



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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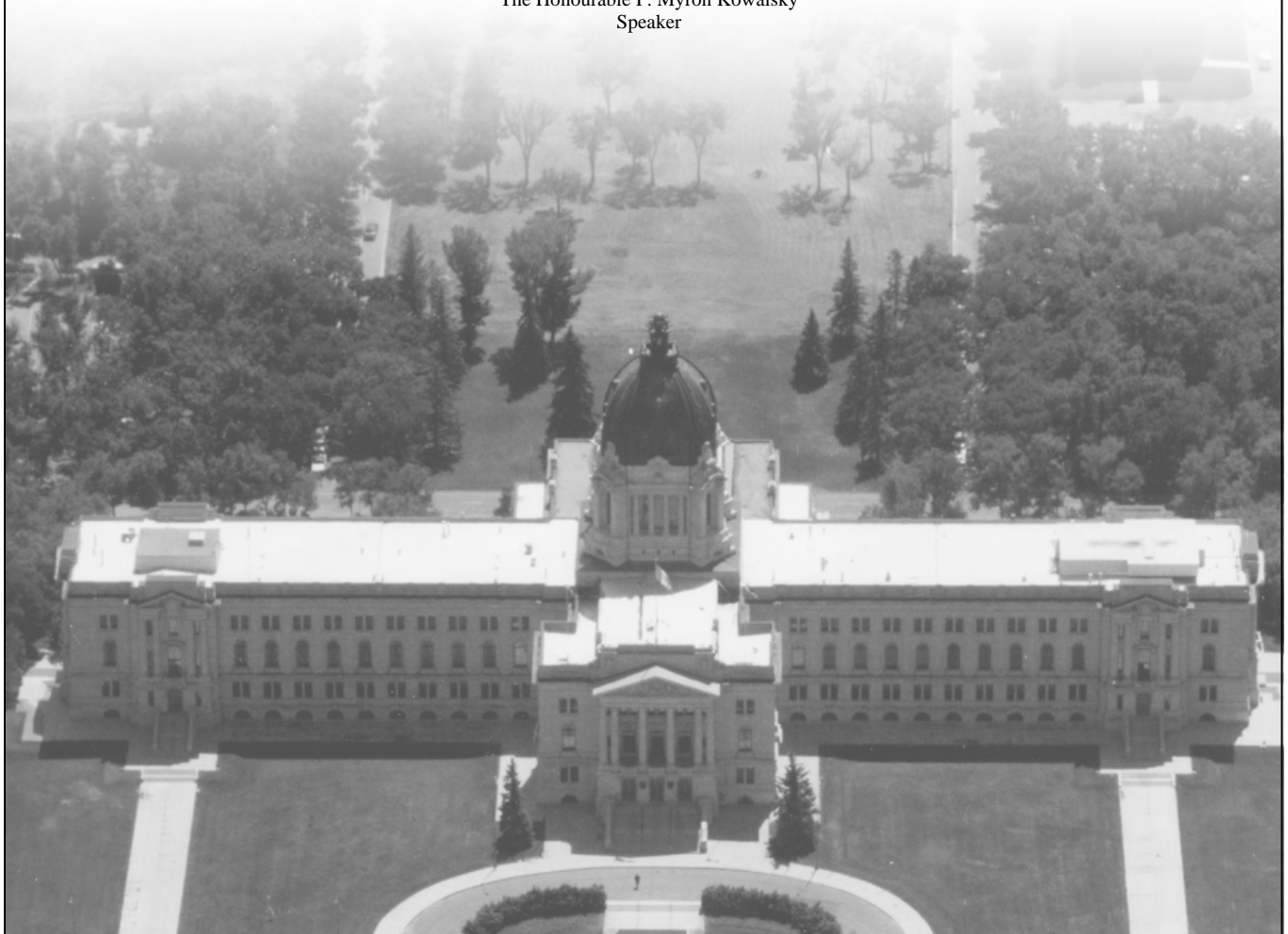
**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
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The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

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

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Addley, 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. Today I have several more pages of petitions to present on behalf of constituents of Cypress Hills regarding the condition of Highway 321 from the Alberta border to the community of Liebenthal. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the 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, again these three pages of petitions are signed by individuals from the community of Burstall as well as Leader and Patricia, Alberta. I so present.

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

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased today to rise on behalf of people from the Barrier Lake resort who are concerned about the marina at Revoy's location.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause this government to take the necessary action to develop a long-term lease to Revoy's Marina to include a turnabout for access to Revoy's Marina, a place for boat trailers to be stored, and the seven seasonal camping spots be maintained, to ensure the safety of this area.

The people that have signed this petition are from Tisdale and from Bjorkdale and Archerwill. I so present.

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

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today 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 Saskatoon, Kamsack, Meacham, Kelvington; Edmonton, Alberta; Wadena, Grasswood, Watrous, P.A. [Prince Albert], Kelvington,

Englefeld, Drake, Dalmeny, Langham, Clavet, and Warman. I so present.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition with citizens calling to repair and resurface highways. This particular highway is Highway 15.

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

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by good citizens all from the town of Kenaston. I so present.

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

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have another petition from citizens concerned about possible reduction of health care services. 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.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

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

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

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition with regard to widening of Highway No. 5. Mr. Speaker, Highway No. 5 travels from Humboldt through Saskatoon Southeast and Saskatoon Humboldt and ends in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, I'll read from the prayer for relief.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to upgrade and widen Highway No. 5 from Humboldt to Saskatoon.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by many citizens from Saskatoon, Humboldt, Sturgis, Buchanan, and elsewhere throughout that area, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again to bring forward a petition from the people of Batoche constituency on the deplorable condition of Highway 368. And 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 368 in order to address safety and economic concerns.

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

And it is signed by the good people of Annaheim and Saskatoon. I so present.

### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Deputy Clerk:** — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and pursuant to rule 14(7) are hereby read and received: sessional paper no. 28 and addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional paper nos. 4, 7, and 26.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce Mr. Charlie Baldock to you this afternoon. He's seated in your gallery. Mr. Baldock has been a member of the business tax review committee for the past seven months.

Mr. Baldock, along with chairperson Jack Vicq and Cheryl Shepherd, handed off their final report to me this morning. And the report contains key recommendations to further improve the business climate in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Baldock has been a tax partner for KPMG in the Regina office for the past 19 years. His professional experience extends over a wide range of areas within the financial services area in both the public and private sectors.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the important research and analysis on Saskatchewan business tax structure that Mr. Baldock and the BTRC [business tax review committee] members have successfully completed. This was a great deal of work in a very short period of time.

