



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

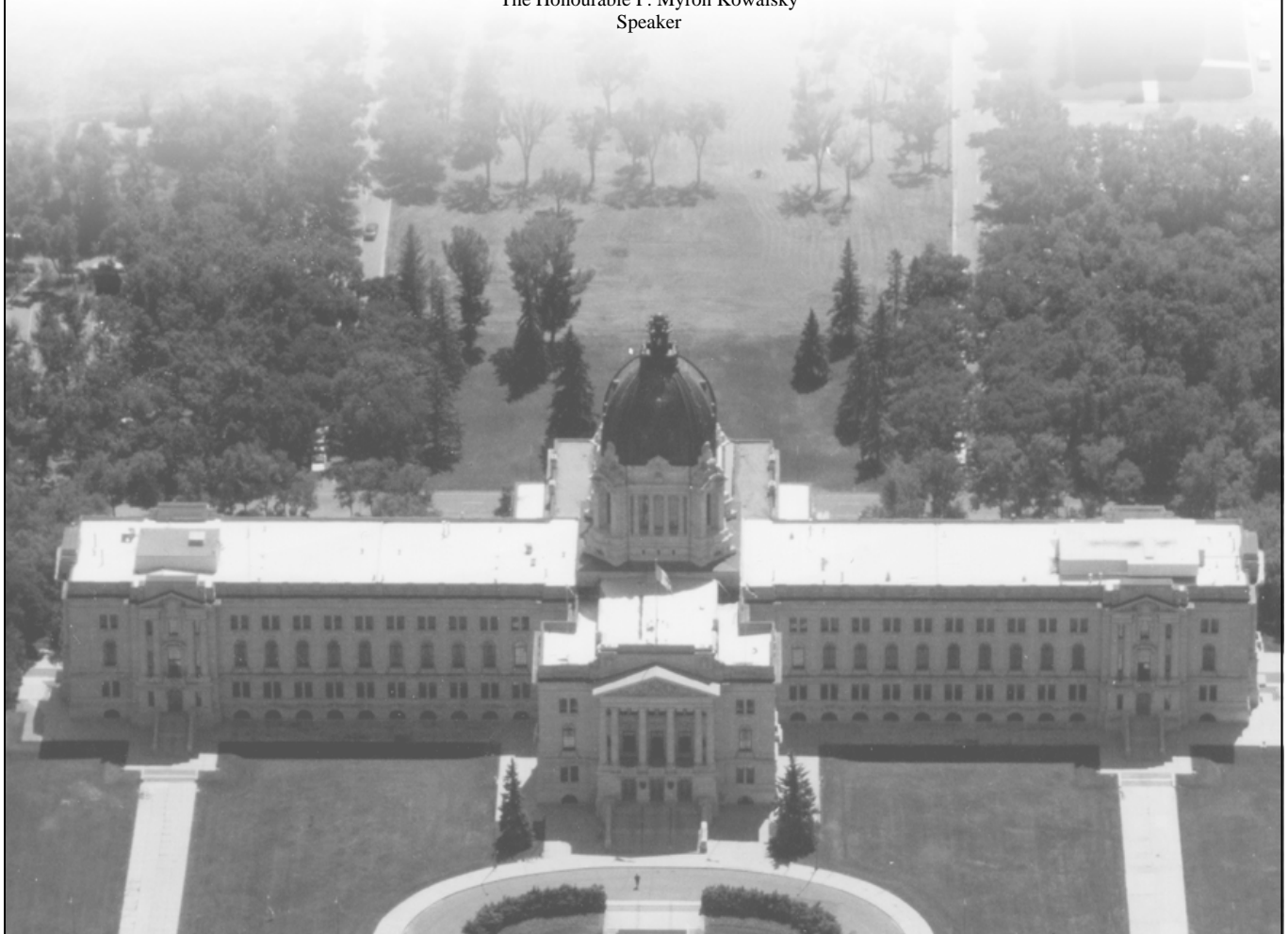
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**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, Hon. 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, Hon. 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. As I indicated yesterday, highways are a continuing problem in southwest Saskatchewan. I present a petition on behalf of constituents who drive the road 321 from the community of Liebenthal through Burstall to the Alberta border. 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 321 in order to address safety and economic concerns.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by individuals from the community of Burstall, Medicine Hat, Calgary, Didsbury, Fox Valley, Saskatoon, Mendham, and Leader. I so present.

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

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have constituents who are also concerned about a highway in my constituency, Highway No. 310.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that the Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause this government to repair Highway 310 in order to address safety concerns and to facilitate economic growth and tourism in Foam Lake, Fishing Lake, Kuroki, and surrounding areas.

The people that have signed this petition are from Lintlaw, Dalmeny, and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition with citizens concerned about the safety of Highway No. 5. 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 upgrade and widen Highway No. 5 from Humboldt to Saskatoon.

And the signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from Fulda, Bruno, and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker,

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to take all the necessary actions to install the technical equipment necessary to ensure that residents on Highway 19 and the Outlook area in Saskatchewan are protected for reliable cellular phone coverage.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens from Strongfield and Loreburn. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to read a petition of people opposed to reduction of health care services in Wilkie. 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 Wilkie Health Centre and special care home maintain at the very least their current level of services.

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

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order petitions have been reviewed and pursuant to rule 14(7) are hereby read and received as sessional paper nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

Ms. Bakken Lackey: — Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 8 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Industry and Resources: for the year 2005 and '06, who are the members of the investment attraction council; how many times has the investment attraction council met; what groups, organizations, and/or companies has the investment attraction council met with; what is the budget for the investment attraction council; how much is being spent by the investment attraction council; and what are the results of the council's works?

And I have the same questions, Mr. Speaker, for the years 2004 and '05, 2003 and '04, and 2002-03.

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

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 8 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Property

Management: how many proposals did SPM receive by the May 31, 2005 deadline for the disposal of the Echo Valley Conference Centre, and who were the parties that submitted proposals?

And, Mr. Speaker, I have a second question also to that same minister and the question reads as follows:

Was the May 31, 2005 deadline for the receipt of proposals for the disposal of the Echo Valley Conference Centre extended to a later date? If so, what was the new deadline and how many proposals were received and from whom?

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly some individuals seated in the Speaker's gallery — seated up there, looking good.

These individuals have something to do with the north central employment enhancement program. I'll say a few words about the program, Mr. Speaker, and then introduce the guests. It's an outreach of the inner city community partnership which is, of course, a partnership between the federal, provincial, and municipal governments working to take on the challenges in our inner city.

This particular program itself is a real partnership between the Department of Community Resources and Employment, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, the city of Regina, the city police, North Central Community Association that is the sponsor for the program, and the North Central Family Centre. There's a great number of groups that are involved in this endeavour, Mr. Speaker.

But part of their work has been to go out to different places of employment, see what they think, get a chance to size up the jobs. And so it happens today that we had opportunity to have lunch with the Premier, with the Minister for Northern Affairs, with the Minister for Culture, Youth and Recreation, and of course with myself. And without any further ado, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce them, and if they could stand and give us a wave when I do so.

Needing little introduction is Forest Pelletier. Anyway Forest is quite the rapper, Mr. Speaker. We've got Carol Burns. We've got Evan Kinequon, Janice Kinequon, Richard Lafromboise, Tony Longman. I'll introduce him again, Forest Pelletier. One more time. There's his encore. Okay. Stacy Sparvier, Cory Williams — oh he's left the building — anyway, Richard Kahnpace.

And of course we've got people that . . . this being the partnership that it is, we've got different people here. We've got Corporal Ray Van Dusen from the Regina city police. We've got — let me see here — we've got Clayton Episkenew who is one of the coordinators for the program. We've got Cecilia — still around here? No, she's out. Thanks very much. I'm just

going to flip over here. We've got Christina Phipps from the Department of Community Resources and Employment. And from the fine constituency of Regina Elphinstone-Centre, the untiring, hard-working Colleen Smith who works in the office of the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

These young people are making a big difference in north central, Mr. Speaker, and it's a real pleasure to see them here in their Assembly. And I just want to say congratulations for the work you're doing. Keep up that good work and keep building that confidence and success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to welcome to our Assembly today on behalf of all members, His Excellency, William Fisher, the High Commissioner of Australia to Canada who has just joined us in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

The High Commissioner is visiting our province over these period of days. He has spent some time in Saskatoon — I understand has toured the University of Saskatchewan, met with officials there, has met with folks from Cameco, and I understand had a tour of the Canadian Light Source synchrotron.

While in Regina he will be meeting with the president of the university here. He will be meeting with yourself, Mr. Speaker, or has met with yourself, will be touring the building, and later this afternoon meeting with myself, the Leader of the Opposition, and I think the Minister of Health.

I want to, on behalf of all members and the people of Saskatchewan, welcome the High Commissioner of Australia to our province, to the nation, and wish him very well during his time in Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, it's a pleasure to join with the Premier in welcoming His Excellency to the Legislative Assembly today. We also want to join with the Premier in wishing His Excellency an excellent visit to our province. I too have noted his itinerary and I think it's a good one. The relationship between the countries, our two countries, but also this province and Australia are key, especially in particular with respect to agriculture. So on behalf of the official opposition we want to welcome him here to the Legislative Assembly today.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation, the member for Cumberland.

Hon. Ms. Beatty: — Mr. Speaker, I too want to welcome the

young people that are visiting us here today. And my colleague here forgot to mention Jeremy LaRose — so if he could wave to us — and thank you for coming to visit us. You're role models like I told you earlier. You're taking a leadership role. And, Mr. Speaker, hopefully that as part of this journey that they're taking, that they're going to end up in the House as well, in these chairs. So I want to welcome them as well, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It always gives me great pleasure to introduce individuals from the constituency of Cypress Hills who make the journey to Regina. It's a fairly long distance as you know, having travelled that way yourself a few times.

But in this case we have individuals representing several different RMs [rural municipality] as reeves and councillors and an administrator as well. So, Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the rest of the House, I'd like to introduce the following individuals: Mr. Ken Dietz from the RM of Clinworth; Dwight Holstein and Doug Smith from the RM of Deer Forks; Larry Bischoff and Tim Geiger from the RM of Happyland. And I have to comment. I don't know where the name came from but given the nature of these guys, it might have had something to do with them or their predecessors. And Tim Lozinsky who's more recently the administrator of both Happyland and Deer Forks. And welcome, gentlemen, to your House today.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

[13:45]

Centennial Medal Recipient

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday night in Swift Current I had the privilege of presenting a Centennial Medal on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor. The recipient was not someone who enjoys fame in her province. She is not the president of a local service club. She is not involved with some very worthy community-based organization, the many that do amazing things in Saskatchewan. She is a recovering drug addict. She is Kelly Merriman. She is the daughter of my friend and my colleague, the hon. member for Saskatoon Northwest.

And while she must deal daily with her drug addiction, Mr. Speaker — most recently to crystal meth — she has the unspeakable courage to speak out to students, teachers, parents, and anyone who will listen about the dangers of drugs, to fight for the lives of others even as she continues to fight for her own. She will have travelled with her dad to 14 schools across the province to take this message, by the end of the month.

Last night in Swift Current her and her dad spoke to parents. Yesterday afternoon and earlier this morning they spoke with students from my constituency, and by yesterday evening

already two students — children of my constituents — had come to Kelly to ask for her help with addictions. Would they have the courage to come forward had she not had the courage herself to go out and speak in Swift Current? I don't know. I don't know that they would have.

But that is the reason that she should be honoured and has been honoured by a grateful province. That Centennial Medal was made for Kelly Merriman. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Nation Builders and Community Recognition Awards

Mr. Iwanchuk: —

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

Mr. Speaker, last Sunday I attended a special awards ceremony sponsored by the Saskatchewan provincial council of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress to help celebrate Saskatchewan's centennial. This year, Mr. Speaker, in addition to their annual Nation Builders Awards, the council added the Community Recognition Award to honour individuals from the Ukrainian community who exemplify the Saskatchewan spirit we've been celebrating this year.

Mr. Speaker, Jennie Ortynsky, Stefan Franko, and Ehor William Gauk received the Nation Builders Awards while Mike Boychuk and Anastasia Zuck were recognized nation builders posthumously.

Patrice Detz received a Community Recognition Award for leadership and cultural preservation and development, Shawna Lee Kozun for cultural preservation and development, while Yaroslav Sywanyk was recognized for his volunteer activities. And for youth achievement, Mr. Speaker, the recipients were Stacey Nahachewsky and Theresa Sokyrka.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating these award recipients and in thanking the members of Saskatchewan's Ukrainian community for their ongoing contributions to our province.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Health Care Services

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday in the Throne Speech there is a reference to Saskatchewan being the model jurisdiction for health care that delivers modern services. I couldn't disagree

more with the characterization that Saskatchewan is the model jurisdiction across Canada. I think, Mr. Speaker, most of Saskatchewan residents would agree with me.

We receive countless letter, emails, faxes, and phone calls, hearing from people that cannot access the services they need in this province. And I know the members opposite receive many of those letters as well because they're cc'd to us. Those letters talk about people who have had to uproot their families to get health care in other provinces, families with children with special needs such as autism that have had to go out of province to receive care.

A number of months ago an elderly gentleman came to this building to do a news conference to inform people that he had to go to Toronto to receive a hip surgery replacement that would have taken over two years here in Saskatchewan. It took less than two weeks when he went to Ontario.

People are waiting months in some cases for much needed cancer care. Does that sound like a model jurisdiction of health care in Canada? I don't believe it is. Perhaps 50 years ago Saskatchewan could hold its head high and say it was the model of health care in this nation. But we're a long ways from that under this NDP [New Democratic Party] government. It's time for this government to quit giving itself platitudes and pats on the back and start dealing with the reality of the longest health care wait lists in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Meadow Lake.

Art and Annie Haase Celebrate 70th Wedding Anniversary

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was a typical November day when Art and Annie Haase arrived at the post office in Cold Lake, Alberta to purchase their wedding licence. However at the counter the postmaster informed them that he had sold his last licence the previous day.

Unable to be married in Pierceland, Art and Annie had to travel 30 kilometres across the provincial border to Cold Lake — by horse, I should say — to Cold Lake to be married. But having travelled as far as they had and being as determined as they were, they made arrangements to have a licence shipped from Edmonton to Cold Lake for the following day. Of course this meant trying to make arrangements to spend the night at Cold Lake, which has apparently made a number of interesting family stories.

Art and Annie Haase were married November 7, 1935 in Cold Lake, Alberta and on Monday of this past week this amazing couple celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary.

Art with his wife Annie at his side managed the Beacon Hill community pasture from 1960 until 1979. There are still many who talk about what a great job they did.

They farmed together in Pierceland for close to 70 years and raised three boys.

Art and Annie now have numerous grandchildren, many great-grandchildren, and now have a great-great-grandchild. This past year they moved off the farm and now reside in Goodsoil. And Art is still going strong. At 92 years of age he bought a brand new van last week. He says he plans on using it for at least 10 years before trading it in.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Art and Annie Haase and to extend our warmest and best wishes to them on the occasion of their 70th wedding anniversary.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Addictions Strategy

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party has urged this government for more than a year to tackle the growing problem of crystal meth and addictions in our province. This spring the NDP finally admitted there was an addictions crisis in our province. Unfortunately the Premier's Project Hope appears to be more about winning elections than solving the problems facing families today.

Mr. Speaker, Project Hope does nothing for families in need of help for addictions today. Not a single additional youth treatment bed will be created until 2007. Instead this NDP government has decided that hiring additional political staff and promoting NDP backbenchers was a higher priority.

Mr. Speaker, this NDP government has the worst crime rate in Canada. Police officers will tell you that addictions are the major cause of crime, and yet instead of using their new-found money to fulfill their promise to hire more police officers and create more addictions beds, this government chooses to create more political jobs for themselves.

The people of Saskatchewan are looking for leadership from their government. Instead this NDP government chooses to benefit themselves. On behalf of the families in crisis and the victims of crime, the Saskatchewan Party and I call on this government to do the right thing and deal with addictions in our province immediately. The NDP have the money. They should care enough to act now before more young people die.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Community Planning Day

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every year throughout Canada and in 30 countries across the world, November 8 is set aside to promote the awareness and involvement of elected officials and the public in community and regional land use planning, and to highlight the valuable contributions that sound community and regional planning make to our quality of life and to our environment.

