



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

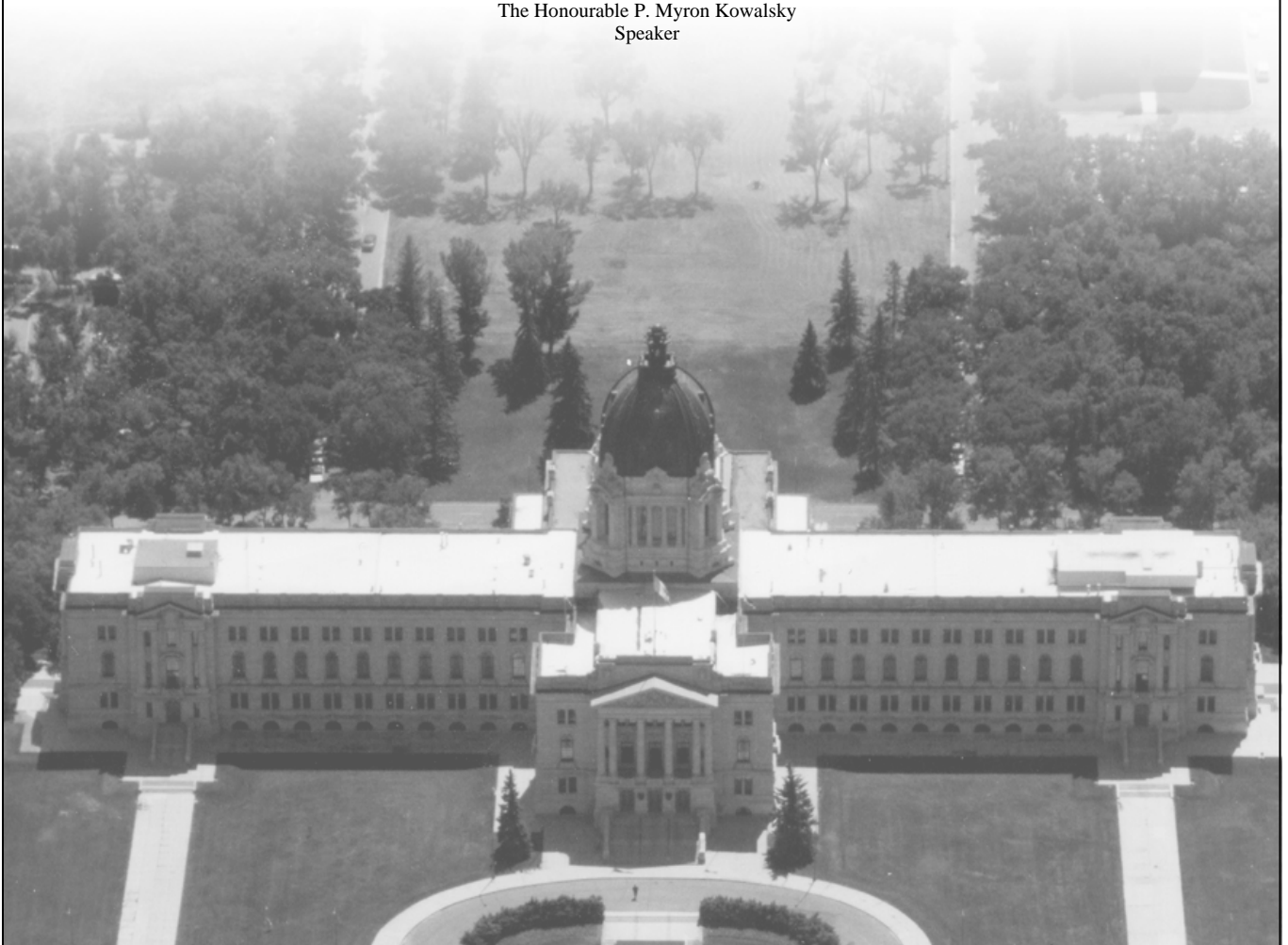
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**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
Beatty, Hon. Joan	NDP	Cumberland
Belanger, Hon. Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornrud, 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, Joanne	NDP	Regina Rosemont
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Dearborn, Jason	SP	Kindersley
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, Hon. David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Gantefoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
Hagel, Hon. 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
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, Hon. 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, 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
Vacant		Martensville

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's certainly a pleasure to present some more petitions to this Assembly on behalf of constituents in the province of Saskatchewan and in this case regarding a dialysis unit in the Broadview Union Hospital. And I read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to implement a strategy that will see a dialysis unit placed in Broadview Union Hospital.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petition I present today is signed by the good folks of Whitewood and Broadview. I so present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I present a petition again today on behalf of constituents of Cypress Hills concerning the highway condition in the area. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary actions to ensure that Highway 18 from Claydon to Robsart is repaved at the earliest possible time to ensure the safety of drivers in the area and so that economic development opportunities are not lost.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this page of petitions is signed by individuals from the community of Maple Creek. I so present.