On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan I would like to thank them for their commitment and dedication to this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the hon. minister in welcoming Charlie Baldock to his Legislative Assembly, and thank him on behalf of the official opposition and thank as well Mr. Jack Vicq and Cheryl

Shepherd who I know are in Saskatoon right now. Thank them for the work that they've done on the business tax review commission.

Thank you for providing a road map for Saskatchewan people on how to get business taxes in Saskatchewan competitive.

On behalf of the official opposition and all Saskatchewan people, thank you for your hard work and thank you for not holding back on your recommendations.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Members of the Assembly, today we have a group of young people from the Canada World Youth program. Ten of them are from across Canada and 10 are from Ukraine.

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

Particularly I want to mention Andriy Atamanenko and DeeAnna Aubin who worked here in the legislature in the information services and the Office of the Speaker.

On November 26 this entire group will travel to Ostroh, Ukraine where they will live and work for another three months.

I also wish to note that it was one year ago that students like these whose zest for democracy formed the basis of the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, resulting in a second runoff for the presidential election.

Canada World Youth sponsors 1,500 youth annually to 30 countries around the world. Please welcome the Canada World Youth participants and supervisors to the Legislative Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too would like to join with you on behalf of the official opposition to welcome our 20 students from the Canada youth group here to the Legislative Assembly. I know that the 10 students from across Canada have had an opportunity of course to spend some time in the province of Saskatchewan working at various departments along with the 10 students from Ukraine, as you have already mentioned, Mr. Speaker.

As indicated, they're going to be in Ukraine during the Christmas holiday over the course of December 25 and New Year's and Ukrainian Christmas. And in discussions with them, I know that they're looking forward to celebrating two Christmases — that is the students from Canada especially. So ...

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

Mr. Speaker, I too, while I'm on my feet, I would also like to introduce a lady sitting in your gallery from the constituency of Canora-Pelly, an assistant who's helping me out get organized — and I know you'll hear some jeering from my colleagues,

Mr. Speaker. Carol Sleeva and her husband Gary farm near the community of Canora. I've known Carol for 20 years. We were together on the Canora School Board for nine of those years. And I know Carol spent additional years on that.

So I'd like all members to join with me in welcoming the students from the Canada World Youth group and Carol Sleeva from the constituency of Canora-Pelly.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — [The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

Mr. Speaker, I too wanted to stand and welcome our young Ukrainian and Canadian students to our Assembly. We had lunch which was very exciting and a good chance to speak with many of the students.

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

Mr. Speaker, what I was saying was that they told me that one thing they did know was the number of Ukrainians that were living in Saskatchewan and . . .

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

And to Andriy Atamanenko who sat and took some time to talk with me.

And, Mr. Speaker, we were able to exchange emails, and it was also surprising at the number of relatives that they have in the Ukraine. So I would ask all members to welcome our visitors to the gallery.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Wartman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour for me to be able to introduce to you and through you to the rest of this House today the Hon. Kevin MacAdam, who has joined us behind the bar.

Kevin is the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries from Prince Edward Island, former Chair of the provincial ministers for the federal-provincial-territorial ministers' meetings, and very strong supporter of equity for the provinces in federal-provincial relations. Really an excellent colleague to work with on the federal-provincial scene. So I'd like to ask other members to join me in welcoming Kevin to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure

for me to introduce to you and through you to members of the House and welcome to her Legislative Assembly someone who I think is frankly a hero in the province of Saskatchewan. I'm going to ask Vicki Graf to just stand if she would and give us a wave, although she'll probably be embarrassed to do so.

Vicki's from Humboldt, Saskatchewan, and in large measure her courage is the reason why the provincial government approved the breakthrough breast cancer drug Herceptin for funding. And so we want to thank her for her courage and we want to welcome her here to her Legislative Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery we have 14 grade 9 to 12 students that are off to play in a senior boys provincial volleyball championship. And they are the La Loche Lakers, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to tell them, while we are in the spirit of speaking languages — we have the Ukrainian language — I want to do a bit of Dene as well because this is what makes the Assembly so great. We come from a wide variety of backgrounds.

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

[13:45]

I just wanted to say, Mr. Speaker, I've forgotten the word for pride in Dene so I just wanted to point out that from the perspective of being the Athabasca MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] I'm very proud of this team. They're going off to compete in the provincial championships and what area they represent is Saskatoon North and that includes Saskatoon. They're a very fine competitive team.

With them of course is a chaperone, Keith. And here are some of the team members: Randy, Wallace Janvier, Manny, Myron, Charles, Clayton Sylvestre, Stuart Fontaine, Lawton Park, Jonovan Kokan, Deano Herman, Dino, Jerrod Laprise, Steven Tobac, Wendell Petit. And Tammy Lemaigre is also another chaperone.

And with them, who's a very fine coach, a fine coach and also a fine person and a fine teacher is Phyllis Longobardi. And they affectionately call her Ms. L. A fine teacher, a fine coach, a fine team but she's . . . while I have the floor, Mr. Speaker, she's really a mean referee when it comes to basketball and she often picks on me during tournaments. So I just wanted to make sure that you as a Speaker know that and the people of Saskatchewan know that. And I just wanted to expose her to that.

But I'll point out, Mr. Speaker, and ask all members of the Assembly to join with me in applauding La Loche's long trip here. They've still got another three-hour trip to compete and certainly from our perspective we're very, very proud of them and we wish them the very best of luck.

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

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce someone in your gallery today who is the first voice that many of the constituents of Humboldt hear when they phone my office, and that's my constituency assistant, Susan Dunne. She works tirelessly in that office for all of the constituents of Humboldt and she does a really great job. So I'd like to welcome her to her Assembly today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to introduce to the House this afternoon, seated in your gallery and not sitting in the press gallery, are the two individuals — Steve Nixon who's the executive director of the Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers, and Mr. Clark Pepper, who is on the board of directors. They're in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

The Saskatchewan Weekly Newspapers Association, as you know, make extensive, tremendous contributions to making sure that information across rural Saskatchewan is well provided. They're here this afternoon to continue their discussions, as we have been over the last number of months, in making a stronger and better system of getting information out to Saskatchewan people in rural, and I want to welcome to the Assembly . . . and the good work that they do in making a difference in our province. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member from Melfort.

**Mr. Gantfoer:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Deputy Premier in welcoming the people from the Weekly Newspapers Association. Many of us in Saskatchewan religiously follow the weekly newspapers in our local communities. They are the purveyors of news and information and a little bit of gossip occasionally but always are read with a great deal of interest.

So on behalf of the official opposition, it's a great pleasure that you're here in your Assembly today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Heart of the Métis Awards

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, a short time ago I had the privilege to attend and bring greetings and award a prize —

award an award, pardon me — on behalf of the province to the Métis Employment & Training of Saskatchewan Inc. second annual Heart of the Métis Awards in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, the Heart of the Métis Awards recognize the valuable contributions of Saskatchewan's Métis citizens.