This year for the first time the day was designated as

Community Planning Day in Saskatchewan and coincided with the annual conference of the Association of Professional Community Planners of Saskatchewan, an organization that has represented professional planners in the province for 40 years.

Mr. Speaker, setting aside a day to highlight community planning provides support to the valuable work that professional community planners do in building our communities. Highlighting the profession of community planners also reinforces the contribution that they make to land use planning and multi-jurisdictional planning projects in our province.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the Assembly to join me in congratulating the Association of Professional Community Planners of Saskatchewan on their 40th anniversary and in recognizing the values highlighted on Community Planning Day. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Saskatchewan Aviation Hall of Fame Awards

Ms. Bakken Lackey: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this past weekend the Saskatchewan Aviation Council convention was held in Moose Jaw. At this event individuals who have contributed to the aviation industry in Saskatchewan were honoured. Dick Ryan, John Howe and Bob McCombie were the recipients of the Saskatchewan Aviation Hall of Fame Award which honours pioneers who built the aviation industry in Saskatchewan.

Steve Burchi received the David Eckmire Industry Service Award. This award is presented in recognition of an individual within the aviation support industry who exemplifies the pursuit of excellence in service to others.

In 2005, Mr. Speaker, our Saskatchewan centennial year, the Saskatchewan Aviation Council initiated a new award titled the Distinguished Airman Award. This award recognizes those past and present heroes who form the backbone of the aviation industry in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to announce that Doug Ingram along with our friend and colleague, the member from Wood River, were the recipients of this prestigious award.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this Assembly to join with me in congratulating the member from Wood River and the other individuals who have been singled out by their peers for their exemplary service to the aviation industry within Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

Equalization

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, by now most people in the province of Saskatchewan know that the Premier is hopping mad about equalization. The Premier has admitted that his policy of quiet diplomacy has failed, has failed the people of Saskatchewan on the important issue of equalization.

Being angry is fine. But what's important, Mr. Speaker, is what is done with that anger and with that resolve. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier share with members of this Assembly and the people of the province what he has in mind? What are his plans to make Saskatchewan's case to a federal Liberal government that clearly does not care about the province of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, what this government and I will do over the next coming days and weeks is to engage the people of Saskatchewan, to report to the people of Saskatchewan and engage the people of Saskatchewan so that's it's not a government that's voicing this opinion — it is a province and a people. And we welcome and have appreciated the support that we have received from the opposition.

Over the next several days, Mr. Speaker, we will use tools available to us to acquaint the province of Saskatchewan with the current circumstance and engage their support.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past February the Premier and well a number of political leaders in the province of Saskatchewan gathered together in this building. Members of parliament, the Premier, there was ministers there. The opposition was there. There were senators there. The Premier wanted a united front on this issue, and the Premier got his united front. There was a commitment there made by all of the people involved to do what was necessary.

And you know, since that date, Mr. Speaker, the first call, the first call that we received on this particular issue on equalization didn't happen until yesterday, until yesterday, moments before the Premier's press conference when the thing had flown apart.

Additionally today, the Member for Parliament for Regina-Lumsden-Lake Centre said that no one in the Conservative caucus, the opposition members of the House of Commons, has been contacted. He says we all showed up for the photo op, and then the united front was forgotten, Mr. Speaker.

This Premier asked for a united front. He got a united front, and then he did nothing with that united front. Short of a temper tantrum, what's he going to do now, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I take it from the Leader of the Opposition's comments right now that the only time his federal members will do anything is when I phone them and ask them to do something. What have they been doing in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, representing the people of Saskatchewan?

Yesterday, yesterday the Leader of the Opposition suggested the thing that we should ought to do, what we should ought to do is send him, him and myself and some others, I guess, to Ottawa immediately, as if going to Ottawa was going to solve this problem. Mr. Speaker, then he raises Danny Williams as a role model on how to get things done in the country.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the Leader of the Opposition that Premier Williams and Premier Hamm of Nova Scotia left Ottawa and got it done in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, and that's what we're going to do.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan, people in this Assembly knew about the case that Newfoundland was making. They heard here loud and clear from the Premier of Newfoundland.

I wonder if the people of Newfoundland know even who the name of the Premier of Saskatchewan is, Mr. Speaker. They do not know because this Premier has left it to officials and to quiet diplomacy, and he has failed. He asked for a united front from political people in this province. He got that united front, and he did nothing with it. He left it to officials. Well now we know the result. The result is that this Premier has failed to get a deal for the province of Saskatchewan.

We would like to know what tactics he has in mind, what plans he has to make the case, Mr. Speaker, so that the people of Newfoundland know our case as we did of theirs only a few short months ago.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I'm asked by the people of Saskatchewan, what has the Leader of the Opposition been doing on this file? What have we heard from the Leader of the Opposition? Does he require my leadership?

Now, Mr. Speaker, if he weren't so busy trying to forward his own political agenda as opposed to the agenda of the people of Saskatchewan, if the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party — the Saskatchewan Conservative Party — was more interested in the future of the province as opposed to his own political future, he would be working with us.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to engage the people of

Saskatchewan. We are going to engage them in this discussion and this debate. And it will be the voice of Saskatchewan people, not the voice of a Leader of the Opposition or not solely the voice of a Premier. It will be the voice of Saskatchewan people that will influence the national government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier wants to know what the official opposition is going to do about the need for strong leadership in the province of Saskatchewan. I'll tell you what we're going to do about that, Mr. Speaker. We're going to win the next election, and then we won't have that . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, what the Opposition has already done, has already done — notwithstanding the fact that the government didn't inform us of this until yesterday — we've already contacted the opposition parties. We've asked them what issue they're going to make of this in the House of Commons. We've already started to work. What has this Premier done? That's the question that the people of the province have. What has this Premier done already in the three days since he found out? And what has he got planned in the future to fight for Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, since we engaged in this goal of reaching for the people of Saskatchewan an energy accord that will be equitable and fair with those energy accords that have been signed with Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, since we began, we have attended to the Senate. We have attended to the House of Commons. I've spent days in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker. I have visited every national media outlet. I have spoken to the Empire Club of Toronto. Yesterday I was on national television.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to engage the people of Saskatchewan, as they have not been previously engaged, in fighting this battle with us, Mr. Speaker, because it is for the benefit of the future of the children of Saskatchewan that we lobby and fight this fight.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say in reference to the Leader of the Opposition's opening comment. I tell you, if the people of Saskatchewan have to wait for him or his party to be in government, it's way too long to wait for an energy deal for the people . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Relief for the Education Portion of Property Tax

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I

have a quote.

And I say, Mr. Speaker, is there any wonder that a tax revolt is brewing in this province? People are being taxed to death and they're saying, we can't take [it] any more.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take credit for that statement but I can't. It came from the Premier, the current Premier. Well, Mr. Speaker, nothing has changed. There is a tax revolt in the province right now. Nineteen rural municipalities are not going to submit their portion of taxes. And what does this government expect when the ratepayers pay the highest education portion of property tax in the country?

Mr. Speaker, the Premier talks about being mad at Ottawa. Well the people of this province are mad at him and they're here today. To the Premier of high property taxes: why does he force people to revolt?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I had the good fortune to attend the meeting of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities this morning. The reception I got from the members of the association as well as the executive was a very positive one — one that was directing government to take some action with regards to education property tax relief.

I had the opportunity to speak for 45 minutes, in addition to questions, in which I laid out the plan of the government with regards to education property tax, Mr. Speaker, and that commitment was to continue the work that we're doing as laid out in the Throne Speech and to provide long-term, sustainable education property tax relief to Saskatchewan residents.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the new premier for the answer. And I understand his answering of questions wasn't all that long this morning.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier also said a portion of any new equalization money would go to property tax relief. Based on his announcement yesterday, the grand total people in Saskatchewan will see is zero. No equalization deal, no relief — nothing but failure from this Premier and this government.

To the Premier: why has he failed the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member opposite does have a very short memory. The government committed at a time, in consultation with representatives from the urban and rural municipalities, to

commit any new monies received from equalization to education property tax relief. Thirty per cent of the money that the Premier received after his very first launch of the fight on this issue, 30 per cent of that money has gone, Mr. Speaker, to education property tax relief, \$110 million, two years — 8 per cent per year for two years, \$55 million per year. This is an interim step towards long-term, sustainable property tax relief.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest my memory is better than the Premier's if you refer back to the quote I just gave.

Mr. Speaker, people are revolting. RMs are going broke because this government won't fund them. What we see this NDP government giving is a band-aid solution to the education portion of property tax. It's like putting a Band-Aid on a gaping wound. Since this government cut the education grant, property tax went up in some cases as high as 84 per cent. How can this be, Mr. Speaker? And are the people expected to live with these massive increases? Again to the Premier of high property taxes, will he commit to real property tax relief today?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm assuming that the member opposite joins me and the executive of SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] in not condoning acts that are in contravention of the laws of Saskatchewan. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I hope the member opposite understood the speech that I made this morning in which I did commit to long-term, sustainable property tax relief in this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Responsibilities and Pay for Government Members of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sixty years and counting seems pretty long term to me, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to quote from an opposition member from a few years ago, and I quote:

Now by my count . . . there is only one member of the government benches . . . who doesn't receive extra pay for some cabinet or Legislative Secretary responsibility . . . [You] Know what that means, Mr. Speaker . . . not only [is it] a question of extra salaries . . . it's extra offices in this building, it's extra staff, it's extra cars, [it's] extra airplane trips.

And you know who said that, Mr. Speaker? It was the Premier,

the member from Saskatoon Riversdale in April 1990.

Now when I look down the list of NDP MLAs, Mr. Speaker, guess what. There's only one member not receiving extra pay, Mr. Speaker. Why is the Premier doing exactly the same thing the previous government was doing?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — I appreciate the fact . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. Everybody will have their turn. The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — I appreciate the fact, Mr. Speaker, the opposition members are spending so much time reading my very good speeches. And I recommend many of my speeches to them, and I think they'll find lots of good and useful information there.

It's interesting that the member from Cannington wants to talk about the 1980s when his party was in government here. We do have memories of the 1980s when we had a cabinet over here that I think was 25 or 26 members at that time, when of course everyone else had certain privileges, and when we recognize some of those privileges were abused, Mr. Speaker.

At the same time when that group of men and women were in these government benches, they nearly bankrupt the province, Mr. Speaker. We're still today paying hundreds of millions of dollars, one hundreds of millions of dollars in payments on the debt that these people rang up when they were in government. The people of Saskatchewan at the end of that decade say we want through with those people, and they don't want them back again.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed we have been looking at the minister . . . the Premier's old speeches and wondering why he hasn't kept his word.

Mr. Speaker, this was obviously a big issue for him because he spoke on it again in April 1991, and I quote:

Perhaps he'd admit it's a mistake that every member of the government benches, with the exception of one, is either a cabinet minister . . . an associate minister, a chair of committees, or a Legislative Secretary, earning extra money.

Mr. Speaker, that was in 1991 that the Premier said it was a mistake. And yet he's doing exactly the same thing. Now, Mr. Speaker, every NDP MLA, with the exception of one, is earning extra salary. Will the Premier admit today that's a mistake?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the test, the test of a government is in the progress of its people and its province. The test of a government is setting forth vision as we have in this Throne Speech, setting forth goals and setting forth key commitments and initiatives to achieve those goals and visions. And, Mr. Speaker, every member, every member of this caucus is engaged in building toward the vision of a Saskatchewan where there's opportunity for all, where we're building diverse communities, and where we are doing it in a green . . . and growing in a prosperous economy. That's the work of this government, Mr. Speaker.

I do not apologize for the work of this government. We will continue to do that work, Mr. Speaker. And we would encourage members of the opposition to come out of the '80s because all the time that they're talking about the '80s, they're only reminding the people of Saskatchewan who they are, where they come from, and where we do not want ever to go again.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately there's even less people in Saskatchewan today than there was in 1991, but the Premier's Throne Speech is saying, no one left behind. Well, Mr. Speaker, it should have said, no NDP MLA left behind. Mr. Speaker, this really speaks to the culture of entitlement that is incipient in the NDP.

When the NDP was in opposition they were against government advertising, government travel, against political patronage, against extra pay for government MLAs. But now they're in government; it's okay as long as it's NDP advertising, NDP travel, NDP patronage, and NDP MLAs getting extra pay. Mr. Speaker, this Premier has become exactly that which he criticized, Mr. Speaker. Why is the Premier betraying his own words?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, all the provisions and extra responsibilities that exist in this House, and many of them are held by members of the opposition, and there are appropriate, appropriate rewards for those positions, Mr. Speaker. As that member should know from Cannington, these are established by the Board of Internal Economy of which he and other members have been a significant part.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I say the test of a government, the test of a government is how you manage the affairs of the province of Saskatchewan. And when that test is applied to this government and our government of the '90s as opposed to their government — which the Leader of the Opposition of today was much a part of — when the test is put by the people of Saskatchewan in how have we managed the affairs, they failed that party, they failed that group of men and women. And they have rewarded this party and this government with successive election victories, and we expect to see that continue well into the

future, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Treatment Beds for People with Addictions

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, on Monday the Throne Speech talked about no one being left behind. And one thing is very clear, this government is doing its very best to make sure that no NDP MLAs are left behind all right, but we're all aware of the ever-expanding NDP cabinet. And one of those positions is going to the member from Sutherland to create an addictions ministry. Meanwhile people with addictions are being left behind.

This government today has new money for a minister. They have new money for salaries for new political staff. They have money for the printing of new stationary, but we don't have any money for a new treatment bed until 2007. Will this Premier, the very man who locked the doors of White Spruce, explain why he's chosen to spend at least half a million dollars a year on a new ministry instead of ensuring people with addictions have quicker access to treatment beds?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Healthy Living Services.

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's been my great privilege to serve the people of Saskatchewan in the past nine months as Legislative Secretary on addictions. I've been able to tour the province and meet with parents, meet with those that are struggling with addictions, meet with teachers, meet with police — all of those individuals. And we learned that we have a very good base of addictions services, a lot of great people doing very good work.

However we did learn that there is areas of improvement, and that's why the Premier released his plan in August with the 60 per cent increase on a \$25 million base providing \$15 million more money per year over the next three years.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition yesterday criticized this government for winning an award from the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. Mr. Speaker, this isn't just about winning awards. It's about helping people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, this Premier, the man that we are talking about, is the same man that closed White Spruce and is the same man that abolished SADAC [Saskatchewan Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission]. And it's the same man that said on March 27, 1990:

... if the government was sincere and wanting to assist Saskatchewan households, the Premier of this province would tomorrow fire four or five ... cabinet ministers, [and] take that money and put it into a school lunch program [or perhaps treatment beds for young people] ...

Mr. Speaker, what Saskatchewan families and the people don't want is another cabinet minister while all this Premier can offer is hope, and what we really need is action. We don't need another minister. We don't need more staff. What we need is some treatment beds.

Why should the people of Saskatchewan believe this Premier that he has any commitment to addictions when he's more interested in expanding his cabinet than helping people with addictions?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Healthy Living Services.

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier has on many occasions, as have I over this past nine months, commended some of the members of the opposition for their very good work on highlighting the issue of crystal meth. Mr. Speaker, I believe this is an issue where the good opposition has raised an issue, and as good government we have responded. I think ...

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, I believe that this is an issue that is showing that this democratic process can work. Mr. Speaker, there is a long list of initiatives that we've announced on August 4. We've actually implemented many of them already. I can go over the list if the member wants to and we're well ahead of schedule on all of the other issues.

Mr. Speaker, this is an additional \$15 million each and every year over the next three years. That's a 60 per cent increase in the budget. Mr. Speaker. The Throne Speech said that every child will have the best possible chance of growing up free from addiction. I'm proud to be part of a government that's going to fulfill that promise, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, yes the opposition has raised the issue, but you know what? We have to wait for the government to actually deal with the issue. And they haven't dealt with the issue.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier said in 1987, he may ask this question:

Have they done anything to cut funding to their own political staff? Have they cut anything from their self-serving advertising budgets? Have they cut from their lavish personal expenditures? And have they cut from trips on government aircraft?

