



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

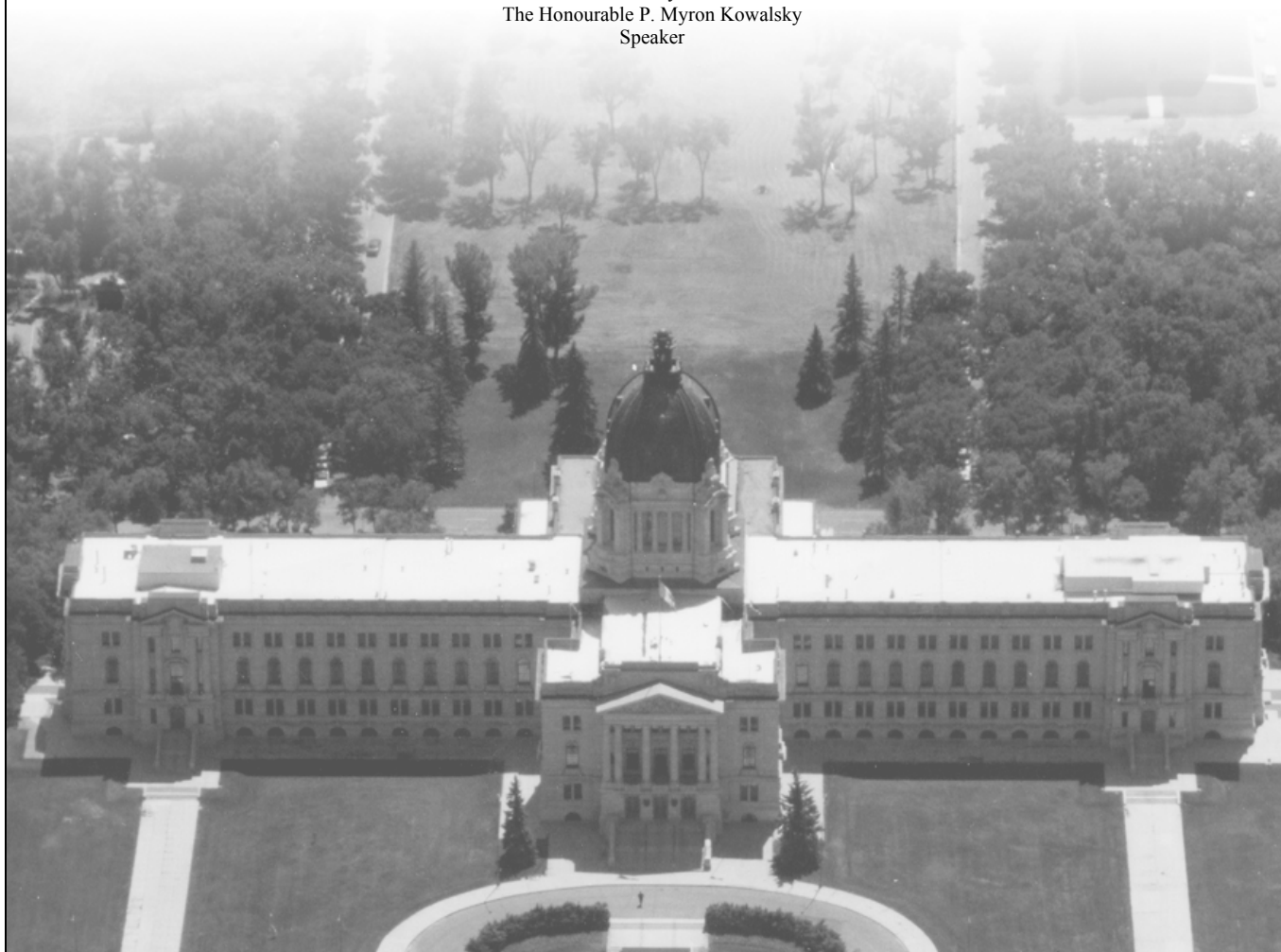
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Addley, Graham	NDP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Hon. Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Bakken 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: — Mr. Speaker, I present a petition today on behalf of constituents of Cypress Hills as well as many other communities around the province and other provinces. People who return home for the centennial are going to be vastly disappointed by the condition 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.

Mr. Speaker, petitioners today come from the communities of Leader; Redcliff, Alberta; Liebenthal; Strathmore, Alberta; Leader, Lancer, Swift Current, Calgary, Medicine Hat, Kindersley, Prelate, Burstall, Eatonia, Gull Lake, Kerrobert, and many more, Mr. Speaker — too many to mention.

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

Mr. Hermanson: — Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I have another petition on behalf of the staff, participants, and families of the Wheatland Regional Centre Inc. and other like centres across the province that provide services for individuals with disabilities. And, Mr. Speaker, they are concerned that the human resources plan tabled with the Department of Community . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. Order please. Just ask the member not to enter into debate. Keep it straightforward when presenting petitions.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This petition, this is regarding the human resources plan provided to provincial cabinet. The prayer of the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners will humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly will please consider implementing the minimum compensation recommendations for staff members who support people with disabilities as outlined in SARC's human resources plan.

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

Mr. Speaker, a number of signatures on this petition are from the communities of Biggar, North Battleford, and Handel. And I'm pleased to present this petition on their behalf.

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

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of people who are concerned about the drug crystal meth.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause this government to take the necessary action to implement a strategy that will deal with crystal methamphetamine education, prevention, enforcement, and treatment.

People who have signed this petition are all from the area of Guernsey.

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

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of constituents of mine who are very concerned about the assistance to autism-affected families. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary actions to improve access to resources for families who desperately need help for their autistic children.

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

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

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

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition as well with citizens that are concerned about the inaction against the problem of crystal meth within our students and children. 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 implement a strategy that will deal with crystal meth — I'm really stumbling with this — meth education, prevention, enforcement, and treatment.

The signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from the community of Guernsey, my home town. I so present.

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

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present another petition on behalf of 600 children and their parents in the Saskatoon Silver Springs constituency 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, Guenter Crescent, and Kenderdine Road 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 with citizens opposed to possible reduction of services at Davidson, Imperial health centres:

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

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

This petition is signed by the good citizens from Davidson and Bladworth. I so present.