Mr. Speaker, John Henikenne received the Challenger Award presented to an individual who has advanced the perception and appreciation of Métis arts and culture. The Volunteer Award went to Terry Boyer, the Employer Award to the Dumont Technical Institute. The Guide Award recognized the contributions of a staff person of a Métis organization and went to Karon Schmon. The Future Award, evaluated on community leadership qualities and academic achievement, went to Danielle Levesque. Cort Dogniez received the Foundation Award for advancing the cause of Métis people over an extensive period of time.

The Merit Award went to Pat Letendre as a Métis woman who is an exemplary role model and makes significant contribution to the Métis and business communities. And Ian Reiman received the Honour Award posthumously. It is given to a Saskatchewan Métis person who has served in the Armed Forces or police forces of Canada and who epitomizes the honour of the Métis people and our country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to congratulate the recipients of the Heart of the Métis Awards. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Humboldt Resident Advocates for Funding for Herceptin

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a great honour to rise in my place today to commend one of my constituents for her bravery, her courage, and her willingness to stand up for herself and for others.

Vicki Graf lives in Humboldt. She is a wife, a mother of two sons, and she's a fighter. Earlier this year she was diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer. Her oncologist told her about a new drug called Herceptin that had overwhelmed scientists in recent clinical trials, a drug that could save her life. At that time Sask Health would not cover the cost of the drug which was a hefty \$50,000 a year.

In June Vicki made the courageous decision to come forward, talk publicly about her personal situation, and fight for the coverage of Herceptin. Talking about one's own health is never an easy thing to do but Vicki came forward and explained how difficult it was for her to not only have to deal with the stress that comes with having to fight cancer, but with the additional stress she was facing to come up with the money to pay for the drug that could save her life.

I am very proud to know a woman like Vicki Graf who is willing to stand up and fight, not only for what she needed for her own life but what many other women in this province will benefit from as well. I firmly believe Vicki's courage and tenacity played a large role in forcing this government into

funding Herceptin.

Our mothers, daughters, aunts, grandmothers, and friends are lucky to have a person like Vicki to stand up for the women of this province. We all thank you, Vicki Graf.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Nap Bouvier Retirement

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Our educators and the people that work in our schools should be commended for all the work they do for our children, and, Mr. Speaker, one constituent of mine has been helping to care for our schoolchildren for more years than most.

Nap Bouvier from my hometown of Ile-a-la-Crosse worked in the school's maintenance department for 46 years. In that time he saw countless numbers of students cross his path. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I am one of those countless numbers of students that have had the honour of getting to know Nap during his tenure at the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division. I also know that the member from Saskatchewan Rivers, who taught at the school, knows Nap and how hard that Nap worked.

Mr. Speaker, on December 3 in Ile-a-la-Crosse, Nap will be honoured by the Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division for all his hard work and commitment to the children of this northern community and the surrounding area.

Mr. Speaker, Nap and I have a friendly competition, and I quote from a higher authority in terms of our attendance at Sunday Mass. We often see if each other is there. And the member from Athabasca, attendance 146; Nap Bouvier, attendance 32.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honour today to rise today and recognize Nap Bouvier for all his 46 years of commitment to northern children and I invite all members of the Assembly to join me in congratulating Nap. Thank you.

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

#### Child Poverty

**Mr. Dearborn:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is the 16th anniversary of the unanimous all-party resolution passed in the House of Commons to eliminate child poverty by the year 2000. The fact that we continue to talk about this problem is a clear indication that child poverty has not been eliminated.

In fact, statistics indicate that child poverty has become a permanent fact of life for far too many people under the NDP [New Democratic Party] in Saskatchewan. In Saskatchewan 44,000 children live in poverty, including half of all the First Nations and Métis children.

Mr. Speaker, instead of getting better, child poverty is getting worse. The percentage of children living in poverty has increased since 1998 under an NDP government that is more

interested in building airports for itself than a better future for children in need. It is the current Premier who, quoting Franklin Delano Roosevelt, said in 1991 of his government that, quote:

The test of our progress will not be in how much we add to the abundance of those who have much, but how we meet the needs of those who have little.

Well the facts sadly speak for themselves about this government's progress. The members on this side of the House have repeatedly urged the government to take action to reduce child poverty. Today we repeat the call.

We're committed to improving the lives of children and families in this province. I hope the NDP eventually will be too.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Prince Albert Radio Station Wins Award

**Mr. Borgerson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week at their national convention in Winnipeg, the Canadian Association of Broadcasters recognized the outstanding work of its members with the presentation of their Gold Ribbon Awards. These awards salute the accomplishments of Canada's private broadcasters and recognize the best of the best in Canadian television, radio, and specialty and pay broadcasting.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that, in this year, radio station CKBI in Prince Albert won a Gold Ribbon Award for community service. This award goes to the station that has made the most significant contribution to its community by such things as providing assistance to its audience during emergencies or taking unique initiatives to deal with issues of concern to the community.

Mr. Speaker, CKBI won the Gold Ribbon Award for a station in their market size for their Battlefield-Crystal Meth campaign. This included a series of ads about the dangers of the drug and, as a follow-up, a half-hour live show with a panel made up of a physician, the Prince Albert police chief, and an addictions worker from the P.A. Parkland Health District. The campaign resulted in significant increases in attendance to the information sessions about crystal meth.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to particularly acknowledge the work of one member of the CKBI team, Eric Anderson, and I congratulate CKBI on receiving this award and for their ongoing contributions to the community. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Birthday Wishes for Leader of the Opposition

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, November 24, 1965 was an exciting day for John and Alice, a young Saskatchewan couple making their way to the hospital 40

years ago. This would be a day that would change their lives forever.

They listened to the news on the radio as they drove. Prime Minister Pearson talked about a brand new Canadian flag. Premier Ross Thatcher talked about agriculture. And the reports of the second anniversary of the assassination of John F. Kennedy were filling the airwaves.

But John and Alice were thinking about something else. They were thinking about whether it would be a boy or a girl. They were wondering about what their future would be. Well, Mr. Speaker, on this day 40 years ago, John and Alice Wall of Swift Current, Saskatchewan were blessed with a son, Bradley John, and their lives did change forever.

Mr. Speaker, this change was all good. John and Alice did not know in 1965 that, because of their bundle of joy, their home would soon be filled with Elvis music and maybe a velvet painting or two. They may not have imagined their home being decorated with Tiger Woods pictures and Oakland Raider flags, not to mention decades of political memorabilia. What they did expect, Mr. Speaker, is that they would have a child that they could be proud of, a child that would make a contribution to society, and a child that would make his world a better place than when he found it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Bradley John, together with his wife, Tami, have provided a wonderful home for Megan, Colter, and Faith. Bradley John, you have fulfilled your parents' expectations, and soon you will fulfill the expectations of many Saskatchewan residents that are counting on you.