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

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today on behalf of people who are very concerned about Highway No. 49. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause this government to repair Highway No. 49 in order to address safety concerns and to facilitate economic growth and tourism in Kelvington, Lintlaw, Preeceville, and surrounding areas.

The people who have signed this petition are from Preeceville and Endeavour

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition today to do with the government not funding the drug Avastin. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

The signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from the community of Carnduff.

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

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition signed by citizens concerned with the lack of funding for the cancer drug Avastin. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

This petition is signed by individuals from the city of Regina. I so present.

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

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I have several pages of a petition from citizens that are concerned about the access road to Bruno which happens to be on the very narrow 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 the Bruno access road off of Highway No. 5.

And the petition is signed, Mr. Speaker, by citizens from Bruno, Humboldt, and Winnipeg. I so present.

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

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again today I rise to present a petition on behalf of people from my constituency who are very concerned about the Estevan Daycare Co-operative. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to review the decision to deny the requested spaces for the Estevan Daycare Co-operative.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this is signed by folks from my constituency

in Estevan, and also by people from Carlyle and Kisbey. I so present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present another petition from citizens of Biggar:

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

As in duty bound, your petitioners ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens of Biggar, Sonningdale, and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition on behalf of people across Saskatchewan who are concerned that Saskatchewan does not have a dedicated children's hospital and increasingly they're having to take their children to Alberta for the care they need. The prayer of the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to implement an allocation of financial resources this year to build a children's hospital in Saskatoon.

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

The petitioners today come from the Willowgrove and Erindale areas of Saskatoon and the town of Vonda. I so present, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the Assembly today to bring forth a petition signed by citizens of Saskatchewan. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatures of this petition are from Grenfell and Regina. I so present.

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

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition on the Government of Saskatchewan to upgrade Highway 20 to primary weight status:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that Highway 20 be upgraded to primary weight status to ensure the economic viability in the surrounding areas.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

This particular petition is signed by the good citizens from Liberty and Nokomis. I so present.

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

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give a petition that the Saskatchewan government made a decision not to fund the cancer drug Avastin. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

This is from the good people of Oxbow, Carnduff, Gainsborough, and Kisbey. I so present.

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

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to rise again in the House today to present yet another petition regarding funding the drug Avastin. I will read the prayer for relief:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to fund the cancer drug Avastin.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens throughout Saskatchewan, and I am pleased to present it on their behalf. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm once again pleased to rise in the Assembly to present a petition on Highway 36. And the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to invest the needed money to repair and maintain Highway 36 so that it can return to being a safe and economical route for Saskatchewan families and businesses.

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

Mr. Speaker, today's petition is signed by the people of Coronach. I so present.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order petitions tabled at the last sitting have been reviewed and pursuant to Rule 15(7) are hereby read and received.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 11 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Investment Saskatchewan: how much money has Investment Saskatchewan given to Beauval Forest Industries or Northwest Communities Wood Products?

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I have another question. I give notice that I, day no. 11, ask the government the following questions:

To the Minister Responsible for Industry and Resources: to date how much money has the department given to Northwest Community Wood Products or Beauval Forest Industries?

And I have similar questions for the Minister Responsible for Northern Affairs and the Minister Responsible for Environment.

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

Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 11 ask the government the following question:

To the Premier: in the 2005-2006 fiscal year, how many nominations were received for the Saskatchewan Youth Award?

I also have a second question:

In 2005-2006 fiscal year, how many Saskatchewan people received the Saskatchewan Youth Award?

And I have similar questions for fiscal year 2006-2007.

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

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 11 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Finance: what was the original completion date of the Finance headquarters on College Avenue and Albert Street in Regina, and what is the new projected completion date of the same building?

Mr. Speaker, I have a second question. I give notice that on day no. 11 I'll ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Finance: what are the cost overruns of the Finance headquarters on College Avenue and Albert Street in Regina?

