouring Melissa*. It includes interviews with Ms. Hoeving's parents, members of her family, one of her former teachers, and EMS [emergency medical services] workers who were at the scene of the collision.

The film looks at the accident and at impaired driving from a number of perspectives. It emerges that the effects of the incident are not just devastating but are also extraordinarily far-reaching, with its terrible shock waves reaching beyond the victim, the offender, and their family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, there was a special broadcast yesterday afternoon at 2 p.m., and SCN [Saskatchewan Communications Network] and Sask Learning encouraged all schools from across the province to watch.

Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge all those involved in the making of this film, particularly the Hoeving family and Ted Gross. In this work they have wrested something positive from tragedy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Meal Allowances

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, as elected members travelling around our beautiful province, we have the opportunity to meet many outstanding people. One such individual I've had the honour of getting to know is Gary Tinker. Gary lives in Pinehouse, north of Prince Albert.

He is physically disabled. In fact many of us in the same situation might consider his disabilities totally incapacitating, but not Gary. In fact 15 years ago Gary walked — using two crutches — from La Ronge to Regina to bring to the attention of government the plight of people on social services that have a disability.

Mr. Speaker, today people on social services who receive an allowance for meals for medical appointments receive \$15 a day — \$15 total for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Anyone who eats in a restaurant, especially in northern Saskatchewan where costs are considerably higher, know it is impossible to eat a

healthy diet on \$15 a day. Breakfast alone is normally \$7 in the North. Mr. Speaker, people with disabilities needing medical appointments have normally spent their \$15 by dinnertime.

In a have province where this government has had \$2 billion windfall extra in the last two years, it is unconscionable to let anyone — especially someone who needs our help — starve.

It is time this government was more concerned with the needs of citizens whose existence is tied to the whims of government than the politics that can be gained from films like the Tommy Douglas movie. Tommy wouldn't be impressed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you . . .

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

#### 50th Anniversary of German-Canadian Society Harmonie

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well in a pause of a lighter note, it is with a great deal of pride and a great deal of pleasure that I attended part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of the German-Canadian Society Harmonie here in Regina on Saturday night.

Mr. Speaker, the German-Canadian Society Harmonie has been part of my life for as long as I can remember. My parents, Franz and Marianne Grobmeier, were very active members, and that provided me with the opportunity to stay in close contact with my German cultural heritage.

I know traditional German folk dances and songs through participation in the club's dance groups and choir, and though I learned to speak German at home, it is thanks to the German Heritage Language School that I can read and write it as well.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that my daughter Morgan is now taking part in the Regina German club's dance program and attending the language school as well. I'm sure the experience will enrich her life as much as it did mine.

Mr. Speaker, in its 50-year history, the German-Canadian Society Harmonie has become an integral part of the life of this city. The German pavilion at Mosaic is a perennial favourite. For many years a tannenbaum, a beautifully decorated Christmas tree provided by the club, was a focal point of the holiday season here in Regina. And the glockenspiel in Victoria Park, only one of two in Canada, is a Regina landmark.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all members of the Assembly to join me in congratulating the German-Canadian Society Harmonie on 50 years of contributing to the social and cultural wealth of Regina. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## ORAL QUESTIONS

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

### Labour Legislation

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Business Council is asking a fundamental question in a news release today. And I quote from the news release: "Can you trust the Calvert government?"

The council says it's astounded to learn that this government thinks passage of Bills 86 and 87 is more important than keeping a promise on repealing most available hours. That promise was made unconditionally.

Mr. Speaker, the council is insisting this government keep its promise to repeal most available hours immediately. Mr. Speaker, the official opposition is willing. Can we do it today?

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

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, we discussed this at length yesterday. There's a number of Bills that are on the docket, have been there since last fall, Mr. Speaker. I don't know why the member is in such a rush to do things immediately.