Welcome to the 40 club. The class of 1965 is a good one. All your colleagues on both sides of the House wish you the very best on this very special day. God bless.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Saskatchewan Encyclopedia

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To quote Dr. David Barnard, the former president of the University of Regina:

Documenting where we have come from and where we are is an important foundation for allowing us to make informed and sensitive choices about where we would like to go.

Dr. Barnard was speaking specifically about the recently released Saskatchewan encyclopedia and what a useful research resource it is and will continue to be for all who are interested in history, geography, and culture of this wonderful province.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan encyclopedia is published by the Canadian Plains Research Center and is the latest and most ambitious project of this Regina-based institution that has been supporting social, historical, and environmental research on the Canadian Plains for over 30 years.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan encyclopedia has been nine whole years in the making. It includes some 2,200 individual entries as well as in-depth essays on a variety of subjects including Aboriginal issues, business and industry, social policy, health, and labour.

I congratulate David Gauthier, the publisher and general manager of the encyclopedia; the writers; members of the editorial board; and everyone at the Canadian Plains Research Center on this really remarkable achievement. Mr. Speaker, it's a great read cover to cover. I encourage all to have a look at the Saskatchewan encyclopedia. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

### ORAL QUESTIONS

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

#### Final Report of the Business Tax Review Committee

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is at a crossroads. We in the province have unprecedented revenues. We also have a tax regime that is stifling job growth and new investment. We have lost jobs, and we have seen the departure of our young people at a time when we should be building our future.

Mr. Speaker, after months of work and extensive public hearings, the business tax review committee has given us a clear road map for the future. Mr. Speaker, my question is simple. To the minister: will this government have the political courage to implement the business tax review commission?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I think I've been consistent and the government has been very consistent in terms of saying that, after establishing the commission to look at business taxes, that we look forward to receiving their report, that we would incorporate that report as we do our budget development process for next year and plan also ahead to further years, and that that report would then be considered in that context. And that's what I want to say at this point, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, this story isn't a story about numbers. It isn't a story about tax regimes. It isn't a story about the GDP [gross domestic product] or the CIT [corporate income tax] or the CCT [corporate capital tax] or the PST [provincial sales tax]. Mr. Speaker, this is a story about hope. This is a story about people's dreams. It's a story about building careers. It's about keeping our young people here, Mr. Speaker.



Today the government has been given a plan to unleash the creative energy of Saskatchewan people. This government has been given a plan. What will they do with it, Mr. Speaker? To the minister: will he study and delay and dither on this report like he has done with all the others?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, this would not be the first report that we have received from a commission to look at taxes in Saskatchewan. The members opposite will recall that we did establish a committee to review personal taxes some years ago. In fact, Mr. Baldock and Mr. Vicq were two members of that commission. Again we received their recommendations. We reviewed their recommendations — made some changes to those recommendations — but by and large implemented the recommendations in our report.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we look forward to reviewing the recommendations that we have received in the context of our budget development for next year and make an announcement at the appropriate time.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when this government fails in health care, they blame the patients. When that doesn't work, they blame the doctors. When the Agriculture minister gets caught, he blames the media. A year from now, Mr. Speaker, when the Finance minister has failed to implement the business tax review committee's recommendations, I am sure he will find a way to blame me.

Mr. Speaker, we have the resources to fix this problem. We have the master plan thanks to the work of this committee.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: does this minister have the courage to stand up to his party's ideologists and implement these recommendations? More importantly, Mr. Speaker, does he have the courage to stand up to the Premier who campaigned against these recommendations in this last election?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Earlier, Mr. Speaker, the member spoke of crossroads. Well we've had other crossroads in Saskatchewan history, crossroads where we had one ideology driving this province and driving this province into ruin, driving this province into near bankruptcy, driving this province so that the people of Saskatchewan had the highest per capita debt in the country.

Then the people said we want a new and we want a better government. They've got it. We've managed over these years, Mr. Speaker, to deal with the circumstances that were handed to us. We now have an opportunity to go forward, Mr. Speaker,

and we will go forward, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that member can say what he wants and he will, but they should not underestimate our resolve and our management in these issues, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Here we go again, Mr. Speaker — always about the past and never about the future with this government.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — You think he would have learned from Mr. Vicq's words this morning. Mr. Speaker, the Chair of the business tax review committee says it's time to move out of this 30-year-old tax regime to one that is consistent with global realities, Mr. Speaker. The Chair of the business tax review says we have the highest marginal tax rate not only in Canada, not only in North America, but in the world, Mr. Speaker. And that doesn't even include their property taxes.

Mr. Speaker, this government's policies are chasing people away. This government's words, Mr. Speaker, are chasing people away.

In the last election, the NDP rallied against corporate tax cuts. Now their own commission says that this has to be done. Mr. Speaker, will this minister have the guts to stand up and say that he was wrong, that his party was wrong, and that they will implement the Vicq commission reports today?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, the Vicq commission has done extensive research. They have provided us with, I believe, a well researched and substantial document. One of the mandates for the committee was also to look at proposals that would be sustainable for government, and obviously that is something that the government needs to review in the context of next year's budget and future budgets.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, we believe that this province is a province of great opportunity. We look forward to doing what we can to fulfill not just our commitments to that future but providing a bright future for many young people here in Saskatchewan. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, here's this Finance minister's track record. Here's what he has to say. He wasn't sure, when questioned about the provincial budget, what his party had promised. Raise or change the PST — I hadn't thought about that; I didn't think about that. What did you

mean; you didn't think about it? Well we don't know if we have the mandate to change it or not, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, it's not a time to dither. It's not a time to hesitate. Can this minister give this House today the assurance that he will implement this recommendation in a timely fashion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan that it was this government that commissioned this report.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — It has been this government that has provided the leadership over the course of the last 14 years or so. That puts us in a position to not only commission the report but to seriously consider the recommendations that had been made by this committee as we go forward into the future, and not just for next year but in subsequent years, to see what we can do based on the recommendations of the report to grow the economy in Saskatchewan, provide more hope and opportunity for young people in Saskatchewan. That's where we've gone for all these years, Mr. Speaker, to get us to this point and we want to keep going. Thank you very much.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Migration of Youth Population

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the Vicq commission has told this government what it should do. We should talk a little bit about why they should do it, Mr. Speaker, because under the current tax regime, under the current leadership provided by this government, what's happening in the province of Saskatchewan? Well we're losing jobs — over 6,000 of them over the last year. What else is happening, Mr. Speaker? We continue to lose population.