I so present, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — For introduction of guests, members, it is my pleasure today to introduce to you Ms. Melissa Bennett who is here in this Chamber for her first time. Melissa was appointed Legislative Librarian by the Board of Internal Economy on July 7, the year 2006.

Melissa began her library career in 1991 at the Saskatchewan Legislative Library and remained here for seven years before moving to the Provincial Library within Sask Learning, where her most recent position was director of library planning and administration. Ms. Bennett demonstrates a deep respect for the library as a knowledge institution that supports the parliamentary process. Melissa is looking forward to meeting with MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] from both caucuses to discuss the vision for the library.

With her today is her mother, Betty Bennett, and staff from the Legislative Library: Pat Kolesar, Leslie Polsom, Bette Desjarlais, Maria Swarbrick, and Kim Hagel. Members, would you please welcome Melissa Bennett to this Chamber.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Saskatchewan Federation of Labour Celebrates 50th Anniversary

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, a number of labour groups from across the province came together in the spirit of solidarity to represent the issues of the working people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 50th anniversary of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour.

Men and women from provincial, national, and international trade unions, as well as district labour councils, banded together to achieve a common goal — social justice. Today the federation represents over 93,500 members from 35 national and international unions. Their affiliate membership belongs to over 700 locals throughout Saskatchewan.

It is because of tireless work of groups like the SFL [Saskatchewan Federation of Labour] that the voice of labour is strong in our province. As a result, incidents like the Mosaic mine fire near Esterhazy can end without injury to workers. Because of the partnership between labour, management, and this NDP [New Democratic Party] government, all 72 miners escaped unharmed.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, what the fate of Saskatchewan's workers would be under a government that didn't respect their rights. For example, the Saskatchewan Party has referred to

occupational health and safety legislation as red tape and regulation. Perhaps they could explain to the federation what they would do for the labour climate in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite all members to join me in congratulating the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour for its first 50 years. May there be many more to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Order of Merit Recipients

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last evening I was pleased to join His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan and Her Honour, the Premier, Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, as well as numerous dignitaries and guests at the investiture of Saskatchewan's 2006 recipients Order of Merit ceremony.

As many people are aware, the Saskatchewan Award of Merit was established in 1985 as the province's highest distinction, and in 1988 the name was changed to Saskatchewan Order of Merit.

[10:15]

The Saskatchewan Order of Merit recognizes individual excellence and outstanding contributions to the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the province and its residents. The order highlights exceptional merit in such areas of endeavour as the arts, agriculture, business and industry, community leadership, occupations or professions, public service, research, sport and recreation, and community service.

Mr. Speaker, of the numerous names presented to the awards advisory committee, five names were brought forward to receive the Saskatchewan Order last evening. They are Mr. Calvin D. Abrahamson, Mrs. Anna G. Ingham, Dr. David L. Kaplan, Mr. Lester D. Lafond, and Dr. William A. Waiser who has a special connection to this Assembly as he happens to be the father of our research staffer, Jessica Paul.

Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the five members who this year were awarded the Saskatchewan Order of Merit.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Accomplishments of University of Saskatchewan Student

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to speak of the accomplishments of Kelly Paton, a young constituent of Saskatoon Sutherland currently attending the University of Saskatchewan. For the past three years Ms. Paton has been enrolled in the engineering physics program, a course of study in which students develop a thorough understanding of the fundamentals of physics and then apply

the knowledge to practical problems. Ms. Paton is also earning a bachelor's degree in math, volunteers for Engineers Without Borders, and Spectrum, the college's tri-annual exhibition to promote science and technology to the community.

For the last two summers, Ms. Paton has been awarded an undergraduate student research award from the Natural Sciences And Engineering Research Council and spent this past summer doing research at the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston where she worked testing parts for a prototype particle detector.

Mr. Speaker, Kelly Paton is an intelligent and gifted young woman. She's excelling in her chosen field and is an excellent example for other young women with similar aspirations. But my favourite point about Ms. Paton is this, Mr. Speaker. When asked about what she'd do after graduation she said, and I quote, "I want to be able to help people; that's my only criteria." Clearly, Mr. Speaker, Kelly Paton is a fine representative of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

High-Speed Internet Access in Northern Saskatchewan

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NDP recently started to follow through on its laudable goal of bringing high-speed Internet to northern schools. Typically however this tired, old, NDP government once again failed to do its homework before acting.