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would 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 Asquith and Grandora and area. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Saskatoon Northwest.

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition that the NDP [New Democratic Party] government has failed to recognize the growing problems surrounding youth drug addiction. The current legislation does not provide adequate protection for the most vulnerable in our society. 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 pass a law that will give Saskatchewan parents the ability to place their children into involuntary drug treatment.

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

From the people of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise in the Assembly today and present concerns of citizens of west central Saskatchewan opposed to the rerouting of Highway 51. 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, this petition is signed by citizens of both Kerrobert, Unity, and Tramping Lake. I so present.

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

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to present a petition on behalf of citizens who are very concerned with the lack of funding to SARC [Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres]. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly will please consider implementing the recommendations as outlined in SARC's human resources plan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signatures to this petition, Mr. Speaker, come from the communities of Ituna and Goodeve. 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 nos. 97, 638, 640, 666, 670, 716, 798, 800, and 814.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

Mr. Brkich: — I give notice I shall on day no. 118 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Rural Development: how many recommendations has the government implemented from

the first ACRE report and which recommendations have not been acted upon?

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

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice I shall on day no. 118 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Community Resources and Employment: what is the province's policy on inter-country adoption of children that are not sibling pairings?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Bakken Lackey: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 118 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Community Resources and Employment: how many dollars will the Family Place in Weyburn receive for their Mini-Go school under the early learning and care initiative and when will the Family Place receive the dollars allocated from the above program?

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, this afternoon in your gallery are a number of the committee members who participated in the preparation of the second phase ACRE report. They will later this day be making a presentation to the policy committee. And this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce the members very quickly. And if they might just stand and just give a short wave.

The Co-Chair is Mrs. Audrey Horkoff who is the past president of the Agribition and from Kamsack. Linda Pipke is the Vice-Chair business development subcommittee, executive director Saskatchewan Council for Community Development from Davidson. Mr. Everett Bear is the past chief of the Muskoday First Nations of Birch Hills, and Wanda Wolf who is the Saskatchewan Herb and Spice Association.

Dr. Red Williams is the Co-Chair of the Crown land subcommittee. Phil Reeves is the executive director of the Saskatchewan Mining Association. Mr. Dick DeRyk who is the Chair, entrepreneur from Yorkton. Loren Katzenberger who is the Co-Chair or Vice-Chair, Prairie Implement Manufacturing Association of Saskatoon, Danae Armstrong Knittig who was with the Saskatoon REDA [regional economic development authority] is now with . . . works for Coverall. Dr. Ernie Barber, dean of the College of Agriculture, and Clay Dowling, past president of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, Saskatoon, and Mr. Neal Hardy who's the president of SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities].

And we have as well, three of our staff, Dr. Louise Greenberg

who is the executive director or the director of Rural Development — sorry, sorry, it's my department — Dr. Greenberg; Mr. Al Syhlonyk, who's the director of policy and planning; and Leann Minogue, who is the policy analyst.

I ask all members of the Assembly to welcome members of the ACRE committee to the Assembly this afternoon.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to join with the deputy minister in welcoming Audrey Horkoff and her committee members.

I was at the presentation of ACRE, and I'll also be looking forward to when they're going to be making the presentation to the Intergovernmental committee and looking forward to asking them some questions I know which they'll be able to provide very capable answers.

I would also like to welcome one of my constituents, Linda Pipke from Davidson. And I'm looking forward to asking her some questions today on that later today. And with that I know all members will want to welcome them here.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Centre.

Hon. Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the members of this House, I'd like to take a moment to introduce a very special group of students visiting here from E.D. Feehan High School in Saskatoon in my riding; 21 students from grades 9 to 12 in the ESL, English as a second language program. And they're here with their teachers, Mrs. Esther Molina, Mr. Godoybaca, and Mrs. Hitchings.

And so I'd ask all members to give them a warm welcome to our legislature. Thank you.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome to you and through you, 21 grade 9 to 12 English as a second language students from St. Joseph High School in Saskatoon. They're accompanied by their teacher, Ms. Lorraine Ratzlaff and Mrs. Sheena Wing.

I just want to give you some background, Mr. Speaker, on English as a second language. For over 25 years, Saskatoon Catholic schools have provided an opportunity for students from around the world to share our culture. This sharing has become a foundation for global learning, harmony, and true international understanding among people of many nations.

All students are provided the opportunity to learn in a safe and

caring environment of faith. High school students are offered a full range of classes in math, sciences, humanities, arts, along with honours programs in the academic disciplines. A French bilingual program is offered as well as advance placement in English. Graduates are recognized at universities across Canada and around the world.

I look forward to joining with the students for pictures, refreshments, and a visit after question period.

I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming the English as a second language students from St. Joseph collegiate in the heart of Saskatoon Silver Springs.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

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

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House, a gentleman sitting up in your gallery, Mr. Ali Doust Waissi from Moose Jaw. And this is his first visit to the legislature.

Mr. Waissi lives in Moose Jaw where he works in the meat processing industry. And Mr. Waissi arrived in Moose Jaw in 2001 from Iraq as a Kurdish refugee. And this summer Mr. Waissi will be writing his citizenship exam, actually next month, and he hopes to be a Canadian citizen by the end of this summer.

Mr. Waissi came to have a meeting with our Minister of Immigration and offered some pointers and helpful hints for keeping refugees into smaller centres in the province of Saskatchewan.

And it's a pleasure. I hope all my colleagues will welcome him here, welcome him to Saskatchewan especially, and hope all goes well with your citizenship in the summer. Thank you.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Shine Woman of Influence Award

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past weekend the 2005 Shine Conference was held in Regina. Every year the Shine Conference brings together women from across southern Saskatchewan and Manitoba to celebrate the achievements of women. To honour the contribution that women make in the community, Shine presents a Woman of Influence Award.