And what have we seen today in Saskatchewan? Larger cabinet, more political staff, a 30 per cent increase in advertising, a 30 per cent increase in cabinet minister travel expenses, and a brand new airport. But you know what? We still have no new treatment beds. Can the Premier explain why any of these lavish expenditures ranks higher than treatment beds for people with addictions?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Healthy Living Services.

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier's Project Hope that was announced on August 4 covers a number of initiatives and areas. One of them is prevention and treatment. We've already hired and established a prevention and education directorate and those individuals will be supporting not only the addiction workers in all of the regional health authorities but also will be a resource to parents.

Which reminds me, Mr. Speaker, of the first thing that this government did on this issue around project hope was enhancing HealthLine. In my consultations with parents what I heard was a gut-wrenching fear that they don't know where to go to turn for help. And HealthLine has already helped over 300 individuals since it's been established. And that is, Mr. Speaker, we know that for every one individual that is having a problem with addictions there's nine or ten individuals that are suffering from that, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, on prevention and education, supply, reduction, and treatment, we've already established a number of initiatives and we're moving forward, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, you don't need a cabinet portfolio. You don't need political staff or a cabinet car to get some things done. The Member for Kelvington has proved that. The Member for Weyburn-Big Muddy's proved that. And last night in Swift Current, my colleague, the Member for Saskatoon Northwest and his daughter Kelly proved that.

In Swift Current, they were making presentations to students and parents about the deadliness of meth and addiction. And after their presentation, two students came up to them and told them that they had an addictions problem and that they needed some help. They asked for some help.

Mr. Speaker, that is what it's all about. You don't need a cabinet portfolio or political staff or a cabinet car to get things done. You need leadership that has a will to get things done.

And at the top of the list, Mr. Speaker, you need beds because what if those two young people in Swift Current were they to need treatment for their addiction? It's not available in NDP Saskatchewan. We need beds not politics. When will the Premier deliver on that?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Healthy Living Services.

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if the member knows that within the Premier's Project Hope is a tripling of the treatment beds for stabilization and for longer treatment.

Mr. Speaker, we're working with the regional health authorities. We're working with communities. We're working with First Nations. And, Mr. Speaker, I can say based on the agenda that we've talked about that we're well ahead of schedule for providing that.

But, Mr. Speaker, treatment beds, we already have almost . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, we have over 250 beds within the province of Saskatchewan. To say that there's nothing being done is far from the truth, but we know that we can make improvements. We are making these improvements, and we're well ahead of schedule for making these improvements, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Crown Management Board.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. Order, order. The Chair . . . Order.

Members, we're on agenda item of ministerial statements. The Chair recognizes once again the Minister for Crown Management Board.

Entrepreneurial Foundation and Fund Established

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to announce today that government has joined with the private sector to establish the Entrepreneurial Foundation of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Entrepreneurial Fund.

Two years ago the Premier made a commitment to establish a foundation and a venture capital fund that would promote entrepreneurship and provide assistance for small- and medium-sized businesses for start-ups and expansions. We have met that commitment today, Mr. Speaker.

The growth and development of the small-business sector is extremely important to our economy. We need to ensure that that sector thrives. We need to start by building our entrepreneurial base, especially among our young people, our rural people, northern, First Nations, and Métis people, as well as co-operatives.

The Entrepreneurial Foundation of Saskatchewan will provide business advice, mentoring, and support services for new and existing entrepreneurs. The goal will be to help them develop investment-ready business plans. And these business plans will then be eligible for investments from the Saskatchewan Entrepreneurial Fund. The fund will provide financing of up to \$1 million for each of these approved proposals. Our research shows that there is a funding gap for projects that require less than \$1 million in equity, so we hope that the fund will fill the need.

CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] will provide up to \$25 million for the fund over the next five years, as well as the \$1.8 million operating grant for the foundation.

SaskCentral, on behalf of Saskatchewan's credit unions, will also invest \$25 million in the fund, as will Prairie Financial Management, which will be the fund manager.

Both the foundation and the fund will actively seek other partners, including financial institutions and private sector companies. We believe it's extremely important for them to become involved and we certainly welcome their participation.

Mr. Speaker, the foundation will be guided by a nine-member board of directors from the public and private sector. And these successful and very experienced advisers and business people will help promote the foundation and build its membership. The foundation's first CEO [chief executive officer] is himself a successful entrepreneur. Ben Voss is a professional engineer from Saskatoon, and he will be a role model for other young people who will want to follow in his footsteps.

Mr. Speaker, we had an exciting announcement this morning in Saskatoon with over 200 people in attendance and many, many, many young people and First Nations and Métis people, along with northerners and rural Saskatchewan people and co-operators. This is an exciting day for the business community in our province and we are extremely confident that the Entrepreneurial Foundation of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Entrepreneurial Fund will be met with pleasure by the business community and will be of great success in our province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Thunder Creek.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you know, the official opposition believes strongly in the need to develop a vibrant private sector in order to create the jobs we need to keep our young people in Saskatchewan. The efforts in this area so far have been a dismal failure. We've had SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company], Channel Lake, Navigata. The list goes on and on. What we need is an economic renewal in this province driven by the private sector. We've tried it one way — the other way — for 60 years and it's not working. It's time to try something new.

Today we commend the credit unions and Prairie Financial Management for their involvement and expertise in this project. But this project, however helpful, is no substitute for a policy

framework that encourages Saskatchewan people and people from outside the province to come to Saskatchewan and invest their own money in the province. To attract that kind of large-scale investment we need to get our fundamentals right. We can't have high corporate taxes, we can't have a corporate capital tax, we can't have the highest property taxes in the country, and we must have a competitive labour environment. These, among others, are avenues that have not been explored in the last six decades in our province. The product of this lack of imagination can be seen today — job losses, people leaving the province, and less and less oil and gas drilling starts every year.

Taxpayers' dollars should not be used as a substitute for private sector investment that has been scared away by oppressive taxation and a failure in other areas to get the fundamentals for investment right. A Saskatchewan Party government would be opposed to investing public money in mature industries. We believe in entrepreneurial education, not gambling taxpayers' dollars as risk capital. This does not preclude investment partnerships with the private sector in non-mature industries that involve the commercialization of innovation and research and development. We in the Saskatchewan Party believe strongly that this is the appropriate role for government in the economy.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:30]

ANNOUNCEMENT

Introduction of Page

The Speaker: — Any further ministerial statements? Before orders of the day, members of the . . . Order please. Before orders of the day, members, I wish to inform the Assembly that Glenna Coleman will be returning as a Page for the fall session.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Before orders of the day I'd request leave to move a motion of substitution on a committee.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has requested leave to make a motion with respect to substitution on committees. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. The Chair recognizes the Government Whip, member for Regina Dewdney.

MOTIONS

Substitution on Committees

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. By leave of the Assembly I would move:

That the name of Len Taylor be substituted for the name of Harry Van Mulligen on the House Services Committee.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Regina Dewdney, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Nutana, by leave of the Assembly:

That the name of Len Taylor be substituted for the name of Harry Van Mulligen on the House Services Committee.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. Why is the Opposition House Leader on his feet?

Mr. Gantefoer: — I would like to move a motion of substitution as well, or several.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

That the name of Mike Chisholm be substituted for the name of Ken Krawetz on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

I so move, seconded by the member from Humboldt.

The Speaker: — Before I put that motion I just want to revert back to the last motion. The member for Saskatoon Nutana was not present so I would ask that this motion by the member for Regina Dewdney be seconded by an alternate member.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Could I just repeat that first motion one more time so that we can have it properly on the record.

It has been moved by the member for Regina Dewdney and seconded by the member for Regina Nutana, by leave of the Assembly:

That the name of Len Taylor be substituted for the name of Harry Van Mulligen on the House Services Committee.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Now we'll proceed to the motion moved by the member for Melfort, seconded by the member for Humboldt:

That the name of Mike Chisholm be substituted for the name of Ken Krawetz on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the member from Humboldt:

That the name of Doreen Eagles be substituted for the name of Donna Harpauer on the Standing Committee on House Services.

The Speaker: — The motion that has been moved by the member for Melfort, seconded by the member for Humboldt:

That the name of Doreen Eagles be substituted for the name of Donna Harpauer on the Standing Committee on House Services.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Humboldt:

That the names of Allan Kerpan and Ken Krawetz be substituted for the names of Lyle Stewart and Wayne Elhard on the Standing Committee on Privileges.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Melfort, seconded by the member for Humboldt:

That the names of Allan Kerpan and Ken Krawetz be substituted for the names of Lyle Stewart and Wayne Elhard on the Standing Committee on Privileges.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And finally I'd like to move, seconded by the member from Humboldt:

That the names of Donna Harpauer and Jason Dearborn be substituted for the names of Allan Kerpan and Doreen Eagles on the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Melfort, seconded by the member for Humboldt:

That the names of Donna Harpauer and Jason Dearborn be substituted for the names of Allan Kerpan and Doreen Eagles on the Standing Committee on Crown and Central

Agencies.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. Why is the Government House Leader on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, by leave I request to move a motion respecting changes to membership in a committee.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. The member may proceed.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Regina Dewdney:

That the name of Doreen Hamilton be substituted for the name of Graham Addley on the Private Bills Committee.

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

That the name of Doreen Hamilton be substituted for the name of Graham Addley on the Private Bills Committee.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — By leave, Mr. Speaker, I request to move a motion respecting changes to the regular sitting hours of the Assembly.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The member may proceed.

Hours of Sitting

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Melfort:

That notwithstanding rule 3(1) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, on Thursday, November 17, 2005 the times for daily meeting and adjournment shall be 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. And when the Assembly adjourns at 1 p.m. it shall stand adjourned until Monday, November 21, 2005 at 1:30 p.m.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for The Battlefords, seconded by the member for Melfort:

That notwithstanding rule 3(1) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, on Thursday, November 17, 2005 the times for the daily meeting and adjournment shall be 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. And when the Assembly adjourns at 1 p.m. it shall stand adjourned until Monday, November 21, the year 2005, at 1:30 p.m.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Ms. Junor, seconded by Mr. Harper, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wall.]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Rosemont, the Minister of Community Resources and Employment.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my intent today to speak against the amendment to the Speech to the Throne — along with substantive reasons why I take this position — and in favour of the Speech to the Throne with particular emphasis on the unbreakable social fabric. And I'll contrast in my remarks the approach of our government with the proposed intent and quotes of the members opposite in approaching social policy in our province. That is after all what government is all about. It's the policies that shape our society, the allocation of resources, and envision the desired outcomes for the people we serve.

I'll spend a little bit of time on the necessity for elected people to serve as role models for the democratic process and the progress of a civil society. And further, I'll spend some time on some new initiatives announced in the Throne Speech reflecting on how these would've been less effective under policies of the Saskatchewan Party.

I wish to speak briefly about the role of the federal government in the policy areas for which I am responsible, and about a small, rural town that's building their future around caring and the work that we can do together if we focus our efforts.

But first I want to welcome you back into the Chair, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your service in the legislature, as well to welcome the member from Regina Wascana Plains to the role of Deputy Speaker. It's a good day for women. I've watched that member chair many committees over the years, and I'm sure that she'll do an excellent job in keeping the

process of our workplace, along with yourself.

This was a great year for me in Regina Rosemont, Mr. Speaker. I awarded medals to my centenarians, one of whom, at the age of 100, is still curling and dancing and is still considered quite a catch. I also had the huge pleasure of awarding Centennial Medals to 25 deserving members of the community. And it was very rewarding to see the very basic people who work on community associations — Neighbourhood Watch, war memorials, services to persons with intellectual disabilities — and to see all the very ordinary ways in which we serve our communities on a daily basis, but having people noted for the work they do to make it a great place for families and children. So I just want to thank all the constituents of Regina Rosemont for the privilege in representing them.

It is a modest area of the city, made up largely of working families trying to make ends meet and volunteering to make the community safe and enjoyable. I attended several centennial events in churches and schools in our area and enjoyed a real sense of celebrating who we are and why people have chosen to stake their claim to the province of Saskatchewan. And there's no question, Mr. Speaker, a lot of it has to do with the people.

I want to preface my remarks a bit about the conduct of the House today. You know, whenever I'm out in the community, I love this job. When I talk to my officials and people in the bureaucracy and we discuss the most effective way to serve people, I love this job, Mr. Speaker. When I sit through a question period and some of the remarks we heard in opposition speeches, Mr. Speaker, I hate this job. I don't want to hate this job. And I don't wish to join the thousands becoming cynical about the political process and our national treasure of democracy.

But there is a phrase that many of you here may be familiar with and that's, we reap what we sow. And when we so disrespect lack of concern about facts, poor behaviour toward one another, we sow the seeds of the demise of democracy. How am I to encourage a young and hopeful person to strive to enter this place, to be treated worse than anyone has ever treated them, and only because they seek to serve their community at the very height of our democratic process?

I got to thinking about the excellent choir from North Battleford that, at the Throne Speech, sang "Children of Peace." And I thought, well you know, we see a lot on TV about the children of war. But what do we really think about the children of peace? What is the huge peace dividend that should accrue to our children? What is the legacy that we will provide to our children from this place in our role as legislators to secure their future? What is our role as elected representatives to demonstrate the kind of behaviour we expect from them and the kind of respect we expect should be shown every living person? How do we teach our children to react to bullies and people who call them names, if not by example?

I'm starting to sound like a grandmother, Mr. Speaker. I don't wish to imply . . .

An Hon. Member: — You are.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — That we should . . . Oh, keep reminding

me. I do not wish to imply that we should not disagree, not by a long shot. We disagree on a daily basis and we should dig for the best answers, the best solutions, and the best questions we can ask ourselves.

But I'm concerned when the first line of questioning in written questions when the House opened is a line of questioning that puts into question the trustworthiness of every public servant and every Crown agency and department. What else could be construed by those questions?

I'm concerned when, in their enthusiasm to make points, the opposition makes unconfirmed mention of questionable actions by employees of government and casts aspersions on northern people who may have placed a stronger emphasis on being members of a community than crossing the finish line first. Would a person desert their friends and neighbours on a field of battle so they could be first? I certainly hope this is not the model we're presenting to our children.

I was speaking earlier today to a woman in the police service in Saskatchewan and we were discussing why dangerous drugs are such a widespread problem. It used to be associated more with an underworld or gangs. But we know that today it has a good middle-class and upper-class foothold. And why is this, Mr. Speaker? I'm sure you ask, I'm sure many people ask themselves that question. Is it because there aren't enough government programs? Is it because parents have no time? Is it because someone didn't do their job when help was sought? Is it because children don't have enough good role models?

Well it's likely all of these things and more. But let's be sure that in this place we're not part of the problem. Let's do our best to show the importance of respect, the need for thoughtful discussion, and the need for challenging each other to do better. And let's show our young people what an energetic democracy can deliver for them.

These are the children of peace. And let there be a real benefit. You know, one of the things that's so great about small towns . . . I've been out lately doing some opening of group homes and it's the way that they pull themselves together and wrap themselves around the residents. They have different religions, usually several churches in the same small town, different economic conditions and abilities.

And the other day I was out in Ituna with the local MLA from Last Mountain-Touchwood and they were opening more independent apartments for people with learning disabilities. And as you can imagine, the tenants were just thrilled to be moving into a brand new apartment without their parents, without a live-in caregiver, but the most interesting part is the story of this town that's decided that their strength is their economic future. And so they've decided that caring will be a major role for their community, and they're building a number of facilities and trying to create a community that will wrap around people who choose to live there in a very caring way . . . and people who have special needs.

[14:45]

And I thought about how wonderful that is for vulnerable people to know they can be part of a community so they won't

have to worry about being beat up when they walk down the street. A place where someone looks at what they can do and not what they can't do.

I was at the Association for Community Living conference recently, their 50th anniversary conference. And there was a story about a young man served by one of the community agencies in BC [British Columbia]. There were people there from right across Canada. And this young man carried around with him a file in which many of the people who had worked with him had outlined all the things he wasn't capable of doing.

The fellow in the abilities council who worked with him discovered that he had a love of horses. So they went and appealed to a fellow who ran a ranch in the Fraser Valley, and they took the young man on to help work with the horses. And today there's a very happy, self-fulfilled young man who's part of the community and looks happiest beside a horse. But he looked pretty good in his Santa Claus outfit at the school Christmas party as well.