In May of this year, SaskTel was very proud to announce that a new wireless high-speed Internet tower had been constructed in Dore Lake. However someone failed to note that the school in Dore Lake had been closed in June 2005.

This could be forgiven in thinking that even if there was no longer a school operating to access this wireless high-speed Internet, that at least — at the very least — the residents of the area would be able to access the service. Unfortunately that has not been the case, Mr. Speaker. As residents as close as 3 kilometres from the tower have been unable to gain access.

One can only hope that in the future this tired, old NDP government will pay a little more attention to the schools that it's closing when it's deciding which schools are in line to receive high-speed wireless Internet access.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

SaskEnergy Provides Natural Gas Commodity Services to Lloydminster

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday SaskEnergy started providing natural gas commodity service to residents and businesses on the Saskatchewan side of Lloydminster. Due to its continued public interest, SaskEnergy officials began

discussions with Lloydminster mayor, Ken Baker, and city manager, Roger Brekko, and other city officials in November last year regarding the possibility of service.

Mr. Speaker, SaskEnergy had been working since early spring of this year to make the project a reality. It was estimated at the time SaskEnergy would need at least 250 customers to be able to acquire gas in a practical and economically feasible manner for this market. Well, Mr. Speaker, over 500 people attended an open house held in Lloydminster June 6. And over 900 letters and contracts were sent out in August to residential and business customers who had expressed an interest in this service.

As a result, as of October 26 there were 780 residents and 23 businesses who have signed contracts, and they began being customers of SaskEnergy effective yesterday, November 1. That represents more than one-third of the potential customers in the city of Lloydminster.

I want to particularly commend Mayor Ken Baker; Beechy product and now city manager, Roger Brekko; and his city officials and SaskEnergy officials for working together to make this a reality for the residents and businesses of Lloydminster.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Plans and Ideas for the Future

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday to a packed audience at the Regina Chamber of Commerce, the Leader of the Official Opposition unveiled the Saskatchewan Party's plan to address the NDP-created labour shortage crisis in our province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Huyghebaert: — It should not come as any surprise to the people of Saskatchewan that when it comes to new ideas, it is the Saskatchewan Party that is out in front, and that tired, worn-out NDP government is left trailing behind. By the Minister of Industry's own admission, there are 10 to 15,000 job vacancies in this province. Yet last year we lost over 4,500 people. Imagine the potential boom in this province if we had a government with a plan to fill those vacancies. Imagine the number of happy families if Saskatchewan had a real plan to retain our young people and build a future for them here.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan just don't have to imagine any more. They can visit our website. Instead of more NDP studies and committees, the Saskatchewan Party plan is about action; tax incentives; more money to CBOs [community-based organization] and food banks; building a better future for First Nations people; long-term funding increases for post-secondary institutions; a plan to retain our youth and increase immigration; and finally, Mr. Speaker, a commitment by a Saskatchewan Party government to end mandatory retirement and allow people over 65 the right to work.

But we know that every time the opposition puts forward new ideas, that tired, old, worn-out NDP government that ran out of ideas long time ago steals our ideas. Yesterday it didn't take more than an hour that they were agreeing with us on mandatory retirement. Mr. Speaker, it just proves that there's one party in this province with the ideas and the vision for the future, and it's not the NDP.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Saskatchewan Party's Attitude

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, good news for Saskatchewan really is bad news for the Saskatchewan Party. That's why they take every opportunity to run this province down. We read a list of good news headlines, and the next thing you know the masters of doom and gloom over there are up on their feet rattling off any and every negative news story they can find. The nattering nabobs of negativity is what they are and all they are, Mr. Speaker, but at least they're consistent.

When a young person writes a letter questioning whether or not to move here, the Leader of the Opposition tells them all the things he sees wrong with the province. To quote the member from Thunder Creek, "Saskatchewan is in a death spiral." To quote the member from Silver Springs, "We are left in the dust by every jurisdiction." This is what they broadcast to the people of Saskatchewan and beyond, Mr. Speaker, day in, day out — non-stop negativity.

And they like to say that Saskatchewan needs a new brand, Mr. Speaker. Well I would ask members to remember what happened to Coca-Cola, one of the largest corporations in the world, when they decided to change brands, and they released a new brand, Mr. Speaker, the notion of New Coke. The new brand was rejected, Mr. Speaker. And why? For the same reason that the Sask Party will be rejected — because they're just too bitter.