Mr. Speaker, session in the spring normally lasts till the end of June, first week of July. We've got plenty of time. We'll have our members speak their piece on the legislation that's on the docket, and we'll continue with our agenda, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Business Council says delays in repealing available hours legislation are prolonging uncertainty in the investment community. According to a news release dated today, the council says, and I quote: "She misled business groups and the general public about the government's intentions regarding labour legislation."

Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader says he wants to keep all his Bills together and we have to do things in the proper order. I say, let's be bold and decisive — let's bring closure to this issue.

Mr. Speaker, will this government keep its promise today and kill the plan for government-directed hours?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I would question the comments from the Business Council. Mr. Speaker, all one has to do is look at the numbers on Saskatchewan's economy. We will lead all provinces in investment growth with 8.5 billion in 2005. That's a 13 per cent increase and double the national average. Mr. Speaker, the forecasters have predicted job growth of 1 to 1.5 per cent. But they've now revised that, Mr. Speaker, to 2.5. The Business Council should know that this province is on a roll, Mr. Speaker.



**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, I think the Business Council understands very well what's going on. A sentence from their press release today, and I quote: "Labour Minister Higgins . . ."

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order please. It seems that members — order please — that members are trying to out yell each other. Let's restore some decorum. Order please. I will invite the member to start over.

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, from the Business Council release, very clearly they understand. And the quote from the press release is this: "Labour Minister Higgins does not appear to understand . . ." That's a quote. That's a direct reference to the minister not understanding the process of consultation, not understanding what needs to be done before Bills are introduced.

Mr. Speaker, this government's approach appears to be completely backwards. The one Bill they did consult on, which is available hours, they said they would dump. And now they're stalling. The Bill they are not consulting on, Bill No. 87, is the Bill there is no consensus on, yet they're pushing it through. This is all wrong, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister of Labour suspend Bills 86 and 87 pending appropriate public consultations with stakeholders and a significant review of all labour legislation?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, during the first meeting that I had with the Business Council, they were very clear in demanding — and I say demanding — that we pull all labour legislation off the table, or my resignation. They requested my resignation.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — So, Mr. Speaker . . .

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

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, we know who butters their bread, don't we?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, and during consultations and as we have and as this government will continue to do, we look at the whole province and all stakeholders. Mr. Speaker, it would be irresponsible to just accept one stakeholder's viewpoint and put that into action.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'll give you a very clear example. On

October 5, Ms. Pollon from the CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] sent a letter to the WCB [Workers' Compensation Board] — and, Mr. Speaker, this is on the website, it's public information — and she gave a very nice discussion on WCB in BC [British Columbia] and Alberta. And then her final request, Mr. Speaker, was:

Given the many challenges facing Saskatchewan business owners, [the] CFIB strongly urges the Board to . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Order please. Order please. Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, the second last sentence is:

Given the many challenges facing Saskatchewan business owners, CFIB strongly urges the Board to freeze 2005 premium rates.

If we had listened to just one, there would be . . .

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for a moment there I thought that the Minister of Labour was going to be bold and decisive and announce her resignation.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Krawetz:** — But it didn't happen.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Business Council represents 51 organizations — the vast majority of businesses in the province of Saskatchewan. They have no faith in the Minister of Labour. They have no confidence in the Minister of Labour. They feel the Minister of Labour has been ineffective in communicating the need for these changes to the labour law. They believe the Minister of Labour doesn't understand the implications of her own proposal.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a good situation. When and how will this Minister of Labour begin the task of winning back the confidence of our business leaders?

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

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I mean the opposition says one thing but the facts are another. This government has believed in balance and putting forward proposals that benefit the province as a whole. Mr. Speaker, we just have to look at the investment growth — eight and a half billion in 2005, a 13 per cent increase. Mr. Speaker, job numbers are up, manufacturing is up, the resource industry is going through the sky, Mr. Speaker.