I am very proud to say that this year's recipient of the 2005 Shine Woman of Influence Award is the Saskatchewan Party member for Kelvington-Wadena. She was recognized for her outstanding contribution and leadership in public and

community service. The member's activities to raise awareness of the dangers of crystal meth are well known in this legislature and across Saskatchewan. Recently she put forward a private member's Bill to provide parents with the necessary tools to protect children suffering from addictions.

Through her work with parents, law enforcement officials, health care workers, and community advocates, and together with the assistance of the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy, the member for Kelvington-Wadena has led the fight against crystal meth and the lobby for better treatment services and more beds for those afflicted with this terrible addiction.

For these efforts and the member's ongoing work with Saskatchewan's First Nations communities, she was recognized as this year's Shine Woman of Influence. I would ask all members to join me in congratulating her on this achievement.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Aircraft Maintenance Orientation Program

Hon. Ms. Beatty: — Mr. Speaker, I'm so pleased to stand in the Assembly today and say a few words about a group of students from Churchill Community High School in La Ronge who are the first Saskatchewan graduates of the aircraft maintenance orientation program.

Mr. Speaker, this program was developed by the Canadian Aviation Maintenance Council to provide high school students with information about career opportunities in the aviation industry. The course includes 130 hours of theoretical training and additional 40 hours of hands-on learning. Successful completion of the course takes dedication and hard work.

Last week I was very proud to be part of the ceremony honouring 10 northern students who completed the course. The students include Christina Ericson, Amanda Miner, Virginia Mayotte, Kenny Beavin, Nathan Catte, Grayson Dubnick, Colin Jackson, Darren L'Heureux, Kyle Menz, and Josh Skopyk.

I also want to recognize industrial art teachers Mel Menz, Shaune Lapworth, J.C. Fafard, Regan Chell, and Troy Patterson, all northern air operations aircraft maintenance engineers who provided technical and teaching assistance.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize also the support of the local aviation industry: Transwest, northern air operations, and Northern Central Helicopter.

Mr. Speaker, this program is based on the partnership of many different groups and speaks directly to the strength of Saskatchewan as we begin our next 100 years together. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Weyburn Red Wings Win Royal Bank Cup

Ms. Bakken Lackey: — Mr. Speaker, how about those Weyburn Red Wings?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Bakken Lackey: — Weyburn Red Wings are the 2005 winners of the Royal Bank national junior A championship, defeating Camrose Kodiaks 3 to 2 yesterday in Weyburn.

This is truly a Cinderella story. Who would have believed when the Wings lost in the first round of the playoffs and then had to wait 55 days to play again in the Royal Bank Cup, that they would win the national championship? What a great tournament the Wings had, winning all but their first game; defeating the Hawkesbury Hawks in the semi-final on Saturday in triple overtime. And in Sunday's final, the Wings led all the way until there were 35 seconds left when Camrose tied the game. And then unbelievably, with 17 seconds left, Rick Wood turned right around and scored for Weyburn and gave them the well-deserved title.

Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the Weyburn Red Wings' coach Dwight McMillan, who is a legend in Weyburn and who has now the distinction of being the coach who has won the most games in this national competition — 18 games in total. As Tiger Williams said at the awards banquet on Friday night, when McMillan was his coach . . . When he played in Weyburn, Dwight MacMillan was his coach and he came home 30 years later and Dwight MacMillan was still the coach at the Royal Bank Cup.

Ryan Kuntz, the captain of the Red Wings, when interviewed after the final game said it best: "We didn't look as good as Camrose on paper, but we fought hard and we won with heart."

Congratulations to Weyburn Red Wings and to the city of Weyburn for an outstanding event.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Fairview.

2005 Coloplast Canadian Wheelchair Rugby Championship

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, over the weekend, teams from all across Canada were in Saskatoon for the 2005 Coloplast Canadian wheelchair rugby championship. You remember, Mr. Speaker, Canada's national team brought home the silver medal in wheelchair rugby from the 2004 Paralympics in Athens, Greece.

Mr. Speaker, I was honoured to bring greetings on behalf of the province, and along with some other Saskatoon MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] and media personalities, including Rambling Dave from C95, we took part in a celebrity game following the opening ceremonies.

We were able to experience first-hand what it's like to play against some of the finest wheelchair rugby players in the world. They took it easy on us, Mr. Speaker. It was immediately

clear that these athletes are agile and extremely skilled. The game is fast, intense, and very demanding. One look at the battered and scarred wheelchairs the players use lets you know what a hard-hitting game it is — so much that Rambling Dave lost a wheel, Mr. Speaker. I'm not surprised that before it was named wheelchair rugby, people called it murder ball.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Saskatchewan Wheelchair Sports Association, the Saskatchewan Wheelchair Rugby Club, the North Saskatchewan Independent Living Centre, and all the volunteers for putting on this great event. And I want to congratulate all the competitors, in particular the team from Ontario who edged out the British Columbia team to become the 2005 Canadian wheelchair rugby champions. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Donna Beall Receives Centennial Medal

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it was a privilege to present one of the first Centennial Medals to Mrs. Donna Elizabeth Louise Beall. Donna celebrated her 100th birthday on January 27 and lives in a care home in Saskatoon Silver Springs.

Donna Baker was raised in the Kinley-Perdue area. After high school Donna went on to nurses training from the Grey Nuns at St. Paul's Hospital. She finished in 1926 and then nursed in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Ontario. Donna married Dr. George Beall in 1939. Together the Bealls moved around Canada before finally settling in Saskatoon in 1953. Donna finished her nursing career at Royal University Hospital in 1972. Donna and George had one child, Vicki. Vicki married Jim McClements from Saskatoon and brought Donna three grandchildren.

I found Donna to be spry and in good health. Our conversation was quite animated. After learning a bit about Donna's life story living in several different provinces, I asked the question, and which province did you enjoy the most? I expected her to answer, Saskatchewan. However she piped up with Alberta, saying she had been there the longest, you see. It was a good, honest answer.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and all members of this Assembly to join me in honouring centenarian Donna Beall.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Centre.

McDowell Foundation Projects

Hon. Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, for the past 14 years the Stirling McDowell Foundation has been funding research for teachers in supporting a wide range of activities aimed at improving education and learning in Saskatchewan.