Mr. Speaker, in June 2001 the Premier and his NDP government released one in a series of economic strategies. It was called the *Partnership for Prosperity*. And one of the goals of the so-called strategy was to achieve net youth in-migration by what year? By 2005.

Mr. Speaker, will someone over there on the NDP side of the House report progress on its goal to create net youth in-migration by 2005.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Leader of the Opposition, who may not be aware, that under the

leadership of this government in the last five years, we have completely reformed the personal income tax system in this province. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because we want to create more opportunities for young people.

I want to let the Leader of the Opposition know that we have revised the oil and gas royalties. And they refer to the Vicq report. I want to point out that the Vicq report acknowledges, Mr. Speaker, that the oil and gas sector is flourishing in Saskatchewan as a result of those changes.

I want the Leader of the Opposition to know, Mr. Speaker, that the mining sector's experiencing an exploration boom in this province presently which is attracting jobs — geo-analytical jobs, engineering jobs — in this province. And what are we doing, Mr. Speaker? We're taking those actions to create jobs.

What is he proposing, Mr. Speaker? That he will appoint a committee and ask them what to do, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you notice that the minister didn't come anywhere near answering the question. The question was, has the government hit its goal of net youth in-migration from 2001 to 2005? And you know why he didn't answer it, Mr. Speaker? It's because he's embarrassed, or if he's not embarrassed, he should be.

The answer, Mr. Speaker, is this. From July 1, 2001 to July 1, 2005, the NDP lost 23,000 people. They drove out 23,000 people from this province, and over half of them were under the age of 30. Mr. Speaker, 14,500 young people, that's who has paid the price, and their families back home. That's who has paid the price for the tax regime they put in place and for poor economic leadership from that government, Mr. Speaker.

Today the Vicq commission's given the NDP a road map out of this mess, Mr. Speaker. Will they have the courage to adopt that report, or will they hold to the rhetoric from the 2003 election where they ridiculed these kinds of tax reforms?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Mr. Speaker, while the leader of the Saskatchewan Conservative Party has a policy that continually says if he was ever elected premier he would appoint a committee to ask them what he should do, we are taking action, Mr. Speaker. We have an action plan, and I want to say to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, we have not done everything we set out to do . . . [inaudible] . . . Mr. Speaker. That's right, there's more, Mr. Speaker, and we will deliver, Mr. Speaker, but I want the people of the . . .

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Industry and Resources.

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — I want the Leader of the Opposition to

know, Mr. Speaker, because he will not reveal this to the people of the province that between 1992 and 2004 the number of young people employed in the province of Saskatchewan increased by 9,800, Mr. Speaker. It went up, not down. And I want the people to know, Mr. Speaker, that the youth population in Saskatchewan between 1992 and 2004 increased by 9,000, Mr. Speaker. It's getting larger not . . .

**The Speaker:** — The member's time has elapsed. The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister refers to his Action Plan on the Economy. You remember what observers of politics and the economy in the province had to say about it. They said it was disappointing and a political cop-out with not one single objective or goal to be included in it.

Mr. Speaker, the figures show that the NDP continues to lose people in every age group. In fact since the Premier took office in '01, he's lost people in their 20s, he's lost people in their 30s, he's lost people in their 40s, 50s, and 60s. In fact the only age group where Saskatchewan has net in-migration under this Premier is people in their 90s, Mr. Speaker. Now we're all for people in their 90s moving to the province of Saskatchewan but, Mr. Speaker, we shouldn't have to wait nearly a century to start attracting people back and retaining our young people here in the province of Saskatchewan.

So does the minister have anything more specific? Does he have more than a plan that is a cop-out, and that is disappointing by independent observers, to offer the people? Will he act on Vicq, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear

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

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Well the biggest cop-out in this province, Mr. Speaker, is the Leader of the Opposition, that when he releases his economic development so-called plan, his plan is this: I will appoint a committee and ask them what to do. And in contrast to that, Mr. Speaker, what this government has done is to reform the personal income tax system, reform the oil and gas royalties, reform the system of taxation for mining.

[14:15]

And are we going to do more? I say to those members opposite just stay tuned, Mr. Speaker, because we are going to do more. Because while they're appointing committees to ask for advice, Mr. Speaker, we're governing and taking action.

And at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, that is what the people will judge: our action against their negative rhetoric. And I predict, Mr. Speaker, that given the choice between action and negative rhetoric, the people will choose and support action any day, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Future of Weyerhaeuser Mill in Prince Albert

**Mr. Wall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister's changed his tune. Because when that economic paper was unveiled and welcomed by chambers of commerce and business leaders, the former NDP minister of Finance, Ms. MacKinnon, and even that minister stood up said up it was a good plan. So he's obviously now changed his position or at some point maybe he wasn't quite representing the facts. And more on that subject right now, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder that the NDP is losing jobs and investment when you see how potential investors are treated in the province of Saskatchewan. Yesterday the minister responsible for the SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] debacle got up in this House and misrepresented a letter he received from a potential investor. He said the investors were asking the government to scrap labour and environmental laws. He tabled the document. It's simply not true. No where in that letter does it say anything of the sort, Mr. Speaker.

Will he stand in his place and apologize to this Assembly and to these potential investors and the people of Prince Albert?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, what I will do is explain what the leader of the Saskatchewan Conservative Party did on two separate occasions yesterday. That gentleman, sir, misrepresented what Mr. Ekstrand's letter was. So let me read it to the record:

We have demonstrated that our clients have the capital to facilitate the acquisition and demonstrated through bank statements and authorization approval from my client and can confirm that we stand ready to move forward pending certain pre-conditions.

Firstly I must receive written assurance from SaskPower and the provincial government that:

1. any residual electrical power produced on site from the materials available from normal operations: e.g. woodchips, sawdust, bark, waste paper residue will be sold to the existing power grid at current market rates charged industrial customers.

2. there will be no charge for standby electricity with all electricity purchases to be invoiced at current electricity charges.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, yesterday that minister stood in his place and said that the letter he tabled on this potential investor's plan or precondition was to scrap environmental laws and labour laws.

Mr. Speaker, the consultant says that's not true. The letter itself he tabled says it's not true, and the mayor of Prince Albert, Jim Stiglitz, says it's not true. In fact he went on to say it's nothing more than fear tactics meant to cloud the issue. Fear tactics and false accusations, Mr. Speaker, that's what we get from that minister.

Will he stand in his place and apologize for misrepresenting that letter by saying that the proponent wanted to scrap environmental and labour laws? That wasn't the case. Will he do the right thing and apologize, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, let me proceed directly with my quote:

3. the new purchaser, probably a joint-venture probably with the Chinese and Canadian company, will not be held liable for or committed to any existing labour, environmental or governmental agreements excepting with the approval of the new owner.