And if I want to get . . . well, Mr. Speaker, I have as much comfort getting labour advice from the opposition as I would having Enron chartered accountants do my income tax.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Condition of Provincial Highways

**Ms. Bakken Lackey:** — Mr. Speaker, Highway 35 from the US [United States] border north to Weyburn is an embarrassment. This is the highway the NDP [New Democratic Party] government turned back to gravel last year. When it rains, there is mud. And when it's dry, there is dust and flying gravel. Truckers from my constituency tell me that the US customs officials say they are not going to put up with the mud that's coming across on the trucks, and there is also concern about grain seeds and weeds coming across in the mud on truck tires.

Mr. Speaker, when will this section of Highway 35 be repaved?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And thank you for the question. I answered a number of questions related to Highway 35 in committee several weeks ago I think it was. There is a process in place where there is a partnership, and we are rebuilding parts of the road through a paved structure over a series of years.

But also I said in the committee, Mr. Speaker, that part of the challenge in fact is the success of the province. As economic development flourishes and as jobs take off here in the province, it creates a lot more pressures on the infrastructure. As a result, Mr. Speaker, it requires more funding for the infrastructure. But what I'm pleased about is that we see a lot better job numbers, and we see a lot more growth in the economy in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Bakken Lackey:** — Mr. Speaker, that answer is alarming to say the least. Mr. Speaker, truck traffic is being obstructed. Rob Pratt . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Order. Order. Order. The member for Weyburn-Big Muddy and only the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**Ms. Bakken Lackey:** — Mr. Speaker, truck traffic is being obstructed. Rob Pratt, a trucker from my constituency, told me this is an economic issue. He said US customs officials can shut him down. They can turn him around. They can send him back to Weyburn to clean his truck, and then he'll have to wait for the mud to dry up. And, Mr. Speaker, when it is dry, the dust and flying gravel are also a great hazard. If this means that truckers like Rob Pratt will have to take another route, he is concerned about lost revenue and wasted time.

Mr. Speaker, Rob Pratt wants to know when will this government repave this section of Highway 35.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well based on the questions that we've heard in the legislature for the last number of weeks, I'm not surprised that that member would find that economic growth and the economy growing is alarming news to them because it's obvious they've not noticed that, Mr. Speaker.

I do want to say again, Mr. Speaker, we have worked with and partnered with the communities. Mr. Speaker, we recognize this as an important link north and south into the province. There are a number of routes though, like No. 6, which has a much higher traffic count. We try and prioritize within the Department of Highways, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we have adequate infrastructure to north and south, in and out of Saskatchewan into the United States.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the importance of Highway 35 and that's why we're working to rebuild that highway. Mr. Speaker, I recognize it's not as fast as some of the people would like to see but we're working at it as quickly as we can.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Bakken Lackey:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, there has been no recognition by the NDP of the importance of Highway 35 in north-south trade. Mr. Speaker, 15 kilometres of this highway was turned back to gravel last fall after years of deplorable state from potholes. Mr. Speaker, when I asked recently when repaving Highway 35 would begin, I was told by the minister that only 3 kilometres would be done this year. That will mean that it will be five years in order to complete this stretch of highway if they do 3 kilometres a year. This is unacceptable. This was and still should be a major route to and from the United States. The condition of Highway 35 is a threat to economic viability, to tourism, and to safety. Mr. Speaker, when will this government get its priorities straight and repave Highway 35?

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well again let me just first of all describe the facts. The road was a thin membrane surface road. She is correct that there was a revision back to gravel to ensure that there was safety for the travelling public and for the truckers, Mr. Speaker. But the changes that have been made and the improvements that are being made over a series of years rebuilds the road to a paved infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, to a paved surface, which is a much better road than used to exist in the past.