This year the McDowell Foundation will be supporting an all-time high of 20 groups in no less than a dozen communities

throughout the province for projects that examine a variety of issues educators face in the classroom and in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, some of these worthwhile projects include research on how gay-straight alliances can work to create safe, supportive schools for all students regardless of sexual orientation. A program at Joe Duquette School in Saskatoon will tackle issues related to Aboriginal issues of levels of success in high school math and science. And a group of Assiniboia teachers will focus on language development as part of their commitment to a rural networking process that will include mentoring and assessment strategies.

Also, Mr. Speaker, thanks to a generous \$10,000 donation from the late Dorothy Rutherford Clarke, the McDowell Foundation was able to fund several projects this year that will examine reading at the primary school level.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all my colleagues will join me in congratulating the 2005 recipients of these grants and in thanking them for the important work they're doing to improve learning here in Saskatchewan. I also want to acknowledge the McDowell Foundation for investing in teachers and in students and in strengthening our education in this province. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan Awards

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend the Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan held their AGM [annual general meeting] and spring conference in Saskatoon where winners of the Women Entrepreneurs awards were recognized. With over 150 people in attendance at the banquet, the following women entrepreneurs were recognized for the excellence in achievement.

The Women Entrepreneur Member of the Year award went to Yvette Moore in Moose Jaw who won for a business that has been operating for more than three years. Yvette is the owner and operator of the Yvette Moore Gallery. What originally started as a home-based business now employs 12 employees in the gallery located in the former land titles building in Moose Jaw.

The award for Best Emerging Woman Entrepreneur operating a business in operation for less than three years went to Theresa Lavis Springett. Theresa is the owner of Heart to Heart Home Services in Saskatoon whose six part-time and three one-quarter time employees provide seniors with home care, housekeeping, shopping, and transportation services.

The Centennial Award went to Janet Ursu. Jan has been on the Women Entrepreneurs board for five years and chaired the board for three years. In addition to her work with Women Entrepreneurs, Jan is involved with the Regina Women's Network, the Globe Theatre, the Regina Symphony, and the Regina Progress Club.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating each of these members. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

Negotiations with Federal Government Regarding Energy Accord

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, our province seems to have the dubious distinction of having the only premier that was unable to make the deal that he wanted at Paul Martin's going-out-of-business sale that we've been witnessing from Ottawa over the last number of months.

The Premier left last week. He said he had an energy accord. He said he would come back with an energy accord for the province of Saskatchewan. When the negotiations weren't going very well he said no, he was going to stay in Ottawa until he brought home that deal. He said he had packed extra socks. Well, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the Premier has come back only with dirty socks and a postdated cheque. Why has the Premier failed the people of this province to get the energy accord that he said he had a week ago?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, to quote the Government Whip, well, well, well. You know what is good news for the people of Saskatchewan is bad news for the Conservatives opposite.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Now they say one thing, but here are the facts of the matter, Mr. Speaker. We went to Ottawa seeking to negotiate with the national government an energy accord, an economic development accord, and that we were not successful because I'm not going to sign a deal, any deal, that I don't believe is good enough for the people of the province of Saskatchewan in the future.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — But, Mr. Speaker, while in Ottawa we were able to negotiate with the national government a commitment to the people of Saskatchewan worth \$300 million. Now I know, Mr. Speaker, I know that members opposite, that opposition last year when we came home \$300-plus million, they said that's table scraps, Mr. Speaker. But only in the mind of the Conservatives in Saskatchewan would \$300 million be called table scraps.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, here's the amazing part of what the Premier just answered, pointing to this \$300 million that he got when he couldn't get the energy accord, Mr. Speaker. This postdated cheque is actually 40 per cent old money that was already budgeted for in the federal budget, Mr. Speaker.

So the Premier went to Ottawa. He said there was an energy accord on the table. He said he was going to go sign it. He doesn't sign an energy accord. Instead he goes there and gets money that was already sitting there for the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, \$180 million is all there is in new money in this arrangement compared to the billions of dollars that other provinces have got, compared to almost 500 million that the province of Alberta got, Mr. Speaker . . .

[14:00]

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, \$180 million over five years, that's not enough to cover one SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] loss per year. And this government is mounting up more than that every single year.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier, last week he said he was going to go sign an energy accord at the beginning of the negotiating process. As the week wears on, the deal evaporates. He comes back with a postdated cheque, only 180 million new dollars compared to other provinces. Why did the Premier fail the people of the province?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, they of course say one thing, and here are the facts. Here are the facts. Over the period of the last eight months, we have negotiated from the federal government for this province an equalization package last fall worth \$467 million net — 467. We've negotiated a child care deal worth for the province of Saskatchewan \$146 million over five years. We were able to negotiate, Mr. Speaker, new funding for health in this province and for all Canadians. In the Saskatchewan case, about \$80 million a year over five years — that's \$400 million. Last week another \$300 million. That's well over a billion dollars, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, the story is not concluded. We continue to negotiate and negotiate hard as again today in terms of an economic energy development accord for the province and people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, to the Premier, to the Premier, is 40 per cent of this \$300 million he touts — fully \$120 million of those dollars — are they dollars that were already in the federal budget? Yes or no?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Well the fact of the matter is I should acquaint, I should acquaint the Leader of the Opposition with how budgeting actually works. Every dollar that will come to the province of Saskatchewan will have to be in a federal budget, Mr. Speaker. And for those dollars to flow to the people of Saskatchewan — whether they be city dollars for the municipalities, whether they be child care, whether they be the dollars from this package — Mr. Speaker, they depend on a federal budget being passed.

That's why I implore this Conservative and Conservatives in Ottawa to pass the budget, pass the budget for the people of Saskatchewan, the people of Canada, and then let's have an election in this country.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, with the kinds of answers we've seen from that Premier and with his ability to represent the province on the national stage, I think the people of this province want an election and want one very soon, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, last week when the Premier left, he said he was coming back with an energy accord. Here's what he said. He said he was looking forward to the opportunity to conclude an energy accord. That left the impression with Saskatchewan people that there was an energy accord on the table for him to sign.