4. the existing forestry contracts in place with Weyerhaeuser will remain in effect.

Mr. Speaker, this is exactly why . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. Minister of Highways and Transportation, 20 seconds.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, that's just typical of the opposition. When they don't like to hear what they like to hear, they holler. They holler from their seats.

Mr. Speaker, the letter is clear. It was responded to by our official, Mr. Spanner, on November 2, which outlined our position as it relates to every one of these four points, a letter of which I'm going to table this afternoon. Mr. Speaker . . .

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister tabled the letter from Mr. Ekstrand to CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan], but he didn't bother to table CIC's response. So I would like to do that today.

Mr. Speaker, Larry Spanner's letter of response is pretty clear. Apparently, Mr. Speaker, apparently, Mr. Speaker, the minister didn't even understand what his officials were corresponding

back to the proponent. And his officials fully understood what the proponent was saying. Here's a quote from the letter. Here's what Mr. Spanner of CIC says in his letter back to the proponent:

The specific terms of the collective agreement are a matter to be negotiated between the employer and employees . . . It would be up to the new owner to renegotiate these contracts with the union.

Mr. Speaker, his officials understood that they weren't trying to break any labour laws. That's what he said yesterday in the House and outside. Will he apologize, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what I said to that member yesterday, and I asked if he favours scrapping the legislation under which this labour laws are. And does he favour scrapping the agreement between Weyerhaeuser and their employees? And he hasn't yet responded, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the correspondence is clear. I say to you this. Weyerhaeuser is in the process of choosing who they are going to do business with, which is how this should be working. Mr. Speaker, that member can play politics with the 700 jobs or the people that work at the Weyerhaeuser pulp and paper operation, but I tell you what. He will pay dearly as he has paid in the past when those members tried to interfere with operations in the community of Prince Albert.

Mr. Speaker, I say to him, keep your nose out. Let us put this together. We'll put a deal together with a good private sector investor working with Weyerhaeuser.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order please. The member ought to direct all of his remarks through the Chair.

The Chair recognizes the Minister of Corrections and Public Safety.

#### **Sale of Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company Equipment**

**Hon. Mr. Prebble:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to respond to the question asked yesterday by the hon. member . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Order. Order. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Corrections and Public Safety.

**Hon. Mr. Prebble:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to respond to the question asked yesterday. The hon. member said yesterday that harvesting and production equipment was sold to Cavendish Farms for \$750,000, what the hon. member claimed was worth more than \$3 million. The hon. member also claimed that this action has driven up SPUDCO losses well beyond the

loss figures of \$35 million.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say clearly that neither is, neither of these accusations are true. First . . . or accurate, Mr. Speaker, accurate. The sale of the equipment below the original purchase price has been fully accounted for when the losses of SPUDCO were calculated and reported by myself. There is no resulting increase in SPUDCO losses.

Second, I can report to the House that the \$3 million figure the opposition is using exceeds the actual original purchase price of all the equipment that was sold to Cavendish. Moreover SVPC [Saskatchewan Valley Potato Corporation] staff conducted a careful assessment of the market value of the equipment in consultation with retailers of potato production and harvesting equipment before the market value was set at \$1.006 million. So the official opposition is using conceptual market values for the equipment that are not realistic.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, the member indicated yesterday that the question was asked in written questions. I just point out to him that that question was not directed to me and was submitted and answered by government well before I was appointed to cabinet. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **Future of Weyerhaeuser Mill in Prince Albert**

**Mr. Wall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, there's another article in the P.A. [Prince Albert] *Herald* today. The headline — "Potential deal off." Calgary-based consultant takes deal off the table after minister's comments. In that article, the minister said this. He said, and I quote:

"I don't know what more we can do to offer him the support of this government."

Well let's see. He didn't return phone calls. He refused to deal proactively and aggressively on the cogeneration issue. He publicly insulted him. He accused the investors of wanting to scrap labour and environmental laws when that wasn't the truth. He misrepresented the letter from investors. I don't know what more he could have done, Mr. Speaker, maybe kick him in the shins, to make him feel welcome in the province of Saskatchewan.

How in the world does this government expect to grow a province when it puts that minister in charge of such an important file, important to jobs in the city of Prince Albert, important to the entire forest industry of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — There he goes again, Mr. Speaker, the master of selective quotations, no one better in this House

than he.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say this and I want to make this very clear. The mayor and the Leader of the Opposition have asked us to impose ourselves politically in the discussions and the negotiation process as it relates to determining a purchaser for the Weyerhaeuser assets. Mr. Speaker, I say they are wrong in calling for that. This is a deal that should be reached and arranged between Weyerhaeuser and who they select with respect to the assets. If Mr. Ekstrand can't qualify, I can't help that, sir.

I can tell you this. We have been clear, and let me say this one more time. We will be willing and ready to negotiate cogeneration on the Weyerhaeuser site as it relates to electrical energy. I've said that in writing. I told that to the mayor last night, and I'm telling the leader of the Saskatchewan . . .

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

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

#### **Final Report of the Business Tax Review Committee**

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to accept the business tax review committee's final report on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan this morning.

The report was presented to me by BTRC members Professor Jack Vicq, Charlie Baldock and Cheryl Shepherd. It contains their recommendations on reforming the province's business tax system. Mr. Speaker, the members of this committee have completed a great deal of work in a very short period of time.

We appointed the business tax review committee this spring to see if our business tax system could be made more competitive in an affordable and sustainable manner. Our province is currently performing well economically, Mr. Speaker. Total employment is up over 5,000 jobs in the first 10 months of 2005, and just recently I presented the mid-year report that detailed a strong financial outlook for the province.

This economic and fiscal strength has permitted our government the means to invest substantially in our future, Mr. Speaker. Investments such as the \$100 million in the academic health science centre, \$60 million in northern roads, and a further permanent debt reduction of \$76 million — Mr. Speaker, these investments are critical to developing our economy.

The work completed by the business tax review committee is a further investment in our future. We know that we must continue to reform our tax system to remain competitive so that our present economic momentum continues.

Mr. Speaker, the work of this committee builds on the very successful personal income tax reform process undertaken in 1999 that led to the largest personal income tax reduction in the province's history. Those changes have left us with the

third-lowest marginal personal tax rate in Canada. The work of this committee also builds on other business tax changes we have made over the years such as reforming the tax structure of the manufacturing and processing sector. Since then Saskatchewan has witnessed significant growth in the value of manufacturing and processing shipments exceeding the national average.