We recognize the importance and the priorities of these roads, but I mean, Mr. Speaker, we rebuilt Highway No. 6. And if that member thinks we shouldn't have done that and done Highway

35, I say to her, Mr. Speaker, then she should identify the priorities. We try and identify, Mr. Speaker, where the most traffic is, where will be the most economic benefit for the province, and that's what we try to do, Mr. Speaker. And I think we are doing a pretty good job of that, Mr. Speaker, given the job numbers and the economic development that are happening in Saskatchewan right now.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is also for the Minister of Highways. There are numerous examples of highways in poor condition in my constituency, but none are poorer than Highway 15. Portions of Highway 15 are in severe state of disrepair. Problems include broken pavement and deep potholes. There's a section between junction of Highway No. 2 and 20 where there is no pavement. This highway represents an unacceptable safety hazard and . . . When will this particular piece of road be fixed?

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well again we've answered a number of these questions in committee. This past budget we delivered a budget of \$300 million, Mr. Speaker, an increase of about \$5 million. We are honouring our commitment to spend \$2.5 billion over 10 years. We're honouring our commitment to spend 1.2 billion over four years, Mr. Speaker.

We recognize the challenges, particularly in the spring. You can't go through a season like we've gone through — through winter I should say, when there's wet conditions and severe freezing — and not have impacts on the roads. It happens right across Canada. More so in Saskatchewan I suspect, Mr. Speaker, with the extreme weather conditions.

We are doing what we can with the budgets we've got, Mr. Speaker. We'll get to all of the roads eventually, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Brkich:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, at Semans, the town of Semans, there's a provincial STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] bus that take an RM [rural municipality] gravel road to the town of Nokomis. It will not travel that particular piece of highway.

I don't think it travels through the RM for a sightseeing tour, Mr. Speaker. I don't think the bus driver takes his passengers on a sightseeing tour. He takes that route because he believes in the safety of his passengers, Mr. Speaker.

Since the Minister of Highways won't answer the question, I'll direct this question to the Minister for STC. Will he petition the Minister of Highways to fix this dangerous piece of highway so

that STC bus drivers don't have to carry RM maps with them so they can find . . . the safety of their passengers to the next town, so they can follow their planned route of destination, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister Responsible for STC.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I could also talk to the Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations if you'd like.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say this. I'm not clear in his reference to STC, if his concern is around STC, if he's suggesting that maybe we should sell off STC, Mr. Speaker, because I think that's what they're really, really still wanting to do.

Look, we've answered these questions many, many times, Mr. Speaker. We've increased the budget significantly in Highways. It is reflected in the much better roads and the much better infrastructure across the province, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to improve the roads as they need to be improved. But we need to identify the priorities. I've described that and my officials have described that in detail in committee, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Highway 368 in my constituency is in dire need of work. Recently a semi-trailer rolled over, dodging large potholes and soft spots in the road. Mr. Speaker, it's reaching the point where poor conditions of Highway 368 is a danger to human life. Mr. Speaker, a patch job is not enough. When will this government commit to rebuilding Highway 368?

[14:15]

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I don't know what more I can add, Mr. Speaker, to the Conservative Party, other than to say there have significant increases in the budgets. It's springtime in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. The crews are out there working right now. We will be improving a significant amount of infrastructure this year again. People will be in . . .

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

I would ask members that they refrain from saying things across the hall, across the aisle that is off the record, that is not allowed to be said in this Assembly that is on the record.

I would recognize the Minister for Highways and

Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Conservative Party opposite identifies many, many times, Mr. Speaker, that there are challenges, Mr. Speaker, but they don't talk about the facts. The facts are, Mr. Speaker, that we're spending \$300 million on infrastructure and highways this year. Mr. Speaker, the facts are that the crews are out there working right now. The facts are now, Mr. Speaker, that drivers will be unfortunately inconvenienced . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Order please. Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — The facts are, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan drivers and people travelling across our province this year will be inconvenienced by the amount of construction that's taking place this summer, Mr. Speaker. We are improving the roads and there have been significant improvements in the infrastructure in our province, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you would think that in a centennial year the government would want . . .