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

Minister's Responsibility for Children At Risk

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning the Children's Advocate appeared on radio. This independent officer of the legislature had this to say about the minister's performance on the safe house file. And I quote:

Why is he asking me to act as a substitute parent? Why doesn't he exercise his responsibility as the parent?

Mr. Speaker, it's clear that the minister has failed in his responsibility as a parent to these children. To the Premier: will he fire this incompetent minister?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, we have today in the province of Saskatchewan a minister of the Department of Community Resources who is deeply concerned about children in our province, deeply concerned particularly about the children who are being abused on our streets. Of that, Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely sure.

Mr. Speaker, I am equally sure that the minister has a focus. That focus is on those children and making life better for those children. That focus is to take the advice of the Children's Advocate. That focus is to deal specifically with issues around Oyate.

But number three, Mr. Speaker, that focus is to look at this issue in a broader context, to look at all that needs to be done to protect the children of Saskatchewan. This minister, Mr. Speaker, has a focus on making life better for those children because they too are part of today's Saskatchewan family. And for that reason, I have no reason, no reason not to support the continued work of this minister.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly that the minister has a focus, and his focus is his own political agenda.

The Children's Advocate is also concerned that the minister is using the safe house report as a prop. He said the minister clearly doesn't understand that report. And I quote:

I'm concerned. It's not only a misunderstanding. It's a misrepresentation of the facts and a misrepresentation of my role.

Mr. Speaker, why is this government allowing a minister to misrepresent the facts on this file?

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

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that I fully respect the role of the Children's Advocate. It is our government that put the Office of the Children's Advocate in place. And, Mr. Speaker, not only did the committee — which our members hold a majority on — agree to have the Children's Advocate and the Provincial Auditor look at Oyate. Because that's where the problems began when we started talking about Oyate is to make sure that people were aware what was going on and what the solutions were. We engaged the provincial advocate and the auditor.

And, Mr. Speaker, the advocate didn't only look at Oyate. He also looked at the department and the systemic challenges that our department had. And, Mr. Speaker, we fully accept that and, Mr. Speaker, again I'll reiterate that we have recommendations that we intend to follow. We respect the office of the Children's

Advocate, and we fully intend to use some of his advice which I agree with. But ultimately I am responsible. We will make the correct choice. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not the Children's Advocate's responsibility. It's that minister's responsibility and it's time he started doing it. Mr. Speaker, the Children's Advocate is frustrated with this minister and so are the people of Saskatchewan. The minister is not giving answers. He's not reading his own briefing notes. He's ignoring his department's own advice on the future of the safe house and he's not explaining his bizarre decisions. The minister has failed utterly on this issue. He's failed the most vulnerable children in our province. Mr. Speaker, when will the Premier fire this incompetent minister?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, what I have in front of me as a minister — and I'll point to that member once again — and this is a recommendation on page 37 of the provincial Children's Advocate in which we're talking about one of the points that he raised when he talked about, and I quote:

Recommendation SYS.14(06)

That the Department of Community Resources and Oyate establish a collaborative partnership process within 60 days of the date of issue of this report, to develop a shared vision and common service delivery principles for Oyate.

And for me it's black and white. I think the advice that we said we were going to listen to was the Children's Advocate. We were not going to listen to your advice. And all you're doing is bringing as much politics as you can out here in your quest for power.

The Speaker: — Order. I remind the member to direct his remarks through the Chair.

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I'll point out, I'll point out that this is an official document that the Assembly received from an independent officer, Mr. Speaker. And again the advice is clear. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

[10:30]

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. He should also take the advice of his own department. The Children's Advocate chose these words to describe the minister's handling

of the safe house file: “total inconsistency.”

This government has no problems rejecting all kind of recommendations before. Now the minister says he’s bound by this report. The Children’s Advocate says that’s not true, Mr. Speaker. Why does . . . the Premier explain this inconsistency.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, what is really important is that this is the minister’s decision. I will decide if and when to shut down Oyate or to continue to move forward. My primary responsibility is the well-being of the children. And when we ask for advice from really solid organizations and offices, such as the Children’s Advocate’s office, we intend to heed that advice and listen to that advice.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would point out, thank goodness for many of the other folks that are supporting the minister in trying to care for some of these children, and many other children, because we have a great CBO sector. We have many groups that are really active in the community. We have the Office of the Children’s Advocate. We have our staff with the minister’s office. There’s a myriad of support mechanisms out there for families and for children.