So we need to look not just at what people can't do but what they can do. And I think in urban centres, as well, we can, if we work together in the right way, create the kind of wraparound in the community that still exists in many rural Saskatchewan communities today. And when each person does their job — the parent, the teacher, the police, government, business, and the young person — I think we'll find, Mr. Speaker, that it all comes together.

So I want to particularly comment on some aspects of the Throne Speech and the unbreakable safety net or the unbreakable community that we build around people. I want to talk first of all about our energy program. Certainly the feedback that I got from people, that this was a very thoughtful and well-constructed program. And I want to contrast it to the proposal that the members opposite put forward. Because that is where you really test the ability to govern and the quality of the idea and program you can put forward.

Now for a basic household, our subsidy was \$50 higher — that's neither here nor there; that's a small part — in Lloydminster it was \$32 more per household. But the important part of this was the part of the program targeted at vulnerable people.

The Sask Party program did not provide any supplementary assistance for lower-, moderate-income households above the basic amount, which was a little less than the amount that we announced. And I would like to say that I was very pleased for the people on social assistance; the transitional employment allowance; training allowances; and Saskatchewan seniors, some 8,600 in number who received an extra \$20 a month over the life of the program; as well as the basic benefit that was available to other households. Again that was something that was not a feature of the opposition's proposal.

The other thing that was not mentioned other than a tax credit for energy conservation was that the program, as designed by the opposition, would have only benefited people who could afford the upfront money to make capital changes to their residences.

And we've built on the federal EnerGuide program and in fact have created a program where people who are low-income and middle-income are able to get those renovations done, and as well people who have houses that are from 1980 to 1990 because the EnerGuide program only covers houses built before 1980.

So this is really a more comprehensive program, and I think for vulnerable people in Saskatchewan today, they're quite happy that we were the government that had the opportunity to construct this program for them.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — And I think it illustrates, Mr. Speaker, the fundamental concept of no person left behind.

Now I just want to go to the Sask Party program and policy in the areas that I work on, the safety net programs, that was on their website. And I'll pick out two highlights because most of it was so general, you couldn't really tell what it would or wouldn't do.

But one tenet of the program was to require employable welfare recipients to work in order to qualify for welfare benefits. And we do have a program that supports people in moving into employment, but it's not draconian in the way that that is. And I'll explain a little bit more.

Their goal was to reduce the number of employable people by 25 per cent. Since we've instituted our program of supporting people as they move into independence, we've reduced the number by 41 per cent and have had 10 consecutive years of reducing the number of people on social assistance in the province. That's 10 years, Mr. Speaker. We didn't just think of this yesterday, and it isn't something we're just planning to do. It's something we've already done.

As well, Mr. Speaker, we work on removing the welfare wall and helping people with the transition. We provide supports to help families move into work, even at minimum wage, without making less working than they would make if they were on assistance. And we have 7,800 families today who have taken advantage of that, with 16,000 children in those families. They receive, Mr. Speaker, supplementary health benefits; housing supplements; a market housing cost adjustment; the employment supplement program for wages; the increased child care subsidies in Regina; and we're working in Saskatoon on a transportation, affordable transportation program; as well as an improved disability allowance and improved retention of earnings; and a substantially increased opportunity to own housing around the province in the North, in the South and in rural areas.

We've made a substantial effort through the RICs [regional intersectoral committee] and other community bodies to integrate services. And now there's committees that the government is involved in working in Regina, Saskatoon, Yorkton, Nipawin — all around this province — to integrate the services to create a wraparound for the families we talk about. And I think, Mr. Speaker, it's possible for people to see that this a much more substantial approach than just tying welfare to looking for work which is pretty thin policy when you get right

down to it.

The other part is that they've talked about directing a portion of the social assistance to food. Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know how you tie a dollar to a carrot unless you give people food stamps. And I have to assume that that's what that means.

The approach we've taken in Building Independence is to try to give people an adequate lump sum which we compare to adequacy standards in Canada, and they make their choices about how to spend that money. We're not paternalistically making their decisions for them. However if people need help, certainly help is there for them. But the idea is to give people an income that they can manage, and certainly people that we talk to are very appreciative of that approach.

Under our transitional employment allowance we do give people \$20 a month additional pre-employment money. We support the cost of relocation to a job, a \$140 job start allowance when they do find that job. And we don't just require them to work. We give them that support to live adequately even when they're moving into what usually in a starting position will be a lower income job. But certainly with training and supports the idea is to keep moving up as . . . or trading up as they call it today on a lot of popular shows.

Now after-tax poverty in Saskatchewan has reduced from 17.4 per cent to under 12 per cent today, which means we still have work to do. And I don't shy away from that when I meet with all the community groups and people who support this segment of our community. I show them the numbers. I show them the charts and say here's where we are; here's where we're trying to go. And we have that very well laid out in terms of adding additional resources to make sure that people are at the adequacy level in Saskatchewan.

And because I mention after-tax income, I want to contrast the Sask Party's proposal for changes to tax rates to what we did when we removed 50,000 people from the tax rolls, lowered the tax bracket, and as well created a spousal deduction.

Now the end result of the Sask Party's proposal would be a 3 per cent increase in the taxation rate for low-income individuals, taking it up to 13 per cent. And as well it doesn't have the feature of the spousal exemption which is the feature that helps single income families end up being more on a par with families with incomes.

I had asked specifically for detail on this because I was sure we had a pretty good tax package there for low-income people, and I'm very proud of the work done by our Department of Finance in making that happen under the tax changes that took place.

So I think I've made my point. The Sask Party is working hard at presenting a caring image, but the facts just don't support it. Whether it's employment, energy cost or taxation, there is no plan, and the plan there is would leave people worse off than they are today. There is no additional support for low-income employed families, no additional support for energy costs, and an increase in the effective taxation rate without a spousal exemption. And don't forget the food stamps.

So as our Premier has indicated and as we have affirmed in the

Throne Speech, no one is left behind by intent in our government, and we're making steady progress on our plan. And unlike the party opposite, we always build the vulnerable into our program planning.

Now I want to talk a little bit about CBO [community-based organization] wages because we have been working with SARC [Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres]. We helped to fund the study they did on wage levels, and we will be making announcement together with them next week.

We are very happy with the work that's happened because it's dealt with recruitment, retention issues, classification systems within their workplace. And I know when I spoke to them about it on Throne Speech day and indicated that it was very good work that they had done, they reminded me that we've been partners in this process and that they have greatly enjoyed working with us. And they look forward to a long and close working relationship far into the future. And it will be very rewarding to stand with them at that news conference and make this announcement, Mr. Speaker. We see it as a shared success. And having travelled across the province, I've seen first-hand the important work they do.

In early learning and care, Mr. Speaker, which is another important announcement in the Speech to the Throne, I want to take us back to the work of Fraser Mustard who is a medical doctor who talks about the actual effects on children's brain development of early learning experiences and love. Those are the two important components. I have to tell you that even puppies who aren't touched behave very badly. And so it's important that children have not only the love they need, but the early learning experiences.

And one of the things that Fraser Mustard has found out through his research is that it actually affects the way your synapses develop in your brain and the pathways that connect the thought processes. So it's tied to literacy. It's tied to health. It's tied to economic outcomes. There's been a lot of longitudinal studies in Canada, the United States that show the impact of early childhood programs on good outcomes for children of all economic backgrounds.

And these programs can be delivered by parents, by caregivers in homes, in daycare centres, in preschools, in pre-Ks [pre-kindergarten], in schools. There's a whole variety of ways that children get this. That isn't what matters. What matters is that they get it and that they get the attention they need.

So we are, with the assistance of money provided through Minister Dryden's auspices — and I think he wishes it could have been more, but we figure it's better to get a good start on this — we are going to move to a comprehensive system of supporting children and families to have those good early childhood supports that are so important. And we'll be working closely to do that.

The Saskatchewan blueprint for early learning and child care will be announced within the next few weeks, and the plan has a major child care component. It is based on discussions with many stakeholders, including the child care sector and parents. We've listened to parents, early learning and child care educators, board members of child care centres. And many of

their recommendations are part of the new plan.

We do value the contributions that they've made towards the development of our plan and look forward to working with our partners in creating a system of early learning and child care in Saskatchewan.

It's very exciting, Mr. Speaker, because the reality of today is that most people work, or they're going to school. And we certainly don't want to be neglectful of the important role of care in the children who are otherwise occupied as their parents are doing these other things.

A detailed announcement will be made. Research has documented, as I mentioned, that children will benefit from this access. And quality in child care is largely dependent on the people who work with the children — on their salaries, on their training levels — and on the programs that are offered. So the program that we announce will have all of those components.

The Throne Speech references expanding accessible child care throughout the province, access linked to things like affordability and availability.

I was very pleased when I heard at the Community Living conference that we are the only province in Canada that, as a priority, has no waiting lists for disabled children. And I thought that was just — I didn't even know that — I thought it was great to hear that.

[15:00]

But one of the things that's so important is that you want children to have optimum development. And children who have perhaps started behind their peers need that extra enrichment to really do everything they can. And again parents and relatives and everyone are involved in that. The QUAD [quality, universal inclusiveness, accessibility, and development] principles speak to the areas that will be directing our investment — quality, universally inclusive, accessible, and developmental. And you'll hear more on that as we move into our announcements.

All in all we're determined to develop and lift all components of early learning and child care to create the base for a comprehensive system across Saskatchewan. The newspaper mentioned that 25 million of the 146 million in federal funds will be spent on pre-kindergarten. And this means a significant portion of the funds are being spent on child care and other related initiatives.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know I've taken more than my share of the time, but I just want to mention a couple of other things in the Throne Speech that stood out for me in my background. I spent the summer touring both the west side and the east side of the North of the province. And certainly the road issue and housing issues were two things we talked about, and I've got . . . The department has worked on and presented to me a plan for even further enhancements in already what's a pretty strong home ownership program in the North. But you've heard the announcements on the northern road strategy.

With immigration, people said, well what's new about that?

Well I think going from 500 new immigrants to 5,000 is quite a big change. And this will require good strong support systems for people who are not perhaps having English as their first language and as well need their credentials verified and assistance in moving into the Saskatchewan community.

The Premier's volunteer sector initiative again emphasizes the importance we place on the work done by the community sector and the kind of work that they can do that they do so much better than anyone else because people enter into those jobs because they care. And you can't really mandate caring. We know that when people go work in those community organizations, they're there because they care. And I mentioned that we've got an announcement with SARC, but we will follow quickly upon the heels of that announcement with an announcement on the work in child care and early learning CBOs as well as other human service CBOs, who will receive the same attention that they did.

The midwifery support. While having a pregnant relative at the moment who totally intends to use the services of a midwife, you can imagine how glad I was to know that we're moving ahead with that because that makes me popular around the family. And I didn't influence in any way the minister in moving forward. I don't want to be accused of any conflict of interest here in helping this happen. But certainly I've thought that midwifery was very important from the time that I was a young woman and expecting my first child.

Missing persons. Certainly people feel that that's a very important initiative that's taking place. The children's hospital I know will be a comfort to a lot of parents. The Aboriginal court. These are just some of the things, Mr. Speaker.

And I just want to finish by reading a couple of the headlines: Speech from the Throne a "Bolder vision." "Imaginative Throne Speech." They highlighted the immigration, the missing persons. And there seems to be one person at least that writes for the *StarPhoenix* who might be related to the member for Wood River over there. He says, ". . . we could have hoped for a throne speech with more than an assurance that, for better or worse, we are all in this together."

Well, Mr. Speaker, we are all in this together. And whether it's Aboriginal employment and the private sector having to step to the plate and hire Aboriginal people; whether it's parents and police and government working together to make sure that kids have the good direction; whether it's legislators behaving responsibly to set a good example and get things done for the young people of the province, I have to say, Mr. Speaker, I've enjoyed presenting this information on an unbreakable social fabric and I respectfully submit the facts as I found them. I speak energetically against the amendment and enthusiastically in support of the Speech to the Throne.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess I'm pleased to be able to stand and reply to the Speech from the Throne. I've heard a number in this particular House of

government. I had the opportunity to listen to throne speeches in a former political life from a different type of government.

But before I talk about the things that I see or I didn't see in the Throne Speech, I want to respond a little bit to the member for Rosemont, Regina Rosemont who just finished speaking. She prefaced her remarks, Mr. Speaker, by dressing down the official opposition for having the gall, having the gall to look into what is our job — to hold the government accountable. Mr. Speaker, the reason we ask those written questions, the reason we ask the oral questions, the reason we are questioning some of the things that the government do, is because frankly their record sucks. And, Mr. Speaker, that's our job. That's our duty.

And I think that if you would go back to when the government was on this side of the House, I think if you . . . In fact we did today go through some old *Hansards*, and they're asking similar type questions for the government of the day that we're asking them of the government of the day.

Mr. Speaker, I want to quote from a book that's known by I think everybody in this Chamber — perhaps some more than others. It's from the Bible, Madam Speaker. And the quote goes as follows, and it says: "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone."

Mr. Speaker, I'm appalled. I am shocked that that member from Rosemont has the audacity to stand in her place today and dress down the official opposition for doing our job. I'm appalled at the high-handed approach, the sanctimonious way that she stood in her place and questioned why we would ask questions about the government or hold them accountable or that we would say something as a comment in question period, Mr. Speaker . . . Madam Speaker. I apologize.

I say to you, who makes the rules for this Chamber? Those of us who work in this Chamber. And if we all agree as a group . . . And frankly I agree with her that I sometimes don't like the way the actions of this Chamber take place and some of the things that are said. My wife is a teacher. She's brought her classes here many, many times. And every time they go home, they're disappointed with the behaviour of MLAs in this Chamber.

Well, Madam Speaker, I would say to you, does this only go one way? Is it only the opposition of this day, of this legislature, who is responsible for saying things across during question period or at any other time? I say not. I say this goes both ways, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I don't know, to be frank, where the heck she gets off standing in her place complaining about the official opposition. Madam Speaker, this is the very same member who last spring had to apologize to the Chair and apologize to this House for calling the member from Saltcoats a dumb . . . four-letter word, expletive deleted. Is she not the same one? And she has the gall to stand in her place today and dress down the opposition? Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.

Madam Speaker, I want to . . . I'm not sure whether this is your first opportunity to sit in the Chair or not, but obviously we're looking forward to having you as the Deputy Speaker. And I will do my best to try to keep my comments appropriate

certainly while you're in the Chair and when the Speaker's in the Chair. And welcome.

I want to talk about the Throne Speech, Madam Speaker. I want to talk about the Throne Speech. And I have heard, and many of us have been here for a couple or more throne speeches, and I've heard more, as I said, in a different House of government. And I want to talk about what throne speeches are all about. In my opinion throne speeches are about a vision. They are about a plan for the future by any particular government. In this case it happens to be a socialist government. But truly, Madam Speaker, throne speeches are merely just words. And words without actions are ineffective, Madam Speaker, they're ineffective.

Now to start my remarks, I want . . . If you came into this legislature two days ago and you didn't have any background about Saskatchewan, and if you didn't know the people involved or the parties involved or anything like that, you could come into this . . . If you would have listened to the Lieutenant Governor read the Throne Speech in her most eloquent way, you would think that in a centennial year for Saskatchewan we are celebrating our 100th anniversary in the middle of an oil boom, and the nice words that were in the speech — and again, Madam Speaker, I say they were words and that's what they were is merely words — you would, if you were a stranger and didn't know, you might think, wow, what a great place to live. What a great place to be. And you'd be right. Except as you will see, Madam Speaker, I want to outline in my remarks today some of the things that I see are missing.

The member from Rosemont finished her speech by reading some headlines from news items. I'll read one too, Madam Speaker. And it says, "Big reality gaps in throne speech." So that's another headline that came from a major newspaper that she failed to read, and perhaps she missed it by accident so I wanted to make sure that it got on the record.

But, Madam Speaker, the Throne Speech is all about that vision. It's all about credibility. It's about leadership. It's about confidence in this particular government and in the province. But when I heard, when I listened to the Throne Speech, it brought to me as many questions as it did answers — in fact more questions than answers. And let me talk briefly about a few of them.

The first one that came to my mind was the idea of immigration. And, Madam Speaker, there would be no one in this Chamber or in this province who would not agree that we need more people here — that we are slightly under 1 million people — and we could argue for days about whose fault that is. The fact remains we need more people. And that's . . .