**The Speaker:** — Members, come to order please. Member for Cannington.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Mr. Speaker, you would think on a centennial year the government would want people to be welcome in coming to this province. And our highways are the first thing they see and they're atrocious, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the people in the village of Alida are very upset with the NDP. Highway No. 361 runs through that community and it's such a poor condition that it's been returned back to gravel. Now families with little children that are walking on the road, riding their bikes, or being dropped off from the school bus, Mr. Speaker, are in danger because of the excess dust from that supposed highway, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the people in Alida believe they should count just as much as the people in the rest of the province. Will the minister pave that highway or will he just continue to watch the decline of our highways across this province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well to listen to the opposition you would think that everything is doom and gloom here, Mr. Speaker, when in fact the facts are we have record job numbers, Mr. Speaker. We have investment growth that is virtually unprecedented, Mr. Speaker. Tourism, Mr. Speaker, continues to flourish in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, people are coming to Saskatchewan to enjoy the beautiful province that we have during the centennial year. Mr. Speaker,

everybody in Saskatchewan as I leave the legislature and I go out to my constituency are in a good mood, Mr. Speaker. But when I come in here it is depressing to listen to the Saskatchewan Conservative Party over there talk about it.

Mr. Speaker, the facts are it's springtime in Saskatchewan. The crews are out there. The roads are being fixed, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, in today's *Leader-Post* there was a letter from Henry Goertzen of Edmonton. He speaks of receiving a glossy tourism brochure called *Places in the Heart* painting a wonderful picture of Saskatchewan. Then he talks about never wanting to bring his RV [recreational vehicle] back to our province because of the "broken-up, pot-hole filled, weed-choked strips of decaying asphalt."

Mr. Speaker, Henry Goertzen wants to know why we spend money on "nice-looking brochures to promote tourism" when we're not even going to fix the roads. Mr. Speaker, we'd like an answer to that question as well.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I am familiar with the letter that the member raises, Mr. Speaker. But let me say this. Mr. Speaker. In the community in which I live and in the Meadow Lake Provincial Park from where I am, Mr. Speaker, I do know that on a number of occasions, surveys have taken place. And many times over 50 per cent of the people there are from outside of the province, from Alberta. So if it's really as bad as that member says, why are people . . . why do people keep coming back to our beautiful province?

The reason they keep coming back, Mr. Speaker, to our province is because they recognize we have a wonderful province. We have so much to offer, Mr. Speaker. And the only people that don't recognize that, Mr. Speaker, are the Saskatchewan Conservatives over there.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Weekes:** — Mr. Speaker, we are facing a system-wide collapse of our infrastructure. Trade between our province and southern markets is being placed in peril by the poor state of Highway 35. Highway 32, an important road to our province's largest gas line, is being beaten to a pulp by heavy trucks and needs urgently to be maintained. We have tourists openly asking us why we bother inviting visitors to our province.

Mr. Speaker, these problems are widespread. There are poor road conditions in every corner of this province. These problems affect many areas. It affects tourism, commerce, future development, international trade.

Mr. Speaker, these highways and roads are costing our trucking

industry large amounts of money to repair their, maintain their trucks. It's also a safety problem with the general public and the drivers on our roads and highways, Mr. Speaker.

Today we have heard, Mr. Speaker, that there are trucks rolling over after hitting huge potholes. Mr. Speaker, we have trucks being stopped at the American border and not allowed to cross into the United States because of the mud and the dirt and the weeds, Mr. Speaker. And we have the added embarrassment of the . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please. I'd ask . . . Order please. And could the member proceed to the question.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We also have STC buses being rerouted because the drivers do not feel it's safe to drive down some of the roads and highways in this province. Mr. Speaker, this is not only a danger to our . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Order, members. Would the member go directly to the question?

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not only dangerous but the highways and roads in this province are an embarrassment to the province.