Mr. Speaker, I will begin reviewing this report immediately. After listening to Mr. Vicq's presentation this morning, it is evident this report contains both sound research and far-reaching recommendations. Clearly further improvements to our business tax structure can be made to encourage investment and growth. As this government stated in our Action Plan for the Economy in September, there can be no social progress without economic progress. It is important to continue to grow our economy, to encourage new investment, to create new jobs, and to build a solid future for Saskatchewan's young people.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, business tax reform is one of the next steps in this government's plan to grow Saskatchewan, and I want to again recognize the BTRC members for their participation in this process. Thank you for your hard work and commitment. Our government will carefully consider the committee's recommendations as we develop next year's budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the opposition critic of Finance, the member for Saskatoon Silver Springs.

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I again would like to join with the minister in thanking the members of the Vicq commission for all the work that they have done for the people of Saskatchewan. Jack Vicq, Charlie Baldock, and Cheryl Shepherd have done an excellent job, and they haven't held back, Mr. Speaker. They've been very direct. They've put timelines in place. And this is something that could guide this government into changing the way that they have done things over the last 15 years in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

When Mr. Vicq was asked this morning about whether the government . . . if he has confidence in this government implementing his plan, he said, and I quote, "They don't have a choice." That's the situation we are in, Mr. Speaker. Seeing our young people leave, seeing our job numbers go down, this government no longer has a choice. We can no longer be the highest tax regime in all of Canada and — as we learned this morning, Mr. Speaker — in all of the world, not even including property taxes.

It's time for a change, Mr. Speaker. It's time for a change of our tax regime, and I hope the government takes this seriously.

My concern, Mr. Speaker, and it started when I heard the minister speak this morning. And he said that he has to convince his colleagues, his cabinet colleagues and his caucus colleagues, on the implementation of the Vicq commission. Well, Mr. Speaker, we hope that he is more successful than he was with the Boughen Commission. Yes that report that we

heard not too long ago, that sits on a shelf somewhere. The PST was increased. But no, Mr. Speaker, no permanent tax relief for individuals.

Mr. Speaker, the business tax review commission is something that I took very seriously and that members on this side of the House took very seriously. We were very proud to make the first presentation to the business tax review commission back in May in Yorkton, to join with businesses, to join with labour unions, to join with corporations, to join with interested parties across the province to give this government a plan on how to change the way they've been operating, Mr. Speaker.

I am very pleased that the commission was listening not only to our presentation but to the other presentations. I have in front of me, Mr. Speaker, some of the highlights of what we presented to the Vicq commission and some of the recommendations that we have today. If you will, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to highlight some of them.

In our proposal on May 9 in Yorkton, we encouraged the government to eliminate the corporate capital tax on general and resource corporations. Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to say the Vicq commission recommendation . . . eliminate corporate capital tax on general and resource corporations.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party proposal said, reverse the NDP decision to impose the corporate capital tax to income trusts. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Vicq commission agreed that changes have to be made, and they said transfer the corporate capital tax on income trust to a royalty structure.

Also, Mr. Speaker, we were very clear in articulating that the corporate income tax rate had to change. Saskatchewan had a rate of 17 . . . or does today have a rate of 17 per cent — the highest in the country, Mr. Speaker. What message does that send to people across the province, across the country, about our tax system in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker? Does it say that we welcome business here? I think not. That's why we recommended that the corporate income tax go down from 17 per cent to 11.5 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

Well what did the Vicq commission do today? What did they recommend, Mr. Speaker? They indeed were listening. The Vicq commission said reduce corporate income tax rate from 17 per cent to 12 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we address some of the promises that the government made in the last election. The Premier, he didn't tell us that he was going to increase the PST. No, he said he was going to increase the tax exemption for small businesses from 300 to \$400,000. And we recommended that they reduce the rate as well.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Vicq commission has recommended that indeed this government keep their promise, increase small business tax to 400,000, and go beyond their promise to increase the small business exemption to 500,000 but maintain the rate at 5 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That's where we differ. We say the rate should go down to zero. But we're willing to accept the recommendations that have been put forward.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on. We were pleased to make

these representations, and we're pleased that the Vicq commission chose to listen to them and include them in their plan. We recommended that the commission consider Saskatchewan's current lack of balance in labour laws as a deterrent to new private sector investment, job creation, and economic growth. Here is what the Vicq commission had to say, Mr. Speaker: recognition that Saskatchewan's unbalanced labour environment is a deterrent to private sector investment, job creation, and economic growth — very true words indeed, Mr. Speaker.

We also recommended the commission consider the negative impact of Saskatchewan's high and uncompetitive property taxes on new private sector investment, job creation, and economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, the Vicq commission recognized that Saskatchewan's high property taxes are a deterrent to new private sector economic growth, job creation. But they weren't included in the mandate of the Vicq commission because the government opposite chose not to include that in their mandate, Mr. Speaker.

As I've indicated earlier, the time is now to look at the Vicq commission, to implement it as soon as possible. And make no mistake, Mr. Speaker. We have the financial wherewithal in this province at this very moment to implement the recommendations of the Vicq commission.

We've talked about, we've discussed the \$759 million phony-baloney Fiscal Stabilization Fund that we have in this province right now. Just in that fund alone, Mr. Speaker, we could implement the Vicq commission's recommendations right away.

Again, Mr. Speaker, as I outlined in question period, and the questions that I think Saskatchewan people will be asking themselves: does this government, does this minister and this government, this Premier, this cabinet, this NDP caucus, do they have the political courage, Mr. Speaker, to implement the Vicq commission report? I would suggest that they don't, Mr. Speaker. I don't . . . I would suggest that they don't.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Finance minister if he has the courage to challenge the Premier, the very Premier who campaigned against these types of recommendations in the election just over two years ago. Does this Finance minister, do the members opposite have the courage to challenge the Premier to reverse his ideas and to implement the Vicq commission? I say that they don't, Mr. Speaker, but time will tell. And we look . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Would the member bring his remarks to a conclusion.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — To make a ministerial statement, sir.

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

## Labour Market Development

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to announce to the Assembly today that yesterday afternoon I signed an agreement on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan with the federal government to secure \$109 million over the next five years for labour market development in this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Mr. Speaker, this agreement will provide investments to achieve the following goals: the expansion and enhancement of apprenticeship, labour market integration of recent immigrants, improvement of literacy and essential skills, workplace development skills, as well as money to assist Aboriginal Canadians to take their rightful place in Saskatchewan and Canada's economy, as well as assistance for others facing labour market barriers.

Mr. Speaker, our NDP government places a high priority on the issues around labour market development because a strong economy does need a strong workforce. Today we are fortunate that there are record numbers of people working in our province, and we are seeing tremendous growth in our oil and gas, manufacturing, mining, and IT [information technology] sectors. These sectors however need highly qualified, highly skilled workers to continue the momentum.