Thank goodness we have these processes in place, and that’s why I point out again, I respect the office of the Children’s Advocate. We will deal with the report, which is black and white; it says this is what we need to do to resolve some of the issues. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, he continued to use the report as a prop instead of doing his job and looking after the safety of these children.

Mr. Speaker, the Children’s Advocate says we don’t even know if these kids are safe. The Children’s Advocate says that.

What we’ve seen this week is the height of hypocrisy. Here we have an NDP government that always claims to be defenders of the poor and the weak, and now we have the minister cutting these children loose without care. His behaviour flies in the face of what his party stands for. This minister stands for nothing beyond his own political survival. Mr. Speaker, how can the Premier continue to allow this to go on?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, the last lesson that I need of poverty is from that member, Mr. Speaker. I come from an area where I see poverty every day. And we start talking about

hypocrisy, I’d say to the gentleman across the way, maybe he should get a big, fat mirror here and have a look at himself.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the most important thing that I would point out is that we’re trying to find some solutions. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, what is really important is that we’re making good progress with this government. We’re the ones that set up the Office of the Children’s Advocate. We’re the ones that are going to respond to the recommendations of the all-party committee, and we’re the ones . . .

The Speaker: — Order please, order. Order. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Community Resources.

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — And the reason why, Mr. Speaker, I accuse the opposition of playing politics of this game because obviously we have said on many occasions that the children that were formerly at Oyate and those that may be sexually exploited, there is a support mechanism in place for them. They are at Ranch Ehrlo. We’ve said that many, many times. And, Mr. Speaker, we’re going to build on that success.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Supply of Radiologists in Prince Albert

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Ian Waddell was the last radiologist to leave the Prince Albert Victoria Hospital. In 2003, radiologist Dr. Holly Wells left Prince Albert. At that time Dr. Waddell made his concerns about staffing shortage public in a letter to the editor of the *Prince Albert Daily Herald* dated November 5, 2003. Mr. Speaker, I need to stress that date — November 5, 2003. That’s three years ago, Mr. Speaker.

This NDP government has sat back as radiologists were experiencing unpleasant working conditions and stressful schedules in the Prince Albert area. Three years ago this government knew of a shortage of radiologists in Prince Albert and did absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker. And as a consequence, people in the Prince Albert area’s health has been jeopardized. When will he do his job and start attracting radiologists to the Prince Albert area?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite indicated that the good doctor had left Prince Albert and I do not believe that was the case — another misrepresentation of the facts in the health system, Mr. Speaker. She has, I believe, left the hospital and gone to work in private practice. Mr. Speaker, she is still doing very good work for patients and people in the province.

Mr. Speaker, there are stresses on the system throughout Saskatchewan, throughout Canada, and the regional health authorities — in which I have complete confidence, Mr. Speaker — are taking actions to provide services that will in

fact provide benefit to Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, there are stresses in the Prince Albert system today. Interim measures have been put in place, **Mr. Speaker,** while recruiting efforts are continuing. **Mr. Speaker,** I have confidence that the interim measures will provide assistance . . .

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, **Mr. Speaker.** Yesterday Prince Albert's chief surgeon, Randy Friesen, said that this is unprecedented for a hospital this size in Canada. He went on to say that his patients' safety was a concern to him, and I quote, "I'm not prepared to have my patients take these kind of chances."

Mr. Speaker, somebody's lives are at risk because this government hasn't acted in the last three years on the shortage of radiologists in Prince Albert, **Mr. Speaker.** When will this minister start recruiting radiologists to the Prince Albert area, but health care professionals throughout this province so we don't see more people leaving the public system to operate in the private system, **Mr. Speaker?**

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, **Mr. Speaker.** One week ago this Chamber began its session, **Mr. Speaker.** And on the morning of Thursday one week ago, **Mr. Speaker,** we had a representation, the prorogation speech in which we took a look at what's happening in this fiscal year, **Mr. Speaker.**

This year's budget . . . or this year's Throne Speech, **Mr. Speaker,** back a year ago, announced a new recruitment agency for the province of Saskatchewan which we funded, implemented, and is now in place.

Mr. Speaker, that Throne Speech indicated greater support for health care in this province. And in the budget in March, **Mr. Speaker,** for this current year, we have record commitments to financial resources into the health care field. **Mr. Speaker,** it said we would concentrate on recruitment and retention and we put into place an extra \$25 million this year for recruitment and retention.