If that was the case, Mr. Speaker, if that's true, that means due to the Premier's excellent negotiating skills he was able to promptly take that energy accord off the table and settle for a postdated cheque totalling 180 million new dollars when even Alberta, resource-rich Alberta, is getting \$500 million. Why should the people of this province trust that Premier to negotiate anything on their behalf again?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — We hear the rhetoric. We hear the rhetoric from across the way. And here are the plain facts, and the people of Saskatchewan know it well. Over the last number of months, we've negotiated from the federal government for the people of Saskatchewan and their future over \$1 billion in new benefit for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Now, Mr. Speaker, when we're battling and fighting for Saskatchewan, we're fighting in the Canadian context. We seek equity in the Canadian context. This agreement signed this week, this agreement that we brought home gives us very good equity with the deal that's just been signed with the province of Ontario.

Now we're aware that an energy accord, an economic development accord has been signed with Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the Atlantic accord, and we seek equity there. But, Mr. Speaker, not under pressure of the Leader of the Opposition or the Saskatchewan Party, not under any pressure will I sign a deal that I don't believe is good for the people of Saskatchewan in the long run.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it was that Premier who said he had a deal when he went down to Ottawa. So was that deal good enough for him to sign when he got on the plane and went to Ottawa or was it not, Mr. Speaker?

We know what the Atlantic provinces have received — Nova Scotia, Newfoundland — hundreds of millions of dollars per year. Not long ago the province of Ontario, \$6 billion. Even Bombardier got \$262 million for this current year from this same federal government last week.

What did our Premier get? The Premier got a postdated cheque from a business that looks like it's going out of business — the Government of Canada. And he got sucked into a photo op for the Liberal election campaign. Why has the Premier failed the people of this province on this file?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, again here are the facts. Let's put this, let's put this debate in a little context. The Leader of the Opposition talks about the Nova Scotia energy accord worth \$830 million. Now not a dollar of it has flowed because the Conservatives in Ottawa will not let the budget pass. That aside — \$800 million for the province of Nova Scotia . . . I have just reviewed how in the last eight months we have achieved for the people of Saskatchewan benefits well over \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker, and we are not finished yet.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — You know, Mr. Speaker, I understand that one of the esteemed political reporters of the province was just in Disneyland, and I'm tempted to ask him if he ran into the Premier at Fantasyland last week, Mr. Speaker. Maybe he was at the exhibit, honey I shrunk the cheque, because if you listened to the Premier last week, he said there was an energy accord. Now he's saying he was not going to sign a deal if it wasn't good enough to sign. Mr. Speaker, which is it?

The Speaker: — Order please. Order please. The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier last Monday said there was an energy accord for him to sign on the table. After a week

of his very able negotiating, there is apparently no deal. He comes back with a postdated cheque for 180 million new dollars. That's what this agreement is for. And he gets sucked into a photo op for a federal party seeking re-election. Can he detail for the people of the province how that is good negotiating on their behalf?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I am very, very pleased to report to the people of Saskatchewan the benefits of this agreement. There is in this agreement \$120 million for higher education, for students — \$120 million, Mr. Speaker, over five years. That represents, that represents, Mr. Speaker, substantial new dollars to the students of Saskatchewan.

Now I'd like that Leader of the Opposition to stand up and tell the students of Saskatchewan that these kinds of dollars — multi-million dollars, new dollars to the students of Saskatchewan — are table scraps. I'd like him to stand up and say that.

I'd like him to stand up and say to the cities of Saskatchewan — for which we've earned another \$25 million beyond the new cities deal — I'd like him to stand up and say to the mayors of Saskatchewan, well that's just table scraps or some change he found in a coat pocket. Mr. Speaker, these are substantial dollars, and they will do good work for the people and the future of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, not only did the Premier go down to Ottawa and blow a deal that he says was already on the table for an energy accord the likes of which Newfoundland and Nova Scotia have already negotiated, but then he proceeded in the national media to attack the — arguably on this file — the only friends he had in Ottawa at the time, the federal opposition who had moved a motion in support of this government and this opposition's request for a better deal . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. Order. Order. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Not just a few months ago, this Premier hosts a little video dance party at the legislature here. He invites all the politicians from Saskatchewan, federal and provincial. He commits to the federal MPs [Member of Parliament] that are there that he'll work with them, that there will be a united front, and then he attacks them last week while he's in Ottawa. How does he think that helps Saskatchewan's case for a better deal considering the fact that it may be that particular caucus that sits on the government side after a federal election?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Conservative blue that they've been trying to hide from is now becoming technicolor blue. The Conservative blue is here. Get this argument, Mr. Speaker — I heard the Leader of the Opposition using it publicly — get this argument. He says, now we should be careful because his Conservative Party may soon form government.

Is the argument here, Mr. Speaker, is the argument that if there is a Conservative government in Canada, they will make their decisions based on politics? Is that the argument that's being made here? And if that's the argument being made by the Leader of the Opposition, he wants to explain how this Conservative Party of his, how his Conservative Party . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. Order please. The Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Well my colleague says it's fascinating. Well it is fascinating if the theory is that Saskatchewan should patsy and party itself to any political party in Ottawa to get deals for the people of Saskatchewan.

Not this Premier. Not this government, Mr. Speaker. We make the case for Saskatchewan based on sound logic and determined principle, and not on a basis of who we need to please in the opposition benches here or in Ottawa.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — What did the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan just say? That if it's a certain party that he doesn't like that is prepared to work with him to get a deal for Saskatchewan, he won't work with them? Is that what he's saying? Because that's not what he said in February when he invited us all to have a united front.

It's unbelievable, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier would choose partisanship over the future of the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia are not as big as Saskatchewan in terms of seats we have in parliament. They made a deal with the Liberals during the last election — where arguably the Liberals were under less pressure than they are now — and yet they succeeded, where our Premier failed, Mr. Speaker. Where this Premier failed, the premiers of other provinces have succeeded. Mr. Speaker, what do the premiers of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia have that our Premier doesn't?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — I tell you what the premiers of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland don't have today, Mr. Speaker, is a human development accord worth \$300 million. That's what they don't have.