Madam Speaker, the questions that arise from something that talks about increased immigration is that it's a great idea but what are we going to do with these fine people that come here? We know that we're down 6,000 jobs over the last year. I mean what are we going to do with these . . . what kind of jobs, what kind of hope, what kind of life do they have? And I watched these 15 new citizens to Canada become Canadian citizens two days ago now I guess, and those things come to my mind. What do they do for jobs? Where are their livelihoods? What's their future here? When you have a record of losing 6,000 jobs in the

last 12 months in the middle of an oil boom in a centennial year where this should be the very best of times, that's what I'm talking about — credibility and leadership.

Madam Speaker, another item that was in the Throne Speech the other day was planting trees. Well, Madam Speaker, who could argue that having more trees is not a good thing in Saskatchewan? Who could argue with the ecological benefits and maybe even the economic benefits at some point in time?

But, Madam Speaker, we're talking about 50 million acres of arable farm land right now and the government's plan is to transform 10 per cent of that land — plant 10 per cent of that number into trees. That'd be roughly about 5 million acres.

Well then the questions start to come. Who's going to decide what is going to be marginal land? Who's going to decide that? Will there be some kind of compensation for taking arable farm land out of production and planting it to trees? What's the long-term plan for those trees? We know that it takes 60 to 80 years to turn a tree around so that it can be harvested. Is that the idea? Will these trees, forests, be planted for harvest at some point in time? And how do we compensate the people, the farmers, the landowners for an 80-year wait for a tree? I'm not sure. There's just too many questions that they have failed to even address.

Madam Speaker, another highlight — and it should be a highlight — from the Throne Speech was the development of highways. Most of us have all travelled that stretch of highway between Saskatoon and Prince Albert and again none would argue, none would argue, Madam Speaker, that there needs to be a huge development and improvement on the No. 11 Highway. The idea of twinning that particular section of No. 11 Highway is a great idea. Can't argue with it.

[15:15]

Have we decided how much it's going to cost? How are we going to earmark funds, taxpayers' money, to build that? When is it going to be built? Who's going to be in charge of being the person who oversees this type of project to make sure that it happens and happens within budget? Again questions that were failed to answer. Did they say, yes well we'll twin number 11; it's going to be done by X amount of time? No they didn't. My question is, how many times will they announce this particular project before we ever see any concrete action? Sixty years, my colleague says, because that's when they announced . . . When was that? That was property tax reduction that was announced 60 years ago by Tommy Douglas. It still hasn't happened.

When you talk about highways, my colleague from Humboldt yesterday raised a petition in the House about No. 5 Highway. Many of us again have travelled that section of highway from Saskatoon to Humboldt. Madam Speaker, it's a very, very busy highway with no shoulders — absolutely no shoulders. It's a dangerous, dangerous, hilly stretch of highway that absolutely needs some sort of attention very, very quickly. And those are all things that I didn't hear mentioned in the Throne Speech yesterday.

I want to talk about one more section of highway, Madam Speaker, and it's a section that I think probably belongs to the

member from Arm River-Watrous. And it's a section of No. 15 Highway that starts at Semans, Saskatchewan and runs west. And I think it's about, I think it's 18 or 20 kilometres — I'm not exactly sure what the distance is — but it's about Highway 15. Well, Madam Speaker, here's how I want to bring that particular section of highway up.

The member from Moose Jaw North this spring — he's also the member who was responsible for Saskatchewan's centennial — he was in the House one day, and I was here and I heard him say it. I don't know the date exactly. He said that Saskatchewan's highways will be full of people returning to the province. And you know what, Madam Speaker? He was right. We had a great summer. People came from all over. The highways were full of people returning and travelling to Saskatchewan. It was a really, really good situation.

But, Madam Speaker, nobody returned on this section of No. 15 Highway because, you know what? It's closed. And you know what, Madam Speaker? It's been closed for two years. Two years Highway 15, a section of Highway 15, has been closed. Now I'm not going to stand here and say that that's the most busiest highway in Saskatchewan. It's not. It's not No. 1 or it's not No. 11 or it's not No. 5 or 16. But you know what? It's a busy highway because I live on No. 15, and I know how much east-west traffic goes on that highway.

But there's a section between Semans, and it runs about 20 kilometres west. It's been closed for two years. Now when you drive, when you go on No. 15 Highway, in order to get around it, you have to take a nice scenic tour throughout the RM that surrounds Semans. And you know what? The roads, the RM roads are actually really good, and I have no complaints there. They're well. They're hard. They're wide. And so wasn't a big issue to travel on them. But my point being is that's the kind of leadership, that's the kind of vision that we see from this government. We've got a highway, a major highway, that's been closed for two years. Unbelievable, unbelievable.

Madam Speaker, also in the Throne Speech the government talked about doubling the output of manufactured goods. Again those are good words. Those are good words, and nobody on this side would argue with that. You know, you could argue that maybe it can't happen in 20 years or maybe it could happen faster. That's not the issue. The issue is the words were good. The words were good. But the questions that come out of those words, nobody has taken the time to answer them. How are they going to do it? Who are they going to do it to?

I understand, I believe it's Doepker Industries, and I stand corrected on that, but who have been a leader in Saskatchewan in manufacturing. They are expanding and that's a great, wonderful thing, Madam Speaker. But do you know where they're expanding? British Columbia.

So my question then is, how are we going to double the manufactured goods in this province when some of the leaders in manufacturing in Saskatchewan choose to expand outside of the province? Those are the kinds of questions that lack the answers — the leadership, the vision for the province.

Now, Madam Speaker, I said at the outset, you know, that if you listen to this Throne Speech and you just listen to the

words, one might think that everything was well in hand and under control in this province. But just like the letter versus the spirit of the law — and we've all heard that term used a number of times — there are of course the words versus the spirit of the Throne Speech. Not the words but the actions of this government, not the words but the actions that really, I believe, tell the tale and are the indicator of what kind of leadership we do have in the province. Let me outline just a couple of those that have happened very recently that are of great concern to me.

Just yesterday, just yesterday the member for Melville-Saltcoats stood in his place right after question period and asked for leave to introduce a motion to have an emergency debate on rural issues, on agriculture. And the House Leader who is the member from North Battleford, and I think others, said no. And of course as we know by the rules, you only have to have one person who doesn't agree, and it doesn't happen.

Madam Speaker, they killed an attempt by us, by our party, to talk about an issue that is hugely critical to a good, good portion of Saskatchewan. Now I understand, Madam Speaker, that the NDP don't really care much about rural Saskatchewan, and that's obvious by their actions, not by their words. Their actions speak far louder than their words.

They killed our attempt to talk about issues that I wanted to spend a minute talking about. I wanted to talk about an issue that happened in Hudson Bay where the SaskTel employee took early retirement through an early retirement program, which is of course legitimate. And I have no issues with that person. But it's a huge concern to the people of Hudson Bay because they lost a link to service from SaskTel that now has to be filled by someone from Tisdale.

And I wrote a letter to the Minister Responsible for SaskTel, and he did his job. I'm not complaining about any action or lack thereof from the minister. He did his job. He passed the issue over to the CEO of SaskTel. And the CEO wrote me a letter back and said that, you know, this person, their service rep, had taken early retirement and that they felt it was economically viable to fill that position from somebody in Tisdale.

And that's all within the rules and the law and the words of what their policy is. But it's the spirit, Madam Speaker, because if, you know, if you live in Hudson Bay, you know that Tisdale is 120 to 125 kilometres from Hudson Bay. And you also know that it's through the forest. And you also know that you have a tendency to get lots of winter-type weather through that forest. And it's difficult to have satisfactory service on short notice from somebody who lives in Tisdale.

It's an issue with the people in Hudson Bay, and they are very concerned about it. And I raise that in the House today because again as I say, it's not just the words of the policy. The words of the policy were fine. Everybody did their job. It's the spirit, and that's where this government has been lacking.

I want to talk just for a second about the SaskEnergy announcements yesterday. And if you listen to the words, they're fine. But once you start to really look at the program offered, if you start to look at what the questions might be, you realize that, you know, you've got a possibility of six different

applications. You've got a possibility of dealing with three or four different departments in order to try to work your way through the convoluted system that the government put in place for a conservation program that . . . I don't who thought of it or how many people it took to think it up, but the only thing they missed offering in this deal was free sweaters from Wal-Mart. It was the only thing that wasn't in there. And I just don't understand how they're going to try to make this program work.

The words in the Throne Speech, Madam Speaker, there was some small words in some small section about crime and fighting crime, and those are good words of course. But if you look at the questions that surround the crime and the crime rate in this province . . . You know that the Premier himself lives in one of the highest, if not the highest, and I'm not sure it is the highest, but it certainly could be. It could be the highest per capita crime rate and perhaps the most violent crime rate in Canada. That's the Premier of the province.

That's the Premier of the province that told us six years ago that they were going to hire 200 new police officers and have to date fallen far short of fulfilling any where close to that . . . [inaudible] . . . It's all words. It's all words, Madam Speaker, and they're all good words. But it's the spirit of the words where this government and this leadership fall short.

In fact Saskatchewan has become Canada's crime capital under this particular NDP government. And the crime has really increased by 35 per cent over the last decade. Unbelievable, unbelievable. I've heard some of the government members talking about how they're so happy that the crime dropped by 1.9 per cent last year. Well I would say to you, Madam Speaker, that if you set the bar low enough, almost anyone can get over it. It's not acceptable. It's not good enough. It's not good enough.

In question period today they talked about . . . some of the questions were about beds for drug addicts and people who require rapid treatment. There are no beds scheduled for some of these programs for two years. To think about how many young people will lose their lives, lose their futures, before any help is there at all. Those are the failures or the shortcomings as I see it.

Now, Madam Speaker, another thing that happened just in the last two days — a lot of these actions that I talk about that happened just in the last three days. And that's why we question the vision that this government might have. We found out yesterday that the federal government told our Premier to take a hike when it comes to equalization. It's over. Negotiations are done. You get nothing. Well where is the Premier on this issue? Where is this government? I cannot believe that we would settle for watching some of the other provinces settle on equalization deals that were good for their provinces. And yet when Newfoundland and when Nova Scotia . . . and when yet the Prime Minister tells our Premier to take a hike, he says, oh well we're not going to give up. We'll do something down the road with no plan. There's no vision; there's no leadership.

And, Madam Speaker, I'd say to you that we . . . And I know I've heard my leader and my colleagues have all offered their help on this file if the government would be interested in taking that. And I would say to you, Madam Speaker, that if this

Premier would show the leadership, we could all — every MLA from this province — we could be on an airplane next Monday morning and be in Ottawa, and we'll do a job, we'll do a job talking to each of the MPs [Member of Parliament] in Ottawa because that's what's required — somebody to show some gall, some leadership; somebody who will stand up for this province.

And we have not seen that because you know what, Madam Speaker? The Prime Minister doesn't give a hoot about this Premier, and his actions are showing it. In fact I think that what this Premier sort of seems to me like when he goes to Ottawa is sort of like a fly on the south end of an elephant — of really no consequence or significance and really doesn't bother. Really doesn't bother. No leadership.

And lastly the last example that I want to talk about today about the actions, not the words but the actions . . . and this is probably one of the biggest issues that I think and one of the biggest examples of lack of leadership that I know of that have taken place in the last few years . . . is the Premier's recent appointments of two new cabinet ministers. Madam Speaker, I can't believe that. I can't believe that this Premier has the audacity, has the gall, has the holier-than-thou attitude to appoint the french fry king back to cabinet. And, Madam Speaker, I want to quote from the Premier from June 23, 1987, and I read this quote into the record and it goes, quote, it says:

But they do expect, and they have the right to expect, honesty. They have the right to expect to be able to trust this government, to be able to trust the men and women they elect. They have the right to expect that commitments made ought to be binding . . .

People, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will forgive mistakes; they may even forgive incompetence; but they will . . . [never] forgive betrayal.

[15:30]

And, Madam Speaker, I am saying to you that this appointment to cabinet by the former minister for SPUDCO is the most distasteful action that any premier can take in any legislature, in every government, in any country because what he's saying, Madam Speaker, what he's saying by appointing the member for Prince Albert North to cabinet, what he's saying, he says, it's okay. He said, you people in the province are stupid. That's what he's saying. He says, I'm going to do whatever I want to do, and I'm putting him back in cabinet.

Because you know what, Madam Speaker? And I want to read again a quote from the deputy minister's report to Premier Calvert on SPUDCO. And it's dated February 17, 2003, and I quote:

The response of Minister Lautermilch to Mr. Sawby is troubling . . . The Minister's correspondence was less than forthcoming in terms of the arrangement with Con-Force. The characterization of this business relationship as a partnership where government enjoyed a minority interest was inappropriate.

By reappointing that very same minister to now a position of great trust is a slap in the face to every man, every woman, and

every child in this province because what he's saying is, I'm going to reward incompetence. I'm going to reward the fact that that minister covered up, misled, mishandled that SPUDCO file for not one year, not two years, but six years.

Forget the money. It's \$35 million. Big money, it's huge money. There's no apologies for the 35 million. I'm saying to you that what he did transcends the loss of \$35 million. He said to the people of Saskatchewan in effect, you people are stupid. You don't know what you're talking about. I don't have to follow the rules. I do not have to show my ethics. I do not have to show credibility. I will appoint who the heck I want to cabinet. And he's back in cabinet.

And that, Madam Speaker, is disgraceful, and I am sickened by that kind of action. Madam Speaker, we've heard members from opposite over the years call us grumpy old men. They've called us a grumpy party. Well you know what, Madam Speaker? They called us mad. They called us grumpy. You know what, Madam Speaker? I'm mad as hell. I am. I am mad. I'm almost . . . in fact I'm almost hopping mad.

But when I see things like this happen, we appoint the minister, the french fry king, back to cabinet. We walk away from an equalization deal and say, oh well, well you people didn't help us. What would you have done? They didn't forget that they're the government. They gave up on that.

You know they talk about the SaskEnergy program. It's ridiculous. It's convoluted. It probably won't work, you know, those kinds of things. They killed the opportunity to help rural Saskatchewan. That's why we're mad. And I would say to you that the people of this province are mad. And that's why we ask those questions. That's why we send in written questions. And we want to know, and we want to know what their dealings are. Because you know what? We don't trust them. The people in this province don't trust them any more. And that's why we ask those questions. That's why we ask those questions. Madam Speaker, that's really the sad part of all this.

I want to finish my comments now by saying that I had the opportunity to go to British Columbia this summer. I had a son that moved out to Nanaimo. Thankfully he came back; he was just there for the football season, but he came back. I got to talk to a lot of people out in BC.

The Deputy Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Hart: — With leave to introduce guests, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Last Mountain Touchwood.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I'd like to thank the member from the Carrot River Valley for yielding the floor so that I may introduce some guests.

Madam Speaker, we have with us this afternoon in the Speaker's gallery three counsels from the RM of Cupar. That's my home RM. We have Stan Weisbrod, and Stan is the brother-in-law of Allison in the Law Clerk's office. He is a member of council. Ron Bohn from Southey. Stan is from Cupar. And Curtis Hart from Cupar who represents the division 5, the division that I represented when I was on that RM council. And they're here this afternoon to watch the proceedings of the House. They are in Regina to attend the SARM convention, and I would ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to welcome them to their legislature.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Ms. Junor, seconded by Mr. Harper, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wall.]

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

Mr. Kerpan: — Madam Speaker, I too want to join with my colleague to welcome our guests here today. But unfortunately, Madam Speaker, I sort of lost my place in my speech, so I fear I will have to start over again.

Madam Speaker, I am almost finished; I promise. I started about telling you a story about when this summer I had the opportunity to travel to British Columbia. We had a son there. And I got to talking to some folks because I knew they'd had an NDP government for some time, but lately they've seen the light, and they've elected a different party to government. But you know you get to talk to lots of people as you're there, and you talk to the restaurant people. And I kept saying well you know everybody seems to . . . it just felt so good there. It felt like a ray of hope. Everybody was happy. There was things happening. There were jobs. There were businesses opening. There's construction and it's good.

So I said well boy, you guys, this a great place this BC. You guys have got a lot of stuff going. And they said well you know what? It wasn't always the case. It wasn't always the case, Madam Speaker. They said when we had an NDP government we felt smothered, and we felt like the government had no direction, no vision, no credibility. And the best thing we ever did in this province was to get rid of them.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kerpan: — That's my report on my summer holiday, Madam Speaker. My point being, my point being is that I'm wondering how good a province we would have here if we simply changed the government. And I would say to you that I believe it would be a much vastly improved place.