Mr. Speaker, why does this government not put a higher priority to maintaining and repairing the roads and highways in this province?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well if the roads are that bad, I have one question — how the heck do they get here, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, the facts are, the facts are, Mr. Speaker, that there is huge economic growth in the province. Mr. Speaker, I just referenced some of the latest statistics. I see Saskatchewan is number one in the nominal GDP [gross domestic product] growth per capita. I see Saskatchewan is number one in per capita personal income growth. I see Saskatchewan is number one per capita personal disposal income. The list goes on, Mr. Speaker. Everybody but the Saskatchewan Conservative Party knows, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan's on a roll. It's growing. The infrastructure's improving. And we on this side are proud of it, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order please.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes . . . Order please. Order please. The Chair . . . Order now. I just advise the members that these mikes are quite sensitive. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Learning.

#### Training and Apprenticeship Review

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I am very pleased to announce that we are undertaking a comprehensive external review of Saskatchewan's training and apprenticeship system.

At this time of unprecedented economic growth, this review will help us to ensure that students and youth have access to the right training at the right time right here to help them participate in our growing economy. Mr. Speaker, this review will focus on ensuring that Saskatchewan's training and apprenticeship system is able to meet the growing demands of our provincial economy.

Today we have record numbers of people working. We are seeing tremendous growth in the oil and gas, manufacturing, mining, IT [information technology], cultural industry sectors. Mr. Speaker, these sectors need highly qualified, highly skilled workers to continue that momentum. As such we have a real opportunity today to ensure that Saskatchewan students and youth will be able to take full advantage of the opportunities this growth represents.

The review that we are announcing will be the first time that we have undertaken a comprehensive and integrative look at SIAST, the regional colleges, and the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission. These three organizations together have an annual budget of approximately \$200 million and provide training programs and courses to approximately 75,000 individuals annually. About 30,000 of these are full-time students.

This review will look to enhance the linkages between our educational institutions and our economy, between business and the trades, and to ensure students and youth can access appropriate training to help them secure not only jobs but careers here at home. Our NDP government places a high priority on the issues of students and youth.

We know also that a strong economy needs a strong workforce. That's why we announced an additional \$2 million in this year's budget to create an additional thousand new training opportunities. It's also why we hosted the economic summit in January.

At that summit, Mr. Speaker, we heard from business and labour leaders as well as economists and academics. One of the key messages of the summit was that Saskatchewan's economy is growing faster than our ability to supply it with skilled labour. We know that today 65 per cent of the new jobs being created require some kind of post-secondary education. While we're well positioned to meet the needs of the growing economy through the education and training of a new generation of Saskatchewan residents, we need to make sure that our training system remains world-class and flexible enough to meet industry needs.

The review panel that we have announced today will recommend how the training system can best meet the needs of students and help build Saskatchewan's labour market. It will focus on recommendations that ensure the high-quality programs, services, and resources are available to help students

get the training they need to get jobs in our growing economy. It will make sure that we are able to deal with a training system that responds to and meets the human resource and skills need of Saskatchewan employers and employees. And finally it will look to ensure the mandates of the training system partners are appropriate to support the economic and social development of this province.

This review panel will consult with stakeholders, including business and labour associations, representatives from the K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] system, universities and Aboriginal institutions, students and community representatives, as well as our institutional partners at SIAST, the regional colleges, and the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission.

I was very pleased this morning to announce that the three-person panel will be comprised of Doug McArthur as its Chair. As many members will know, Mr. McArthur is a former minister of Education here in Saskatchewan and was instrumental in developing the regional college system of this province.

I have also appointed Lorraine Hanson who is a reeve of one of our rural municipalities, a former school board trustee, and a former Chair of the Southeast Regional College Board.

Additionally I have appointed Professor Paul Dudgeon to the board who brings a unique perspective from his role as a professor emeritus with the First Nations University of Canada and his role as a former Chair of the SIAST board.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say in closing that this review provides the first real opportunity we have to reinvent and renew our training and apprenticeship systems in a way that encourages closer linkages between education and our economy, between business and labour. It is one of the initiatives that comes from the economic summit held this spring and it is a cornerstone of how our NDP government will help ensure that Saskatchewan is indeed the best place in Canada to live, to learn, to work, and to raise a family. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:30]

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

**Mr. Elhard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to offer a few comments in reply to the ministerial statement just read for the House this afternoon. And before I do that, I'd like to thank the minister for making a copy of his comments available to me in advance.