Mr. Speaker, we are not approaching this on the basis of trying to please any politician in Ottawa. We're there fighting for the

people of Saskatchewan. The argument being made by the Leader of the Opposition that somehow we need to please Mr. Harper and the Bloc Québécois, this unholy alliance that's now existing in the House of Commons, to get a fair and an equitable deal for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that's just not on.

We don't care much who is in the government in Ottawa. We're fighting on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier didn't answer the question. The question was, what do the premiers of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia have that our Premier doesn't have? Well, Mr. Speaker, they have obviously some negotiating skills, and they have a deal on behalf of their people, Mr. Speaker. That's what they have.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Our Premier's failed to get it. This united front turned out to be more of a photo op as it turns out.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I remember another premier in this province. I didn't agree with him all the time, but can you imagine Roy Romanow going down to Ottawa and ruining a deal that was already on the table and arguably embarrassing his province? I don't remember even Premier Romanow ever doing that, Mr. Speaker.

The bottom line is this. This Premier got sucked in by a federal government that is under significant duress. There apparently was no deal on the table or if there was, he ruined it. So will the Premier promise this: the next time he hears there's an energy accord on the table in Ottawa, will he just send his officials, and will he stay home so we can actually sign the deal?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Well, Mr. Speaker, let me report to this legislature the kind of conversations I've had over the course of the last 24 and 36 hours, conversations with students, Mr. Speaker. They don't take this kind of line that the Conservative Party here in Saskatchewan takes — negative doom and gloom. I'll tell you the students of Saskatchewan that I talked to this weekend are very excited about the accomplishment that we achieved in Ottawa this week.

Mr. Speaker, there are people waiting for housing in this province. We've enhanced that opportunity by another \$25 million. There's \$90 million here, Mr. Speaker, in terms of labour market development that will speak in many cases to helping our immigrant population and our newcomers to the province move into the labour force.

Mr. Speaker, everywhere in Saskatchewan, except in this legislature, this is seen as good news — good news, Mr.

Speaker. And let me repeat, in terms of building an energy economic development accord, this story is not concluded.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier seems to be living in a little bubble because apparently he's not aware of what other provinces have signed. The provinces of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland . . . even the province of Alberta, sitting on billions in surplus, signed a deal also on the weekend. Mr. Speaker, the province of Ontario signed a better deal per capita than our province. The province of Bombardier got \$260 million from this federal government. Only this Premier seems to think that trailing every other province in Canada is somehow succeeding.

To the Premier again: will he explain to the people of this province why in the world they should want him or ask him to represent them at any negotiations again?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, let me again, let me again review the record. Last fall — this is in eight months, Mr. Speaker — last fall we negotiated a deal around equalization in justice that earned this province \$487 million — \$487 million. The opposition called it table scraps.

We negotiated a deal for the province of Saskatchewan that has added about \$80 million per annum to our health budget to meet some of the real challenges we have in health care — over five years, \$400 million.

We've just signed a deal for \$146 million to provide early childhood learning and child care in our province. We negotiated in this year, Mr. Speaker, an \$80 million equalization payment on top of last year's and this past week, \$300 million.

I add that up, Mr. Speaker, it's in the neighbourhood of \$1.4 billion, new dollars for the people of Saskatchewan from the national government. I'll stand on that record any day, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Support for Agriculture

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, as everyone in the province knows by now, the Premier spent all last week in Ottawa, and he wasn't coming back unless he had an energy accord. So I can only presume they closed all the hotels in Ottawa because he's back and no

energy accord, Mr. Speaker.

But you know what's even worse, Mr. Speaker, not one word from that Premier when he went to Ottawa about agriculture. Not one word about the shape our farmers are in, the trouble they're having putting this crop in. Not one word, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier explain, when he had the ear of the Finance minister, why he couldn't have mentioned agriculture just once?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is, not just days ago we gathered as western premiers in the city of Lloydminster. And, Mr. Speaker, at that meeting of western premiers I moved the question of federal funding for national agriculture programs to the front of the agenda and, Mr. Speaker, achieved, if I may say, achieved for the first time agreement among all Western provinces and territories that the 60/40 split in that national funding and provincial funding for national programs is inappropriate. For the first time, we moved agriculture to the front of the agenda at the western premiers, and we are approaching this now as a western unit.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I find that somewhat amazing because it's not the western premiers that are going to help farmers in Saskatchewan. It's going to have to be Ottawa and that Premier doesn't see fit to even mention it when he's got their ear and he's down there.

Mr. Speaker, I found it amazing in the *Leader-Post* on Saturday, and I quote from the Premier:

“On this front, \$300 million is not a bad week's work in my view,” he said.

Well we go to find out that's not \$300 million to start with; 120 million of that was already announced in the federal budget earlier. It's amazing, Mr. Speaker, when Premier McGuinty can get 5.7 billion for Ontario, Atlantic premiers can get all that money for Atlantic Canada, and our Premier goes down there, creates high expectations and come back with almost nothing, Mr. Speaker, for the people of Saskatchewan.

And what's more amazing, Mr. Speaker, is the federal government right now don't seem to be able to find enough people to give their money to. Why, Mr. Goodale says, and I quote. He said: my critics are wrong; I've only given away between 9 and 10 . . .

The Speaker: — Would the member go to the question please.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Goodale, and I quote him out of the *Leader-Post*, said that: my critics are wrong. I've only given away between 9 and \$10 billion. I have more flexibility. I actually have 28 billion to give away.

The Speaker: — Would the member put his question please.

Mr. Bjornerud: — I'm getting to it, Mr. Speaker. When that kind of money, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. The member for Melville-Saltcoats.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier explain when the federal government has \$28 billion, why Saskatchewan farmers can't get one red cent now out of the federal government after this Premier went to Ottawa?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Well, Mr. Speaker, again we have the circumstance they say one thing, but here are the facts of the matter.

Due to the — if I may say — significant efforts of the Minister of Agriculture from Saskatchewan, joined by his western colleagues, we pressed the federal government this spring, and they produced a payment of \$1 billion. That represents in the neighbourhood of \$280 million.