Madam Speaker, I want to end my remarks by asking a simple

question. And that simple question is, who is better off as a result of this Throne Speech? Who in this province feels much better today than they did yesterday after listening to the Throne Speech two days ago? Pretty simple, Madam Speaker. Not one person in this province is going to be better off as a result of this Throne Speech, save an NDP MLA because they're really the only people that seem to have benefit from this leadership, this credibility, this Premier over the last number of years. Because as we heard in question period — and I have the list right here, Madam Speaker — every one of the NDP MLAs is drawing some extra pay for some sort of different job. Oh except for one. Correct. But I'm sure that's likely to change very quickly.

So who is really better off as a result of this Throne Speech? And, Madam Speaker, I'm saddened by the fact that in this our centennial year, when this province is 100 years old and we're starting a second century and we in this Chamber are responsible to make sure that this province gets off to a good start for the second century, in a centennial year that's in the middle of a boom . . . and yet there's no hope for many people in this province. That's a sad thing because, Madam Speaker, in a land built simply on hope and dreams by our parents and their parents and our grandparents before them, that there is no hope from the people that we have chosen to lead us into the second century. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

Mr. Trew: — I thank you. Thank you, colleagues. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Of course my first words must be to my friend, the new Deputy Speaker, the member for Regina Wascana Plains. Madam Speaker, Madam Deputy Speaker, I know you for considerable time. I know you will discharge your duties as Deputy Speaker to the best of your considerable abilities, and I know that this Legislative Chamber is in very good hands with the operation of the Speaker's Chair, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker. And I wish you the very best as you serve in that capacity.

Having been a former deputy speaker myself, it's a great job and it's a great honour I know to serve all members of this Chamber. And I know that's how you feel. I don't want to put too many words in your mouth, but know that I join a good many others in wishing you the very, very best in this capacity as Deputy Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I also want to say a few words of thanks to the constituents, my constituents in Regina Coronation Park, north end of this wonderful city, this city that is bucking the national trend in housing sales. Nationally housing sales, I read in the paper, are down about 2 per cent. What do I read about Regina? Up 5 per cent this year, up 5 per cent. We're just blowing the doors off of the national average. And interestingly the value of those houses has escalated something like — if my memory serves me right — about 15 per cent here in Regina. So we've got increased housing sales and increased price which is good for those of us who may own a house, and yet housing is still very affordable here in Regina.

Madam Speaker, my constituents honour me by electing me. And I try and honour them by serving them in this Chamber, and I try and speak out to their issues.

I was out canvassing door to door a couple of weeks ago and asking around energy conservation, what it was that we should be doing. And not just energy conservation, really the crux of the matter then was what do we do about a potential 41 per cent increase in our home heating, natural gas price. And I was so impressed with the people who were at home and who responded to me because they clearly said we need two parts. We need to address the increase and dampen that, although nobody was as bold as to say we needed to dampen it all the way down to where it did get dampened. Although in more normal times, I think a 10 per cent increase would have been seen as big. But compared to the 41 per cent increase that was projected, this seemed pretty wonderful.

But the other thing that really impressed me was the concern of my constituents for people that were working poor. Now I have a fair, probably more than my share of people that would fit in that category. In Regina Coronation Park, there's a huge number of people that work and don't find themselves with the surplus of money at the end of the month. In fact often months are four or five days too long; the month is simply longer than the paycheque. But somehow they have a tremendous spirit of getting the job done, and they just work a little harder, and they budget a little tighter and get through the month.

So, Madam Speaker, those were my first words — congratulations and thanks and gratitude to my constituents.

This Throne Speech is the first one in my time in the legislature where I've actually asked the Government Whip if he could bump me up on the speaking list, bump me ahead because I was so anxious to say some things about the Throne Speech and about the vision that this government is exhibiting and that this Throne Speech is exhibiting. To me, it's about vision, and it's about how we live and how we work and how we create a society together where all of the hopes and the dreams of every single Saskatchewan resident have a chance to succeed. And I chose that word carefully — have a chance to succeed, Madam Speaker.

Government can lay the groundwork. Government can encourage better out of us all. Government can set minimum standards. We do this in areas of employment. We do it in minimum wage. But a minimum wage or minimum health and safety standards are just that. That's the floor. That's the minimum. And that's our collective responsibility in this Chamber. But what we really strive to do is to encourage people to exceed that and go beyond that.

I know there's . . . I'm hesitant to speak for every member in this House, but I don't know of a single member that believes that minimum wage is where we want everyone in society to be. Everyone, I believe, wants wages and earnings to be considerably higher than that. But we have to set a limit, a bottom limit somewhere and then build on that and hopefully help all of our members of society that way.

[15:45]

This Throne Speech is about improving the economy of Saskatchewan, and it's about working to pay the bills. It's about working to pay those bills so that we can help Saskatchewan residents work for a better future.

And our better future includes . . . one of the things that really caught my eye was the pre-kindergarten, the four-year-old program that will provide for, voluntarily, for two half-days for four-year-olds in a pre-kindergarten course or class, if I can describe it that way. Being the grandfather of a four-year-old who is very bright . . .

An Hon. Member: — No, no . . .

Mr. Trew: — I know; it's hard to believe that I could be a grandfather. Thank you. But I'm a proud grandfather as my colleagues know and as they're joking. But it is a wonderful thing to see a four-year-old and their thirst for knowledge and their just desire to learn, their desire to be a part of our world. And it's wondrous as everything is brand new to them, Madam Speaker. It's just a joy to see it. And I know that this is going to help make brighter futures, and I know that a stronger economy is going to help pay for that.

The stronger economy also is going to help pay for new training support in our publicly funded and publicly administered medicare system, our health care system. New training support there.

This stronger economy has enabled us to announce in this very Throne Speech that we're going to fully fund the CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization], the Saskatchewan portion of the CAIS, the federal agriculture support program for 2005. And that's a considerable chunk of change there. And it's interesting because the Conservatives have always told farmers every day in every way that New Democrats don't appreciate farmers and don't support farming. And it is always disheartening to me that Conservatives would practise anything, Madam Speaker, that is a divide and conquer tactic like that.

I spent a considerable amount of time on a farm this summer . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . and with all respect, due respect, members opposite think that I'm somehow jerking their chain. I spent a considerable amount of time on a farm this summer and this spring. I assisted in the seeding. I assisted in the summerfallow. And I assisted in the harvest. And having grown up on a farm, I want to just sort of . . . Why I protest so much, Madam Speaker, is that if you listen to Conservatives, there's nobody on this side that ever had anything to do with the farm.

Well I grew up on a farm. My daughter lives on a farm. My grandchildren live on a farm and obviously my son-in-law. And I'm very proud. They're struggling. They're paying their bills. They're doing everything they possibly and humanly can to make that farm work. And I'm happy to try and support them in that. And I know that I look at my colleagues on this side of the House, and you know what? There's others that can tell a similar story about their relatives, their friends on the farm. We've got tremendous farm background on this side of the House.

Madam Speaker, this is Saskatchewan's centennial year. And what a centennial it has been. We have honoured those who

have turned 100 years old and older. We've presented them with medals. I know every MLA has had the opportunity to present medals to the centenarians in our own constituency. And I want to share what a joy that has been for me, and I think others have said that too, to meet families — some of whom I've known before, some of whom are now new friends, new acquaintances — and to hear the pride of those families in their loved ones and to see the joy as they receive that special recognition, this specially minted medal for people who turn 100 years old.

Part of why I talk about that is because this being our centennial, it's a year to reflect. And we have to look back and learn from the past. And, Madam Speaker, we have to look to the future. From question period and some of the comments of members opposite, you wonder . . . they seem to have written essays on how I spent my summer vacation. And in most cases, it was reading *Hansard* of the Premier — how I spent my summer vacation. And I'm sure it's an interesting read.

I spent a bit of time checking on a couple of previous throne speeches because I wanted to try and capture what were the highlights or the highlight. What was the one thing that the 1986 Throne Speech was about? 1986 was when the Conservatives were just re-elected for their second term — the Grant Devine Conservatives — re-elected in Saskatchewan. And I look at the 1986 Throne Speech and what it was about was public participation, Madam Speaker, public participation.

And two years later Saskatchewan people supported the longest walkout in Commonwealth parliamentary history, the longest bell-ringing in parliamentary history, and the people of Saskatchewan stopped dead the privatization of SaskEnergy. And this year they're reaping, in huge reward, the rewards of their actions from then. Because we own SaskEnergy, the people of Saskatchewan own SaskEnergy, we're able to set the rate for that natural gas. We're able to cap the increase for this year, and we're able to do it in a meaningful way that is measured. It's thoughtful. It's controlled. It makes sense and it's very, very helpful. But 1986, their Throne Speech was about public participation, read privatization. That's what they were about in 1986, and they're really no different today.

Then I look at, Madam Speaker, the 1991 Throne Speech and what it was about. It was clearly the shortest Throne Speech that I've ever seen. 1991 was when Roy Romanow became Premier. That was the year — I cast myself back to remembering — that the Conservatives had failed to pass a budget, had failed to pass a budget that year. So a quote from the Throne Speech of December 2, 1991 — right near at the end of the year but shortly after the October election. And it says, and I quote:

The primary work of this session will be to provide supply for my government for the remainder of the current fiscal year. My government has the greatest respect for the fundamental tradition that public funds must be appropriated by the legislature, and that members have the right of grievance before supply.

Members will be accordingly be asked to take steps to vote supply on the basis of the estimates first presented to this House in April 1991 by the previous administration. This

will end the need to fund the ongoing operations of government through special warrants.

And that was sort of the first order of business, and that was the main order of business in the very late fall, early winter of 1991.

But interestingly we also spoke of taxation, and this is the other major piece of that session. And it says, and I quote:

This legislature will also be asked to repeal legislation which provided for the expansion and harmonization of the provincial sales tax. The elimination of this additional tax burden will safeguard jobs throughout our province and put millions of dollars back into the pockets of Saskatchewan consumers, thereby stimulating the provincial economy.

And I remember that well because there was considerable discussion about whether we shouldn't just reap the extra roughly \$600 million a year that harmonization with the GST [goods and services tax] would bring to the province and blame the then government — you know, the previous government — or whether we should do what we did, and that was end the harmonization.

We have the PST [provincial sales tax] on the smallest grouping of goods of any province that has the provincial sales tax in Canada. We've got the smallest PST of any province that has a PST. And of course the code that I'm saying there is, Alberta doesn't have a PST. They have a health care premium. They collect money by a different method. We do it every time you buy a consumer good other than a health product or reading material or some other things that we have exempted — medications, children's clothing, that sort of thing.

Madam Speaker, government is clearly to me about doing things together that we cannot do alone. Government's about setting minimum standards — I mentioned that earlier — and encouraging better. That's what government's all about. And it's about the future. And it's all about hope. This Throne Speech is about my Saskatchewan's future, and it's about our Saskatchewan future where no one is left behind.

This speech is about energy investment. It's about energy investment in heavy oil upgrading. It's about cleaner coal technologies and more. And this investment in growing the economy is so that our Saskatchewan treasury can afford the future. And that future includes things like the \$30 million that we've announced in this Throne Speech — \$30 million to address community-based organizations, wages, recruitment and retention concerns — \$30 million.

You have to grow an economy because there is . . . I was just about to say there's no Santa Claus. But I think there was a Boston newspaper that actually claims differently. And I support that particular letter. Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. There is no free lunch, and everything has to be paid for. We know that. We know it painfully well. You have to grow the economy. You have to earn that \$30 million before you can spend it on an ongoing basis. So that's part of what we're about. We're about paying the bills so that we can in fact grow the things for our community.

This Throne Speech, Madam Speaker, is about things like the new Saskatchewan Youth Award that recognizes commitments and accomplishments of Saskatchewan's youth. On the other side they say, go. On this side we say, go for it. You can do it. We can help you. We can encourage you. They say, go. We say, go for it. That's the difference.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech is all about celebrating our successes in our Crown . . . Madam Speaker, this Throne Speech is about celebrating our successes in our Crown corporations. We say that Crown corporations can and do deliver much-needed services every day and in every way — every day and in every way. We see things like I've talked about — the SaskEnergy, the gas, where we've spent \$130 million out of the provincial economy, the provincial treasury; \$130 million to ratchet down the natural gas increase for homes and for farms. They're capped at very close to 10 per cent — 10.2 or 10.3 per cent.

And we spent an additional \$37 million on energy conservation, Madam Speaker — \$37 million on energy conservation. That covers a wide range of things, but one that captures immediate attention is the grant for programmable thermostats. And it's a grant that equals basically the price of many of the programmable thermostats. And it's just as simple as that. But these are some of the things that we've been able to do.

Madam Speaker, I see in today's *Leader-Post* something about another Crown corporation — SaskTel, a little telco, a little telephone company that is one of the best-run telephone companies in the universe. It's a telephone company that misses the services of a Bob Hamilton who retired from there, but otherwise it is a very good telephone company.

[16:00]

And I want to just read the headline and then a couple of paragraphs out of today's paper on SaskTel. This is a Crown corporation the Conservatives would privatize and that New Democrats fight elections on and we say we're proud of it. This is a telephone company to keep. This is a telephone company that's delivering services to all of us at very low rates.

The headline says, on the Wednesday, November 9, 2005 *Leader-Post*, "SaskTel Mobility customers happy." That's the headline. Opening paragraph — and this is filed in Ottawa, this story — "If you really want to be happy with your cellphone service, move to the Prairies."

SaskTel . . . And laugh, members laugh. Members opposite, Madam Speaker, laugh. We have a Crown corporation that is providing services in a better way than any other telephone company in Canada and they laugh. They've got a solution for it, but we know what that solution is — it's privatize it. It's let the head office move out of Saskatchewan. That's their solution.

Our solution is keep SaskTel right here; keep it providing the very best telephone communication services and other services that they possibly can. Let's keep the jobs right here in Saskatchewan, and let's watch it grow.

The article goes on:

SaskTel Mobility was the most popular carrier, ranking more than 10 per cent above the national average among contract service providers. It received particularly high ratings in customer service, call quality, billing, and service plan options.

Not bad. Not bad. The greatest little telco in Canada. They say, sell it. We say, let's run it. Let's be proud of it. Let's keep those thousands of jobs right here in Saskatchewan.

Madam Speaker, this Throne Speech is all about Saskatchewan's future. It's all about my future. It's all about our collective future. And it's a future I'm going to be very proud . . . as we go forward into it.

I debated whether to say this in the Throne Speech or not, but I'm going to. Madam Speaker, we struggle with a citizenry that struggles to respect the Legislative Assembly and members. And I reflected upon it. I've been here some time now. Many of us have. And it seems to me that citizens reflect what we reflect in the Chamber. When we treat one another with respect, when we treat one another as we would like to be treated ourselves, citizens can respect this Chamber. Most of the time that happens. Most of the time it happens. Not all of the time, Madam Speaker. Not all of the time. And when it falls apart, that's when citizens have difficulty. Citizens have difficulty then in respecting this, this institution and respecting politicians. So I guess that's sort of my opening salvo in urging that a civility return.

Madam Speaker, the Throne Speech is about our future. The Throne Speech is about my grandchildren's future, our grandchildren's future. It's about the future of children so that in 2025, 20 years from now there will be no child left behind.

I'm very proud of this Throne Speech. There's many, many more things in it that others have covered very capably. I'm just real proud of it and I'll take my place so others can . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cannington.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Ms. Deputy Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise today to address the Speech from the Throne. Before I get into the main body of my speech I'd like to address a couple of the comments though that the previous member mentioned.

In this one particular case I happen to agree with the member that there is indeed a Santa Claus, Madam Speaker — a Santa Claus for the NDP MLAs because each and every one of them, with one exception, has received additional pay. So there certainly is a Santa Claus if you're an NDP MLA.

And I agree with that same speaker, Madam Speaker, that there is no free lunch. Because there is no free lunch for every person and every taxpayer in this province in paying the extra bill for all the extras that every one, save one, of those NDP MLAs. So there is a Santa Claus, Madam Speaker, for the NDP and there's no free lunches when it comes to paying for the taxpayers of this province, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, on another area though the member from Coronation Park was wrong. The policy of this party is not to sell the Crown corporations as he was saying. He's misinformed, Madam Speaker, or else he's trying to misinform the public on this particular area. He's either misinformed himself or he's trying to provide misinformation to the public of Saskatchewan.