There is a great deal of focus around the country today on how it is we can make Canada a more competitive and productive nation. At the same time we are increasingly attentive to the issue of ensuring Saskatchewan maintains its place of prosperity within the federation. There is no doubt that one of the major contributors to our economic prosperity is a skilled labour force that can respond to the changing labour market needs and ensure the productivity and quality that we need to maintain a competitive place within the global economy. This agreement will help us provide business and industry with the skilled workers that they need to continue to drive the economic growth in our province.

The funding for this agreement comes as part of this year's federal budget as negotiated by federal NDP leader, Jack Layton. We are pleased that the federal government has agreed to fund this, and we think it supports the priorities of Saskatchewan people. I also want to say in particular that I want to thank my federal colleague, Belinda Stronach, for her leadership in seeing us through in terms of securing this agreement.

This agreement does build on the strength of the Premier's Action Plan for the Economy, and it supports the direction laid out in our recently announced training sector review. Mr. Speaker, it also aligns with our priorities in terms of ensuring all Saskatchewan people have the basic literacy and essential skills that they require to take full part within Saskatchewan's economy.

As we heard during the Premier's centennial summit at the start of this year, Saskatchewan's economy is growing at a rate that may soon outpace our ability to supply it with skilled labour. This agreement will help to ensure Saskatchewan people have

the skills that they need to take advantage of the many opportunities presented by our rapidly growing economy. At this time of unprecedented economic growth in Saskatchewan, this agreement will help us ensure that our current and future workers across this province have access to the right training at the right time right here at home.

Mr. Speaker, we are still waiting for the federal government to fulfill its commitment to Saskatchewan's university students as promised in that same federal budget. As you will know, that budget contained a commitment to reducing post-secondary tuition fees, which amounted to \$120 million for Saskatchewan students, over the next five years. Included in that 120 million was additional support for student financial assistance. To date the federal government has refused to negotiate with the province of Saskatchewan or any province in this federation to make good on that promise.

I want to encourage the federal government to continue with the path that they have shown through the Labour Market Development Agreement to negotiate with the provinces to keep their promises.

I want to again thank the federal minister for her work on this 109 million. I look forward to working with her in securing the next 120 million to support Saskatchewan students.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Elhard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to respond to the ministerial statement at this time and prior to my comments, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for a copy of his statement and for giving us a chance to review the contents of the statement.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to respond to this recent Labour Market Partnership Agreement signed between the federal government and provincial governments, including our own as was enunciated by the minister just a few minutes ago.

Given the importance of a well-qualified and well-trained workforce to our province's economy as we go forward, there's no question that \$109 million in funding from the federal government for workplace development, for the expansion of an apprenticeship program, and for assistance to those experiencing barriers to the workplace are very welcome dollars.

But, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the minister that labour force development is only half the equation when it comes to creating a vibrant and successful economy. The other half of the equation, Mr. Speaker, is creating a business climate in the province where investment is welcome, opportunity is encouraged, and barriers to growth and expansion have been removed. And, Mr. Speaker, we've heard something about that in comments from the Minister of Finance and from the critic for Finance just moments prior to our own minister's presentation here.

The Vicq commission has presented some of the very important directions that will help us achieve that kind of a vibrant economy. But despite what the minister has said about investing in workers, the fact is that Saskatchewan lost 6,200 between October last year and October this year. Remember, those are workers who have left this province during an unprecedented oil boom. If we can't retain workers during an oil boom in this province, Mr. Speaker, when will we retain them? And how can you invest in workers if they're leaving the province?

Mr. Speaker, you can't have a strong economy without investing in workers. There's no doubt about that. And that begins by retaining our young people right here by creating a positive economic environment. And, Mr. Speaker, that takes a plan. And that's why the Saskatchewan Party has an economic vision for our province that will build a strong foundation for economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, that plan is comprised of several different points. Number one, establishing a stable business climate that removes barriers to long-term, private-sector capital investment, economic growth, and job creation in both urban and rural parts of Saskatchewan.

Number two, implementing a personal and corporate tax structure that promotes and supports wealth creation and social sustainability for Saskatchewan families and businesses.

[14:45]

Number three, supporting the mass . . . I'm sorry, stopping the mass exodus of young people and families from Saskatchewan and retaining more of our young people after graduation.

Number four, maintaining public ownership of Saskatchewan's major Crown utilities, but have them focused on the provision of power, telecommunication services, natural gas transmission and distribution, and as well as insurance services to Saskatchewan families and businesses at the lowest possible cost. Get them focused on their primary objectives, encouraging economic development in key sectors where Saskatchewan has or could have a competitive advantage.

Number six, working in full partnership with First Nations. Respecting the treaties as the foundation for development of economic policies that achieve the shared goal of creating prosperity for all people in Saskatchewan.

Number seven, maximizing the potential of innovation as a primary economic driver in the new globalized knowledge economy.

Number eight, establish a one-stop service for businesses and investors interested in starting or expanding a business in Saskatchewan. And of course enhancing our labour market development through investment in post-secondary education, partnerships with businesses, and encouraging entrepreneurship.

Mr. Speaker, that is a plan. Unlike the minister who refers to his government's inaction plan for the economy, our plan will build a strong foundation for growth. Building a skilled labour force must be a priority.



We are pleased on this side of the House that the federal government has decided to contribute to the development of Saskatchewan's workforce and hope that this government will take the necessary action to create opportunities for these workers.

But, Mr. Speaker, just a word of caution before I conclude my comments today. The minister alluded to the fact that this \$109 million in funding was part of an agreement struck by the federal NDP Leader, Mr. Jack Layton, which was an attempt in the spring to prop up a desperate Liberal government. And in the interim months we have seen desperation turn to serious, serious desperation, in fact to the extent that the Liberals have promised \$18 billion in spending in the few days running up to what is expected to be the collapse of the government in the next few days.

So whether or not we ever see the \$109 million promised to this province as part of this agreement remains to be seen, Mr. Speaker. And I hope we haven't vested all of our interest on that particular investment in this province by the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### **Bill No. 20 — The Collective Bargaining Agreement Expiry Date Exception Act**

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

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 20, The Collective Bargaining Agreement Expiry Date Exemption Act, 2005 be now introduced and read for the first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Labour that Bill No. 20, The Collective Bargaining Agreement Expiry Date Exception Act be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — The motion is carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — First reading of this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — When shall the Bill be read a second time? The Chair recognizes the Minister of Labour.

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

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

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

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In order to accommodate the work of the policy field committees, I would move that the House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried. This House stands adjourned until 10 tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:49.]



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