Now of course they said then to the Western provinces, well now we want you to ante up 40 per cent. And every western province and every territory, in fact every province in Canada said the provinces of Canada are not in a position, not in a position to join in that. And hence we have the kind of agreement that we have with the western premiers to make change, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the member changes his facts and figures every time he's on his feet. Now we have an Ontario deal, and I think he just described is worth 7 billion. The fact of the matter is it's worth 5. Take out the immigration piece in the Ontario deal, and you will find a very close parallel, much equity with the deal we signed in Ottawa last week.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier wants to talk about his Ag minister. Let's talk about his Ag minister. Press release today: provincial Ag minister meets with lenders in Saskatchewan. And I want to quote from that press release:

Wartman emphasized, the provincial government is committed to providing effective programming that meets the needs of producers across the province.

Well let's see how they're meeting the needs, Mr. Speaker. One thing they're doing is they're not funding CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization], wouldn't fund it last year till December, haven't funded it to this point this year. Won't even think about addressing the cash injection that APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan] asked

for.

That Ag minister, Mr. Speaker, has been a total failure as well as the Premier, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to sticking up for farm families and ranchers in Saskatchewan. When will the Premier make farm families a priority in Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Ag and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Mr. Speaker, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again that member is so far off the facts that it's unbelievable, Mr. Speaker. Unbelievable.

Mr. Speaker, this Agriculture minister has been there fighting for the farmers of this province all through the time that I have been minister to try and get a better deal for Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we pressed the federal government for more funding for farmers, so they would be able to plant this spring. Mr. Speaker, they came through. They came through with a payment of \$1 billion, of which we received 280 million, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we pressed the federal government to try and make some changes in the CAIS program, Mr. Speaker. They gave support for the other chapters of the APF [agricultural policy framework], Mr. Speaker, to help us out.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to deal with affordability at our July meeting, should we be able to get there. And we will be effective in getting a change that will support the farmers of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Deputy Premier.

Action Committee on the Rural Economy

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today in this Assembly the Action Committee on the Rural Economy will present to government its phase 2 report on the rural economy. This report encompasses 35 new recommendations to government to grow our rural economy.

Mr. Speaker, this group of outstanding individuals from all walks of rural life and from all corners of the province have dedicated themselves to advancing Saskatchewan's rural economy. They have weathered criticism even the most seasoned politician would find difficult to experience. They've been able to do this, Mr. Speaker, despite the controversy, based on their love and enthusiasm for our province and for the shared common goal of a better Saskatchewan for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, ACRE has been engaged in an extensive consultation with citizens of our province. When citizens had concerns, I observed the ACRE committee members make every effort to communicate with those individuals and address their issues.

Mr. Speaker, the 43 men and women of ACRE are employed in all sectors of our economy and bring with them an assortment of skilled backgrounds to the work table. ACRE as a non-partisan group has worked diligently to remove the politics from their discussions in order to focus solely on solutions.

In phase 1 of ACRE's work, Mr. Speaker, a substantial amount of consultation with rural Saskatchewan residents resulted in 185 recommendations to government on ways to improve rural Saskatchewan. To date I'm proud to say that this government has addressed almost all of those recommendations. And we continue to work with ACRE's committee to monitor the status of those recommendations and we will be reporting further this fall on the progress.

These recommendations have been wide in scope and have addressed all areas of the Saskatchewan economy. These include an introduction of lower royalty tax structures for oil and gas sector, the reduction of corporate capital tax, the expansion of livestock loan guarantee program, the development of the greenprint on ethanol and the plan to stimulate investment in ethanol, and the expanded high-speed Internet and cellular telephone coverage in rural Saskatchewan.

As well, Mr. Speaker, ACRE's recommendations have been instrumental in building a rural economy for our youth. ACRE's recommendations regarding tax incentives for graduates to stay in this province has resulted in a yearly increase in graduated tax credits. On top of that, Mr. Speaker, this government has created the youth advisory council, which was one of the recommendations of the ACRE youth subcommittee.

Mr. Speaker, in phase 2 of the ACRE work, six consultations meetings were held across the province where rural residents gave feedback on ACRE's ideas, and ACRE executive members also made themselves available for countless other phone calls, letters, and meetings with stakeholders. These consultations have resulted in 35 new recommendations in the areas of Crown lands, business development, employment, and rural infrastructure.

These new recommendations build on the extensive work of ACRE's first series. Training for our First Nations people, expanding immigration opportunities, promotion of careers in the trades and other skilled professionals, and the renewal of the business tax rates in Saskatchewan have all been recommended by ACRE. In fact ACRE will be making a presentation of their tax recommendations to the business tax review committee in June. I am pleased to report that my department will work with ACRE and other government departments on all of these recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, the ACRE committee has served the people of Saskatchewan very well over the last five years. Their dedication and enthusiasm for a province and its future is truly commendable and I'm happy to have served as ACRE's Co-Chair and work with these devoted individuals.

The province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, is a better place to live, to work, and to raise our families because of the work of this committee. Our rural economy grows more green and prosperous every day because of your efforts. Thank you very

much to the members of the ACRE committee and thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to make a statement.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also want to join the deputy minister to make a few comments on the ACRE report and the committee. I also want to congratulate the work they did on it. I know a couple of members on there personally and I know the hard work and dedication they poured into filling this committee on this particular report and the report on the first ACRE. I think this time they had 45 members that were working on this particular one and I know each and every one of them has worked very hard. I attended a meeting and many of my colleagues have attended the many meetings that they had throughout the province, and there was a very good turnout at all the meetings of the people that wanted the input out there.

When I look at many of the recommendations that are brought forward there I notice a lot of them are very similar to what's in our pamphlet, the Saskatchewan *100 Ideas* — the elimination of corporate capital tax, reducing taxes to ensure that Saskatchewan businesses can stay competitive with those in other provinces, and increase in immigration. And the minister also talks about the recommendations from the first ACRE report on that.

He also talked about cellular telephone coverage in rural Saskatchewan. Well I've been around since '99 and I know in my area and that, that I still can't get cell coverage in the same spots in '99 and I still can't get them now. So I don't know where he's been expanding that, Mr. Speaker. I hope he's continuing to work in that particular end of it.