Cell service across Saskatchewan, Madam Speaker, from SaskTel works very well where it works. But obviously the member doesn't get out of Regina very often and drive around the province or he would notice that his cellphone isn't working. Maybe if all he does is drive from Regina to Saskatoon, yes his cellphone works, but take a drive on a few of the other highways, you know. And I suspect, Madam Speaker, that most of the members opposite never drive on any of the other highways or they wouldn't have let them get into such a deteriorated state as they are today.

So those members would know that both their cellphones don't work once you get off those main highways, and that it's not safe to drive on those highways that are not the main highways across Saskatchewan. So I think the member from Coronation Park needs to get out around the province and see what's actually happening across this province, see whether his cellphone is working, see whether it's safe to drive on the road.

The member from Regina Albert South a few years ago went down to Redvers in my constituency to attend a health meeting. Drove down No. 8 Highway — this is about 10 years after the NDP have been in power — and tore the muffler off his car on No. 8 Highway. That's the condition of that highway. But I'm sure the member from Coronation Park has never even been down that road, Madam Speaker, because his cellphone wouldn't work there either. So, Madam Speaker, when the member stands in his place it would be somewhat helpful if he was at least informed.

Madam Speaker, there is some good things that have been happening around the province though in spite of the member from Coronation Park and his colleagues. Madam Speaker, centennial year was a good year across Saskatchewan. It gave an opportunity for our friends, our family, our neighbours to return home to Saskatchewan — return home, Madam Speaker, because so many of them are no longer in this province. They're not in this province, Madam Speaker, because the opportunities are not here in this province under that administration.

And while it's great to have them return to their original community — it's great for families to have an opportunity to see their family members and their friends again after so many years — it's even good for the economy, Madam Speaker. It even was good for the economy because people, the celebrations . . . People needed to spend money. Hotels were in use. Parks were all being used. Gasoline was being purchased to travel in from across Canada and the US [United States], Madam Speaker. So there certainly was a benefit. And there was a warm feeling across Saskatchewan for the centennial year and for the return of the people.

But, Madam Speaker, when the celebration was over on the weekend and the families packed up and headed back to where

they now lived, it left a hollow feeling in the hearts of people across Saskatchewan. It left a question of, why do you have to go back? Why can't you stay here in this province? And that question was being asked across Saskatchewan, Madam Speaker, by families, by grandparents, by children, Madam Speaker, as to why they couldn't stay and be with their cousins, their aunts and uncles, their grandparents. Why, Madam Speaker, couldn't they stay? Because there's no opportunities here under an NDP government. They're the ones, Madam Speaker, that drive people from this province. What do they do to encourage them to come back? What do they do, Madam Speaker?

Yes we got an oil boom going on in Saskatchewan right now. And we got 6,200 less people working in Saskatchewan this year than last year — with an oil boom going on, Madam Speaker. That's the kind of thing that the NDP government trumpets as a good thing in Saskatchewan. Well it's good for government coffers that there's an oil boom, but the people across Saskatchewan aren't seeing the benefit of it.

It reminds me of the member from Coronation Park wanted to relive the 1986 and 1991 campaigns. Let's take a step back even a little further and relive the 1982 campaign. I remember the statement: the family of Crown corporations is strong — Allan Blakeney's theme. The member from Coronation Park was a part of that. And what did that say to the people across Saskatchewan? Yes the government is doing well, but I'm losing my home because of the interest rates. I'm losing my business. I'm losing my house. Did the government care? No.

And it's the same thing today, Madam Speaker. The government revenues are doing well, but people are suffering and the government doesn't care. The same as in 1982, Madam Speaker. The same as in 1982.

I'd like to address some of the points from the Speech from the Throne and they tie into what I've already been saying. The third paragraph in the speech to the throne, Madam Speaker, talks about that:

Our ancestors were people of vision, courage and optimism. They dreamed of a prosperous land and a progressive society in a province richly blessed . . . [with natural] bounty.

And that's true, Madam Speaker. Our ancestors did have vision and courage or they would never have picked a frozen plain that Palliser said was a desert to live. They took that, Madam Speaker, that vision, that courage, and that dream and they did build a good province.

They also believed that — it's not mentioned in here though, Madam Speaker — they believed in growing this province, in growing it. They weren't prepared to settle for the first 10 immigrants that came to this province and say that's enough and if anybody leaves, as the member from P.A. [Prince Albert] said, that leaves more for the rest of us. No, they believed in growing the province.

The member from Saskatchewan Rivers last year says, grow, grow, grow. That's all you guys ever talk about. Why do we need to grow the province? Madam Speaker, we need to talk

about growing. We need to grow this province so our kids have a place to live and work instead of going someplace else.

That's what the members opposite don't understand and don't realize. They're only concerned about what they have today, not about what their children can have tomorrow. There is no vision on those benches over there. It's simply about what I can have today and that's why every NDP MLA, except for one, has additional pay, Madam Speaker. It's about today's greed in today's pocket, not about the future.

Madam Speaker, the Speech from the Throne goes on to say, "a province offering them abundant opportunities to pursue meaningful and rewarding careers." That's what people when they founded this province were looking for, that's what they hoped to build, and that is the promise that has been betrayed by the NDP-CCF [New Democratic Party—Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] Party since it came to power in 1944.

They have understood wealth redistribution but they have never understood wealth creation, and that's why our population remains the same — stagnant since that time. No vision on how to build a province. And it's certainly not the fact that the people of this province don't have the ability to build a province because at that time Alberta was almost half the size that Saskatchewan was.

[16:15]

The people from Saskatchewan moved to Alberta and built a province that's three times the size that Saskatchewan is, and its economy is booming. It's the envy not just of Canada but of the world. And yet it's Saskatchewan people that built that economy. They would have loved to have done it here but were denied the opportunity.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Speech from the Throne also talks about the government's goal that children in the centennial year have the best possible chance to grow up free from addiction. And that's a very laudable goal. Everyone in this province supports that.

In fact it was my colleagues, the member from Kelvington and the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy, that brought forward the problem of crystal meth addiction in this province. The government didn't want to hear about it. They tried to sweep it under the table. And the fact is the minister of Education said that there was no need to focus on crystal meth, that there was no need to have a program in place for it. Tried to deny that there was even a problem there. That was the NDP vision.

So what do we have today? What do we have today for the leadership from the NDP on this issue? Well they proclaimed Project Hope. I think a better name for it would be project hype because all it's amounted to, to today is an advertising campaign.

There's lots of talk on the radio about a program that's going to happen in 2007 or later, but where's the help for the kids today? It's not there. The money is being spent on an advertising campaign which the Premier was opposed to previously, and now he promotes it. Now he signs the cheque to allow the

spending. Madam Speaker, the Premier's words don't match his actions. He spoke one thing at one time and does something the complete opposite. He has now become what he was criticizing.

Madam Speaker, the Speech from the Throne talks about a green and prosperous economy. And I'd like to read from it. It says:

Today, because of the vision and hard work of Saskatchewan people, we are a 'have' province, and the only 'have' province in Canada that does not charge its citizens a health care premium.

And that's true, Madam Deputy Speaker. That's right. And the member from Athabasca says, right on. But you know our neighbour to the west doesn't charge PST. So I guess we got a choice here — health care premium, PST. You know, how does that work out? Well in Alberta a family of four pays \$1,056 a year for their health care premium. You know that's a significant amount of money. What does a family of four in Saskatchewan pay on average for PST? Well if you look at the budget book it works out to, Madam Deputy Speaker, \$4,064. So health care premium for a thousand bucks, PST for 4,000. Who's getting the bargain? Who is being served by their government, Madam Speaker? Who is getting the return?

Madam Speaker, when the government brags about no health care premium, maybe they should also mention what the cost is to this citizen because, to quote the member from Coronation Park, there is no free lunch. And it's the same thing in health care, Madam Deputy Chair — there is no free lunch. So the people of Saskatchewan, every man, woman, and child in Saskatchewan pays \$1,000-plus in PST, in part for their health care premiums, for the health care costs in this province. You know.

And one other thing that might be of interest, Madam Deputy Speaker, to you, is that in Alberta seniors are exempt from the health care premium. So not only do they not pay the PST, they don't pay the health premium either. You know, interesting isn't it? Somehow the government keeps forgetting to mention these cost comparisons.

So, Madam Speaker, some of the other things that are going on in this area. It talks about:

Active work will be undertaken to include more youth and Aboriginal people in the labour market and business sector.

That's very good, Madam Minister. That's important that we get more youth working. Well I know that the government's program for getting youth working in this province is to have them hired by the Crown corporations. After all, it was the member from Saskatoon Nutana that put in place a program to hire more youth in the Crown corporations. That was the goal for youth in this province; they wanted to work for the Crown corporations, Madam Speaker.

This statement that was in the Speech from the Throne also talks about Aboriginal people. And I would like to read a quote, Madam Speaker, from this year's Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority 2004-2005 annual report. The very first sentence,

Madam Deputy Speaker, says:

Creating employment for First Nations was one of the primary reasons the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority Inc. (SIGA) was established in 1995.

And this is signed by Chief Alphonse Bird, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. The primary reason that SIGA was created was to create employment for First Nations. Very good. I agree with that. And fact is, I supported the original casino down in White Bear for that very reason.

So what's happening today? Well First Nations under SIGA are trying to establish a new casino at Dakota Dunes outside of Saskatoon. Now remember one of the primary reasons for SIGA and the casinos was to find employment for First Nations. So what did the minister for Economic Development do here a month or so ago? He mandated that SIGA had to take every employee from the Emerald Park Casino regardless of whether they were First Nations or not.

How does that fit into the criteria to hire First Nations, to provide employment for First Nations people? And fact is, SIGA was given an exemption from the human rights Act to be able to hire up to 80 per cent First Nations. How does the minister of Economic Development forcing SIGA to take the employees from the Emerald Park Casino — they're not taking over their business — how does that square with the role of SIGA to provide First Nations employment?

Where were the members of the NDP caucus on this issue? Did they support that mandate from the minister of Economic Development that forces SIGA to take those employees? Where were the individual members? Where was the member from Athabasca? Where was the member from Cumberland? Did they support this?

Madam Speaker, there was a reason why SIGA was given exclusive right to casinos in this province, excluding Casino Regina. It was to provide employment for First Nations. That was the primary reason, one of the primary reasons as stated by Chief Alphonse Bird, as stated previously by government in their contracts with SIGA. And yet the government just throws that out the window when they want to.

And I would like to know, and I'm sure people across this province would like to know, where was the NDP caucus on this issue? Where were the members of the NDP caucus on that issue? Were they supporting the mandate of SIGA for primary reasons for the employment of First Nations people or were they playing the political expediency? Where were they, Madam Deputy Speaker? I think that's a question that needs to be answered.

Another thing that caught my eye in the Speech from the Throne, Madam Speaker, was a statement that during the session:

... my government will continue a process of consultation with northerners towards the recognition of the Churchill River as one of Saskatchewan's natural legacies.

What does that mean, Madam Deputy Speaker? What does that

mean? Is that a code for a new hydroelectric plant being put in place on the Churchill River? Does that mean that they're looking at putting in a dam on the Churchill River and are in negotiations with the First Nations up there?

You know if you're looking at ... because there is talk about new electrical production in this province and one of those talks is about new hydroelectric in the North. I know what the fight was like down at Rafferty-Alameda when it come time to dam off a couple of streams. And from start to finish it took 18 years, Madam Deputy Speaker, from the time the decision was made to go ahead on that to the time it was all finally completed.

So when it says that we're in consultation with northerners on the Churchill River, what does that mean? Does that mean that the government is looking at putting in place a new hydroelectric dam someplace on the Churchill River and they're in negotiations with the First Nations in the area to do that? Are they going to go through all the environmental steps that are necessary to put in place a hydroelectric dam? Because it's not a short process, but if you're going to do that you need to let people know.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, it's important that these things be laid out clearly before the public and not being covered up and done in some sort of nefarious manner, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Under energy and mining, which falls under the critic area of not only energy and mining because this deals with electricity as well, there's some actual misinformation in the Speech from the Throne, Madam Deputy Speaker. It says under energy and mining:

To capture the energy of the wind, projects already underway will produce 172 megawatts of zero emission power, five per cent of Saskatchewan's electrical generation ...

Madam Speaker, there may be 172 megawatts of capacity put in place, but there's a difference between capacity and generation. Just the other week in Crown Corporations Committee, I asked Mr. Waller, who is the head of CIC, Crown Investments Corporation, that exact question. How efficient are your wind turbines? They have a capacity, let's say, of 100 megawatts. What do they produce? If you have a thermal generator that has a capacity of 100 megawatts, they produce 100 megawatts. What does wind generate? And his response was, well roughly 30 to 40, 35 to 40 per cent.

So if 172 is the generating capacity, you're actually only producing about 60 megawatts. So that's what the government should have said in here or they should have said that they have 172 megawatts of capacity, not of generation. So again the government is trying to mislead what it's telling the public, Madam Deputy Chair.

It goes on to say in this very sector, it talks about ethanol production in this province.

[That] ... Saskatchewan is poised to become a major producer of grain-based ethanol ...

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, it is indeed. Saskatchewan is moving ahead with the production of ethanol, but it's happening in spite of the government, not because of the government. And fact is this government put every roadblock up that it could to prevent the Lloydminster and Weyburn facilities from going ahead. The only ones who were going to be able to produce ethanol in this province was the government-designated company Broe.

And fact is the Premier marched out there just west of Regina and had a sod-turning ceremony with the kids out there and a big sign and a circus tent. Well it turned out to be a real circus because the only thing that dug in the ground that day was the sod-turning spade and nothing happened after that. It's now just a barren spot. There was no ethanol plant going in there, Madam Speaker. But there was an election coming up, and the Premier had to make believe that he was actually doing something in this province, and it was all a sham. There was no ethanol plant. Eight hundred and some thousand dollars . . .

[16:30]

An Hon. Member: — \$100,000 worth of gravel went in there.

Mr. D'Autremont: — \$100,000 worth of gravel. I'm sure the farmer that's now farming that appreciates that gravel being on his crop land now. It probably came from Findlater .

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Premier and the NDP government have done everything they could to prevent ethanol from coming to production in this province, but it's moving ahead in spite of them not because of them, Madam Speaker.

You know, and I mentioned earlier the oil boom that's taken place. You know and it takes place right in my own constituency. There are rigs drilling, but not near what you would expect when oil is at \$60. Everybody's busy. You try to hire somebody in my constituency, and you've got a tough time because they're working. But they're not living at home.

They're out working in Alberta. They're not working in Saskatchewan. The crews and the crew trucks are all out in Alberta working. The contractors are all out in Alberta working. The engineers and the construction, the prefab places — they're building stuff for Alberta. It's not for Saskatchewan. Sure our people are working, but they're working in Alberta and coming home once a month. Not a very good way to live with your family, Madam Deputy Speaker.

But that's the way it is because you have to support your family and you have to support your other enterprises in Saskatchewan because the Government of Saskatchewan has no vision on how to build that economy and get that production happening here. They're living on the backs of the production that was built previous to them on programs that they criticized at that time.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it goes on to talk about — in the Speech from the Throne — “One of the richest uranium mines in the world is gearing up to go into production at Cigar Lake in 2007.”

Saskatchewan produces about one-third of the world's uranium. We produce the very richest uranium in the world, Madam

Speaker. Yes, and I heard the Premier the other day say he's willing to look at further uranium production, uranium usage in Saskatchewan. You know, the Minister for Economic Development talks about refining uranium. He even talks about electrical production, and yet the Premier the next day turns around and says, “not on my watch in Saskatchewan.” You know, one day he's on side, and the next day he's on the other side. Well which way is he, Madam Deputy Speaker?

In fact oh was about a year or so ago, he talked about uranium industry as being the tailpipe of the energy world, the dirtiest energy possible. And yet here a couple or three weeks ago, he was talking about having that very production in Saskatchewan.