Mr. Speaker, the review that has just been announced, the 2005 training system panel of review, is an undertaking that is, in my estimation, overdue. I understand, if I heard the minister correctly, this is the first time that this kind of a comprehensive look at the role of the post-secondary educations would be undertaken in the province.

And while it may not have been thought necessary previously,

we are entering a time in this stage of our economy in terms of the competitive nature of economic growth, both in Saskatchewan and in other jurisdictions that surround us, that we need to make sure that our educational institutions are offering the very best opportunities to the people of the province. And in successful economies elsewhere, much of this type of undertaking has already occurred where advanced institutions of learning have coordinated very carefully the programs they deliver, trying to expedite the training of individuals, moving them through the system as effectively and as quickly as possible. And so having done that good work in their jurisdictions, they're seeing the benefits of that already in their economies.

So I welcome the opportunity for this report, for this commission to undertake this study, for the report to be developed and presented. I do hope that the work that comes out of this exercise will be worthy of the time and effort that they will put into it.

The minister talked about consulting broadly to achieve the hoped-for results and once again I will be very interested to see with whom the consultation is undertaken. We've heard from this government time and again about their willingness to consult and have found that frequently they say they're willing to consult, but the consultation is very, very weak and very minimal at the best of times. So we'll be watching carefully that that broad scope of consultation is undertaken.

Saskatchewan's economy is growing faster than the supply of skilled workers in the labour market according to the minister's statement. And I think that there is certainly an element of truth to that, but one thing that goes unstated as part of this presentation is the fact that many of our already performing skilled workers in this labour market are being enticed away by other economies to other jurisdictions. And that creates an extra burden on our businesses because the competitiveness related to finding skilled labour is just dramatically increased when you have other economies pulling well-trained people from our jurisdiction. So while we need more people that problem is exacerbated by the loss of existing skilled labour.

The minister's statement also says that we need to make sure our training system remains world-class and flexible enough to meet industry needs, and that is absolutely true. I alluded to that earlier. But we also need to remember that our economy is simply not isolated from the rest of the country. And we need to be aware of what demands exist for skilled labour in other jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that this review will be successful. We'll look forward to the recommendations brought forward and will wait to see what kind of work is produced by this particular exercise.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member for Melfort on his feet?

**Mr. Gantfoer:** — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day to raise a point of order.

**The Speaker:** — Would the member state his point of order?

### POINT OF ORDER

**Mr. Gantefoer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on two occasions during routine proceedings, firstly the Minister of Learning, during a member statement, and secondly the Minister for Community Resources and Employment, during question period, uttered what I believe are very extremely unparliamentary languages and phrases.

And, Mr. Speaker, I hope that you will be successful in reviewing the transcripts of the proceedings and the tapes that the microphones hopefully were clear enough to pick up these words. But even if they were not, the ministers responsible know that they used unparliamentary language and should be asked to withdraw that language and apologize to the House.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes on the point of order the Minister of Learning.

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Mr. Speaker, I did certainly during the proceedings say that the statement that was made by the member opposite, one of the members opposite, was indeed shameful, disgusting, and disgraceful, as she suggested that this government allow people to starve. If that is unparliamentary for me to have said, I would withdraw it. But I do however admit that I said it was shameless, disgusting, and disgraceful.

**The Speaker:** — I think the . . . Order please. Order please. Order please. I am very conscious of the sensitivity of use of language and I thank the member for bringing . . . for raising this point of order. It's impossible to hear all of the phrases from the Chair. I do occasionally get people mentioning this to me. I would ask members to just take a deep breath before they utter things across the way they wouldn't do otherwise. And it would certainly help to improve the decorum and certainly the esteem of this Assembly.