But I look forward later in the House today to discussing the 35 recommendations that this committee has and asking them some questions in that. And I hope that this government can implement the recommendations in a timely fashion because rural Saskatchewan out there needs to grow. It needs to start to expand because it hasn't for many, many years, Mr. Speaker, and things aren't that good out there in rural Saskatchewan. If you go out there where I have been from community to community, they all . . . and they want one thing. They want this province to grow and they want to be part of this growing economy with the province.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the committee members for the work, the hard work that they do and I look forward to the work that needs to be carried on in the future.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:30]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 118

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Forbes that **Bill No. 118 — The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority Act, 2005** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this 50-page Bill brought to us very late in the session concerns me with just the time factor alone.

It says it will protect water quality and quantity. Yet I see things like at Grandora and Asquith there's a freshwater aquifer and they're pumping it at the rate of 1,200 gallons a minute for two years. And they're using this water to flush out the saltwater caverns for natural gas.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there are some experts that say that the next gold on the Prairies, and in fact all over the world, is going to be fresh water. So here we are flushing a cavern with some of the soon to be very rare and expensive fresh water. I have a lot of questions of the rationale of that use of fresh water.

Mr. Speaker, in our small communities water is also a problem. In order to meet water standards, small towns have to do more and more water testing and we've reached the point in these small communities that they can't afford their own water. I have towns in my constituency that they're stepping out of the water testing program because they can't afford the equipment. Mr. Speaker, they can't afford the digital testers.

Some of the communities have decided to join with the new water pipeline projects. And now after several years, they find that their bills are higher than what the water bills are in Regina. Mr. Speaker, communities cannot afford their water. We all take it for granted but something has to be done to level the playing field.

Mr. Speaker, I also understand this Bill also talks about spring flooding. This is a very touchy situation no matter which side of the debate you're looking at. Environmentally we must be very careful — very careful.

From the landowners' side we must be very careful and look at the big picture and be sure we are on the right track for future generations. Mr. Speaker, there should be direct consultation with landowners and municipalities to be sure we are doing the right thing before we move ahead on this Bill.

Therefore at this time I would like to adjourn debate on this Bill.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Batoche that debate on second reading of Bill 118 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Bill No. 123

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Forbes that **Bill No. 123 — The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, 2005** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to speak to Bill No. 123, An Act to amend The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, the Act protects 3.4 million acres or 1.4 million hectares of upland and wetlands in Saskatchewan. And the minister has stated there'll be a swapping of land from one private owner to another included in this Act.

Mr. Speaker, the minister has recommended taking 2,223 hectares out of The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act, and it's interesting to see that the government has no net loss policy regarding protecting of wildlife land. And this Bill basically, Mr. Speaker, shows that the NDP government is breaking their own protection policy, and the minister himself has said that losing 2,223 hectares of land from the Act is really a net loss. And, Mr. Speaker, the whole point of the Act is to protect wildlife land.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister said that his department is committed to placing new land under the protection in the future, but some questions arise out of there. Are there plans to bring in new land under the Act to replace the amount that's being taken out? And the minister has said that there's 9 per cent of the province's area as we proceed to a 12 per cent goal established under the biodiversity action plan. Mr. Speaker, why should we and why should the people of Saskatchewan believe the government is going to replace the protected lands taken out of the Bill when they aren't meeting other protected land commitments?

So there's a number of questions around what's happening in this Act. The Act was introduced very late in the session and, Mr. Speaker, we certainly have a number of questions that concern the land that's being taken, that is in and out of the Acts being protected, or taken out from the protection that this Act gives. And we'd like to know what process that is in place to determine how more land will be incorporated under the Act at a later date. And we'd just like to know why people of Saskatchewan should really trust the NDP government when it comes to commitments in the past where they are taking land out from under the protection of the Act.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that the NDP likes to claim that they are green. But when you're taking land out of . . . protected land out of protection, this is pretty hard to keep the commitment that the NDP government likes to make about how green that their government is.

And a number of questions also arise out of compensation for current landowners. The whole treaty land entitlement process, is this part of this Bill and what provisions within the Bill

include this process?

And, Mr. Speaker, since this Bill was introduced very late, we certainly wanted to speak to the stakeholders in the province and get more feedback and information concerning the implementation of this Bill and the effect and the impact of taking land out from under protection that the wildlife habitat Act gives the wildlife land. And so, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Biggar that debate on second reading of Bill No. 123 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

The Chair recognizes the Deputy Government House Leader.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — In order to expedite the work of the two policy field committees, the Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure Committee and the Economy Committee, I would move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:38.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS	
PRESENTING PETITIONS	
Elhard	3095
Hermanson	3095
Draude	3095
Eagles	3095
Harpauer	3095
Cheveldayoff	3095
Brkich	3096
Weekes	3096
Merriman	3096
Dearborn	3096
Hart	3096
READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS	
Deputy Clerk	3096
NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS	
Brkich	3096
Merriman	3097
Bakken Lackey	3097
INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS	
Serby	3097
Brkich	3097
Forbes	3097
Cheveldayoff	3097
Higgins	3098
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS	
Shine Woman of Influence Award	
Wall	3098
Aircraft Maintenance Orientation Program	
Beatty	3098
Weyburn Red Wings Win Royal Bank Cup	
Bakken Lackey	3098
2005 Coloplast Canadian Wheelchair Rugby Championship	
Iwanchuk	3099
Donna Beall Receives Centennial Medal	
Cheveldayoff	3099
McDowell Foundation Projects	
Forbes	3099
Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan Awards	
Eagles	3100
ORAL QUESTIONS	
Negotiations with Federal Government Regarding Energy Accord	
Wall	3100
Calvert	3100
Support for Agriculture	
Bjornerud	3104
Calvert	3104
Wartman	3105
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	
Action Committee on the Rural Economy	
Serby	3105
Brkich	3106
ORDERS OF THE DAY	
GOVERNMENT ORDERS	
ADJOURNED DEBATES	
SECOND READINGS	
Bill No. 118 — The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority Act, 2005	
Kirsch	3107
Bill No. 123 — The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, 2005	
Weekes	3107

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