Well I would suggest to you, Madam Deputy Speaker, that there is a moral question here as well. If we're prepared to dig out of the ground the richest uranium in the world, if we're prepared to ship that around the world, have we given up moral responsibility for that product when it leaves our boundaries? I think that's a question that the government and the people of Saskatchewan need to ponder. Where does our moral responsibility with uranium begin and end because the Premier seems to be all over the map on this issue.

One day he's for it. The next day he's against it. The Minister for Economic Development seems to be for it. The Minister for the Environment's against it. I think you got a fairly schizophrenic caucus over there, Madam Deputy Speaker, that doesn't know what they want or where to go. And it's strictly a finger in the air to check where the political winds are blowing.

You know I note that there was a very small mention of agriculture in the Speech from the Throne, and that small comment is that the government has agreed to pay the 2005 CAIS program. Well the government pushed for an expansion of the CAIS program with the federal government. The federal government agreed to expand it. And then the province said, but we're not going to pay for it. This was in 2002-2003, 2003. So every year they have said, no we're going to put in the base amount that they believe in which was the original agreement, and we're not going to fund the rest. Even though they're the ones that demanded it, we're not going to fund the rest.

And then, so you go through that crop year, and you go through the next year. And finally the government says, well in 2004, they said for the 2003 year between Christmas and New Year's, well yeah, I guess we'll put in the money. So we come to the 2004 year. It wasn't till this summer that the government said they would fund the 2004 CAIS payments. So at least they're getting a little bit further ahead. We actually are still in 2005. That's an improvement, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the government would say in 2005 that they would fund the 2005 CAIS program.

But what does that mean for next year, for the 2006 year? The government called for the expanded CAIS program. The federal government agreed to it. Now can the agricultural producers across this province go to their banker, because they're in desperate straits and say, yes the government will fully fund the 2006 crop year, so you can give me a loan based on that so that you know and I know what my protection is in case there's a crop failure. It hasn't happened yet. It hasn't happened yet.

And people are out there, have been buying their fertilizer and their chemical and their supplies for next year already. Even though they're struggling to make those payments, some of them are out there doing it. Some of them aren't doing it because they don't know where the money is going to come from.

Commodity prices are in the tank, the lowest they've been proportional-wise probably since the 1930s or before. And yet the government is proud of themselves because they finally managed in one year to agree to pay that year's CAIS program. Because every other year, they were a year late in making that determination.

So when is the government going to make that decision to say yes to agriculture producers across this province, that we're going to meet our commitments? The Premier seems to have a problem with that. He says one thing and then does something completely different. When is he going to meet the commitment that he made to agriculture producers that the Deputy Premier went to Ottawa and fought for? When is he going to make that commitment for the 2006 crop year so next year agriculture producers will know what their coverage is?

It's totally unacceptable that this Premier makes the promise and then completely breaks it. Agriculture producers across this province have not forgotten that Premier's broken promise on property rights . . . property taxes, Madam Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — Property rights too.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Property rights as well. That's right.

The Speech from the Throne talks about honouring veterans. And veterans are a very, very important segment of our society. We owe those veterans our way of life. And a lot of them sacrificed the ultimate sacrifice to give us what we have today, to give us the right to stand in this legislature even and speak our minds. You know, and to honour them by naming a highway after them I think is fitting. I think though that those very same veterans, it might bring back unpleasant remembrances to them when they drive that highway though because of the craters on the highway. It might remind them of what they went through in the First World War and the Second World War with craters by the mile, Madam Deputy Speaker.

You know if you're going to name a highway after veterans, don't you think you would want to pick a highway that's fit to travel, that people would want to drive on, that people would want to see what's along that highway?

Madam Deputy Speaker, the highways in this province are atrocious. And now the government, the Premier, has appointed a new minister as the Minister for Highways. It's the SPUDCO minister — the member who was responsible for the SPUDCO debacle, you know. And he had to apologize. He was let go from cabinet because of that. And now the Premier has seen fit to reappoint the man who betrayed the trust the people of Saskatchewan put into him, you know. And people of Saskatchewan believe in fairness. But they also believe that people who disabuse their trust should not be trusted again.

So this morning I was listening to the radio. And the members

might find this interesting. I was listening to the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation].

An Hon. Member: — You were listening to the radio?

Mr. D'Autremont: — That I was listening to the radio, but also that I was listening to the CBC. And I heard a comment on there from Tom Roberts. And he had been talking to the new Minister of Highways. And to quote Tom Roberts, he said, "Right now the government is talking to other governments and other parties on how each party will pay for the upgrades."

Upgrades for what? Well what he's talking about is the government's discussion on upgrading the roads in northern Saskatchewan. It's a good idea. The fact is, part of the Saskatchewan Party policy is to rebuild and upgrade the roads in northern Saskatchewan — absolutely — through the member from Athabasca's constituency, through the member from Cumberland's constituency. We support that. We believe those roads need to be upgraded. And they're in desperate shape. The roads in southern Saskatchewan are in equally desperate shape. But the roads in northern Saskatchewan are in desperate shape. And so we have a minister of the Crown who talked about a partnership arrangement, who talked about a partnership arrangement between the government and Con-Force and yet, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to describe to you a comment that was written into the deputy minister's report to the Premier on SPUDCO. And this is dated February 17, 2003, and I quote. And it says, and this is a quote, Madam Deputy Speaker:

The response of Minister Lautermilch to Mr. Sawby is troubling . . . The Minister's correspondence was less than forthcoming in terms of the arrangement with Con-Force . . . The characterization of this business relationship as a partnership where government enjoyed a minority interest was inappropriate.

Inappropriate. And for that misinformation the government member, the minister of the day, had to apologize. And now that very same minister is looking at entering into partnerships with governments and other parties across northern Saskatchewan to pay for the government's promised highway upgrades.

Well the members on this side of the House, Madam Deputy Speaker, believe that the government should be paying the entire cost of the upgrades. The government reaps the resource benefits from that area. That's what those monies in part are used for. Why is the government going to someone else to pay the bill? They already pay their road tax, they pay their income tax, they pay their PST, they pay all their fees and other things that they have to pay. So now you're going to go back to them again and demand more money for a road that is rightfully theirs in the first place. But that's not new with this government.

In my own constituency, No. 48 Highway . They let it deteriorate to such a state that the heavy trucks on that highway were no longer driving on the highway, they were driving on the municipal roads and wearing them out. So what does the government do? They go to the municipalities, to Maryfield and to Walpole RMs and say, gee isn't that terrible that your roads

are being pounded out? We have a partnership for you. If you'll pay for 50 per cent of the highway, we'll fix the highway so they won't drive on your municipal roads. There was no corresponding offer to reduce their fuel taxes or their income taxes or their PST or any of the other monies that the government collects from the people living in those two RMs. But they're expected to pay, Madam Deputy Speaker, for half of the highway.

[16:45]

You know there's talk of building a bypass around Regina. Are the tax payers, property tax payers of Regina going to pay half of the cost to build the bypass around Regina? You know, I doubt it. I don't think the government would dare go to the tax payers, property tax payers of Regina, and demand that they pay half of the cost to build a bypass around Regina.

But they have no qualms whatsoever of going to two RMs or going to northern Saskatchewan, to the government and other parties there and saying, if you want your road fixed then you've got to pay for it. Well most people are already paying for it, Madam Deputy Speaker. They're already paying just like every other member, every other person in Saskatchewan is paying. So why do they have to pay extra? Why? Because the government is forcing them to with threats.

You know, in another time, in another jurisdiction, in another venue, it would be called extortion. If Al Capone came into your business place and said, you know, fire is a real threat, you know, there's so many people are getting Molotov cocktails thrown into their stores and they're all burning up. You know, if you pay us we'll protect your establishment.

An Hon. Member: — Al Capone used to hang out in Moose Jaw.

Mr. D'Autremont: — That's right. In fact is some of the hotels in Moose Jaw burned down even.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, you know, so Al Capone and his colleagues were going to protect that establishment from those arsonists, you know. And as long they paid then there was no fire, but if they quit paying all of a sudden there was problems. And that is exactly what this government is doing. If you want your highway fixed, pay us. If you don't pay us, we're not fixing your highway and they're going to destroy your municipal roads — or in northern Saskatchewan you're not going to have any roads.

That, Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe is absolutely wrong. The people of this province have paid for those roads and highways and the government has no right charging the people in those areas again to get those roads.

An Hon. Member: — More. More, Dan, more.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Oh yes. I'm just turning the pages here for my next sticky.

And you know, I listen with interest to the member from Saskatoon Eastview speaking the other day, and actually the member from Saskatoon Rosemont today, speaking about the

issue of midwifery . . . Regina Rosemont, about midwifery.

You know, I remember this issue coming forward probably six years ago or so. We had a group from the midwifery association come and made a presentation to us, gave us their pitch as to why we should be supporting midwives in this province. And we did. We believed that they offered a valuable new possibility within the health care system — new to Saskatchewan, certainly not new to other jurisdictions. There have been midwives, perhaps in other provincial jurisdictions. I know there have been. But certainly in England and in Europe the practice of midwifery is well-known and utilized.

But it was interesting listening to the members opposite talk about that because in the statement here, the Speech from the Throne, it talks about:

Midwives will offer their skill and training as part of multi-disciplinary teams in hospitals . . .

Very good. Very good. But it sets off some alarm bells for me as well because there is only five or six midwives in this province. Does that mean that there is only going to be five or six multidisciplinary teams in this province? What happens in those hospitals where there isn't a midwife? Are they going to lose their obstetrics? You know, is Estevan or Yorkton or North Battleford or Moose Jaw, if they don't have a midwife, are they going to lose their obstetrics? I think that's a real problem, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I think the government needs to clarify.

Are they planning on eliminating obstetrics in those hospitals that do not have midwives? Because, Madam Deputy Speaker, I remember a campaign back in the '80s where the NDP ran around the Assiniboia constituency telling the constituents there in a by-election that the government of the day was going to close every hospital in that constituency. There was five of them. The NDP went around and said that the government of the day was going to close every hospital in that constituency.

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, when the NDP became government in 1991 they closed four of those hospitals. It wasn't the previous government administration. It was the NDP that closed those hospitals.

And so when you take a look at this, five or six midwives, they're going to be part of the multidisciplinary teams. Does that mean the multidisciplinary teams are going to be limited to five or six? I think the hospitals across Saskatchewan need to know whether that's what the NDP plan on doing. Are they going to eliminate obstetrics in all of those hospitals that don't have midwives?

I think there's a serious concern out there, Madam Speaker, and I haven't heard the government comment on that because they say one thing and then turn around and do something else. They're very good at blaming other people, Madam Deputy Speaker, but then they turn around and do the very same things that they are accusing others of doing.

Now we've seen the province go through amalgamation, the education amalgamation process. And the government's bragging now about providing a pre-kindergarten program for

four-year-olds. And there are a good number of four-year-olds that can utilize those kind of services.

The fact is my own son when he was a little guy — he's not little any more. He's way up there — used to sit on my knee when he was three and four years old and watch me on the computer. And he was about four years old, and one day I did something different on the computer. And he had not asked me any questions yet about the computer, but he had sat there quite a bit and this one day he says to me, why did you do that? Well what do you mean? Well you did it this way this time, and you did it that way last time. You know, so while he wasn't asking questions, he was certainly learning. And there are a good number of four-year-olds around the province that are capable of handling pre-kindergarten.

But when we're looking at expanding education in some areas, we look across Saskatchewan, and we see education costs on the rise. You go to most municipalities in my constituency, and you will see that the cost of education is rising to them. And what do they receive in return? Actual fact they're receiving less service. We had two schools close, close to me this year so they're paying more and getting less service, and that's how this government is treating education across this province. They talk a good show, but they don't deliver.

The same with youth — the government has been talking about a new Saskatchewan youth award. You know, when I heard that I wondered, what is this, a new Saskatchewan youth award? They're going to give youth a medal or some sort of certificate. You know what youth want in this province, Madam Deputy Speaker? They want a job. They want a meaningful job, a job that's going to lead them up the career ladder. You know, is the Premier . . . You know, I can see him right now sitting in his high chair with a fancy ermine stole on and a big silver-coloured wig saying to the youth of this province, let them eat cake. You know. The Premier acting out the role of Marie Antoinette and let them eat cake. So his message to the youth is: sorry there's no jobs, but here's a medal.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the people and the youth of this province want jobs. They want a meaningful job. They want a job that's going to let them grow and prosper in this province. They want a job that's going to let them stay in this province and raise their families.

And why do they want those jobs? Certainly for their own benefit. But they want those jobs so that they can also support their parents and their siblings and their friends and neighbours. Because you can't pay . . . As the member for Coronation Park said, there's no free lunch. You can't pay for our social services. You can't pay for our health. You can't pay for our education unless there's people creating wealth. And the youth of this province want to stay in this province and create this wealth, but the government is denying them the opportunities.

Madam Deputy Speaker, what this province needs is a vision — a vision of prosperity, a vision of growing this province where our youth are going to stay here, where their grandparents are going to remain here because their grandkids are here. We need a vision for the future — a vision that we will have prosperous streets, prosperous blocks, new buildings going up — that will have people in our universities that are able to graduate and

come out with a real job. Not with a muck job, not with a job in Alberta, not with a job in Toronto, but a real job in Saskatchewan where they have an opportunity to grow.

And that job, Madam Deputy Speaker, is not necessarily in a Crown corporation or working for the government. When you work for the government you're living on somebody else's taxes. There's a need for the private sector and the co-operative sector in this province to grow, to play the role that they play across the world.

You know even, Madam Deputy Speaker, even in China the private sector is growing. It's only in Saskatchewan where the government is trying to diminish the role of the private sector, only in Saskatchewan. Even in China the private sector is growing. The private sector is creating the wealth. The private sector is creating the jobs. You need . . . There is a role for government, and there is a role for Crown corporations, but they should not be the sole economic generator in the province as the NDP envision.

You know, we had new citizens — I believe there was 15 of them in here earlier in the week — that received their Canadian citizenship. We receive an extremely low number of people as immigrants into this province. You know 50 per cent of the year or better, we have no problem with bugs. You know there's no mosquitoes here for roughly six months of the year, you know. And yet people don't come. Why is that?

We certainly have a beautiful province that people love to visit. We certainly have the natural resources to develop a prosperous economy. You know, we have uranium. We have oil. We have huge wheat fields, cultivated land. We have potash. And yet we don't have the economic development that others have. We have the new diamonds that are coming on stream. We have huge coalfields.

And yet why aren't the immigrants coming here? They're not coming here because there's no job opportunities. Their career advancement is not able to happen in this province. So that's why, Madam Deputy Speaker, people in this province . . . or the immigrants don't come to this province. Even Manitoba, even Manitoba is certainly outpacing us when it comes to immigrants because the government there — even though it's an NDP government, even though it's an NDP government — have seen the value of bringing immigrants into this province.

You know, you take a look. Each and every one of us is either an immigrant or a son and daughter of immigrants. So our families came to this province years ago. And they recognized the benefits of Saskatchewan. They recognized the benefits of Saskatchewan.

And so, Madam Deputy Speaker, we need to engage the people around the world. We need to let them know that there are still opportunities in this province — opportunities that are yet unrealized. And we need, as a government, to step back and let them realize those opportunities. Let them build their future in Saskatchewan, as our ancestors saw the opportunity to build their future and their children's future and their children's future.

But that vision is not here today in that government. They are

busy trying to manage the decline and have forgotten — if they ever knew — what it took to build that vision. That, Madam Deputy Speaker, I think, is a huge disservice to what this province should be and could be. I believe the government's philosophy has failed this province miserably. We were 1 million people back in the 1930s and '40s. We're still 1 million people, and in fact those numbers continue to decrease, decrease when we should be growing, when we have such huge potential. It's unrealized because of the philosophical brakes that this government puts on our economy.

You know, this government likes to talk a lot about its social conscience — you know, how it helps people, how it takes care of those that are more vulnerable. But it's forgotten, in its own desire to be strong economically within the government's circle, the impact it's having on individuals outside of that government circle.

You know, if I recollect correctly, Saskatchewan Housing a few years ago entered into contracts for natural gas with someone other than SaskEnergy. So the government's new program for natural gas rebates . . . because of the high increase in cost, the government is not providing that benefit to the people who are living in Sask Housing houses. They're excluded from that, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — It now being 5 p.m. this House stands adjourned till tomorrow at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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