I thank the member for the statement. I will listen to the tapes. If there is something there that has not been brought to the attention, or if somebody else wishes to acknowledge and apologize at this time, I will accept that as well.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member on his feet? Member for Battlefords.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — I ask leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The member for The Battlefords has asked leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery today there are two guests to the legislature that I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature.

One individual in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker, is well-known

to members on both sides of the House. He is Mr. Bob McDonald who is the director of . . . I'm just trying to read my own writing here, Mr. Speaker. Bob is director of membership and legal services with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

With Mr. McDonald is Michael Price who is the deputy registrar of the Professional Engineers of Ontario. Mr. Price is in the city of Regina attending the Canadian Council of Professional Engineers' annual general meeting and awards banquet which starts its proceedings today and continues through to Saturday.

I ask all members to warmly welcome Mr. McDonald and Mr. Price to our legislature.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I'm extremely pleased on behalf of the government to stand and answer written questions no. 1,218 through 1,235 inclusive.

**The Speaker:** — Responses to questions 1,218 through to 1,235 have been submitted.

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, so that the Economy Committee can take over the Chamber for its meeting and concurrently the Human Services Committee can meet, I move the Assembly 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:** — The motion is carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:40.]

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### PRESENTING PETITIONS

Elhard .....	3013
Eagles .....	3013
Harpauer .....	3013
Bakken Lackey .....	3013
Cheveldayoff .....	3013
Brkich .....	3013
Weekes .....	3013
Merriman .....	3014
Morgan .....	3014
Dearborn .....	3014
Kirsch .....	3014

#### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk .....	3014
--------------------	------

#### NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Bjornerud .....	3014
-----------------	------

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Elhard .....	3014
Beatty .....	3015
Draude .....	3015
Morin .....	3015
Weekes .....	3015
Higgins .....	3015
D'Autremont .....	3016
Toth .....	3016
Taylor .....	3025

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

##### Saskatoon Achievement in Business Excellence Awards

Addley .....	3016
--------------	------

##### Celebrate Success

Cheveldayoff .....	3016
--------------------	------

##### Youth Business Excellence Awards

Taylor .....	3016
--------------	------

##### Provincial Volleyball Tournaments

Weekes .....	3017
--------------	------

##### Special Screening of Documentary, *Ted's Story: Honouring Melissa*

McCall .....	3017
--------------	------

##### Meal Allowances

Draude .....	3017
--------------	------

##### 50th Anniversary of German-Canadian Society Harmonie

Morin .....	3018
-------------	------

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### Labour Legislation

Krawetz .....	3018
---------------	------

Higgins .....	3018
---------------	------

##### Condition of Provincial Highways

Bakken Lackey .....	3020
---------------------	------

Sonntag .....	3020
---------------	------

Brkich .....	3021
--------------	------

Kirsch .....	3021
--------------	------

D'Autremont .....	3022
-------------------	------

Draude .....	3022
--------------	------

Weekes .....	3022
--------------	------

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

##### Training and Apprenticeship Review

Thomson .....	3023
---------------	------

Elhard .....	3024
--------------	------

#### POINT OF ORDER

Gantfoer .....	3025
----------------	------

Thomson .....	3025
---------------	------

The Speaker .....	3025
-------------------	------



**ORDERS OF THE DAY**  
**WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

<b>Yates</b> .....	3025
<b>The Speaker</b> .....	3025

## **CABINET MINISTERS**

Hon. L. Calvert  
Premier

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

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

Hon. B. Belanger  
Minister of Northern Affairs

Hon. E. Cline  
Minister of Industry and Resources

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

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

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

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

Hon. P. Prebble  
Minister of Corrections and Public Safety

Hon. F. Quennell  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Hon. C. Serby  
Deputy Premier  
Minister of Rural Development

Hon. M. Sonntag  
Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations  
Minister of Highways and Transportation

Hon. L. Taylor  
Minister of Government Relations

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

Hon. H. Van Mulligen  
Minister of Finance

Hon. M. Wartman  
Minister of Agriculture and Food