Mr. Speaker, a year ago we announced intentions and over the years . . .

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Fees for Cancer Patients

Mr. Morgan: — **Mr. Speaker,** when it comes to cancer treatment in Saskatchewan we know the NDP government has failed to fund Avastin, the standard of care for colorectal cancer. And while they haven't done this, I'll tell you what they have done. They've started nickel and diming cancer patients. It's not enough that Terry Rak of Saskatoon has already spent \$40,000 of his own money on Avastin. Now he's being asked to jump through more administrative hoops to pay for copies of his own test results.

The Saskatchewan Cancer Agency used to provide these free to cancer patients but now forms have to be filled out, fees paid out, other lineups gone through, and forms mailed out weeks later. Will the minister quit nickel and diming cancer patients and get rid of this offensive policy?

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, **Mr. Speaker.** Done.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Names for Political Parties

Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Thank you, **Mr. Speaker.** My question is, my question is for the Premier. We know things are going very badly for the governing party, **Mr. Speaker.** We've known this for some time; the by-election in Weyburn-Big Muddy demonstrated it. But just how badly it's going maybe is evidenced more today in the newspapers of the province because we find out that the NDP, **Mr. Speaker,** the New Democratic Party is considering — what now? — a name change, **Mr. Speaker.** They're considering the prospect of changing their name. And you know who's in favour of it? Why the Minister of Industry is in favour of it. The same minister that pulled muscles opposing our notion that the province needs a rebranding.

My question to the Premier is this: is it that bad? Is their polling that bad? Are they that low in the polls and in public support that they're now looking at changing their name, **Mr. Speaker?**

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — **Mr. Speaker,** now this invites a variety of comment. But first of all let me tell you about some of the polls that I'm interested in. The poll that tells me there's 105,000 young people working in this province, the largest number that we've ever seen.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — A poll that tells me the major financial predictors of this country, including the Toronto Dominion Bank and the Canadian Bank of Commerce and so on, saying

that our growth levels are going to set record highs. That's the kind of information I'm interested in, Mr. Speaker.

But for that leader to stand up and talk about a party name change, well if there was ever a pot calling a kettle black, this is it. I mean that's the group of conservatives that had no alternative, no alternative but to change their name to hide from their record. That's exactly what they did. Everybody knows that, everybody sees through it. They offered a few treats so the few Liberals would join them. The Liberals soon found out it's a conservative party — no it's a reformed conservative party and they had to get a new name to hide from their history, Mr. Speaker. You want to talk about names, I'll talk about names.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — It would be a lot easier to take the Premier seriously if his own front bench cabinet minister wasn't saying in today's paper that they're considering changing their name, Mr. Speaker. This is amazing. Mr. Speaker, we're getting used to the NDP stealing stuff from the party. They steal our ideas and that's fine. We're here to offer them to the province. As late as yesterday they stole mandatory retirement from us when we raised it yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, now we hear the Minister of Industry say it's not fair that we have Saskatchewan in our name. You know my daughter would say waah, waah, someone call the waah-ambulance, I think is what my daughter would say to that minister.

So they want to steal our policies, they want to steal our name. Does the minister need some pens or some paper maybe we could send over, Mr. Speaker? The question to the Premier is this, why is he running from his record and does he honestly think, does he honestly think changing his name will help that moribund governing party opposite?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, this is just too easy. He wants to talk about running from your record. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, you can turn up any website around that has my biography on it and you will find out what I was doing in the 1980s. I was a proud member of the New Democratic Party working in this legislature. That's what I was doing in the 1980s. I sat over there as a member of the opposition and I sat over here as part of the government, Mr. Speaker.

Now I tell you, you just want to turn up the website of the Leader of the Opposition, check out what he was doing in the 1980s. If you want to run from your record, there's a great big gap — there's a great big gap. He doesn't want to talk about the fact that, when I and a number of the colleagues here came around as young members of this legislature, what did we find? Another young person running around this building at that time. I think his name was Mr. Brad Wall. That's what I think his name was. He was working all over the building, Mr. Speaker.

Now if you want to run from your record . . . Mr. Speaker, I'll stand on any platform in this province, in any forum of debate and stand firm on the record of this government under the leadership of the former premier and under my leadership on any platform . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I want to remind the Premier about . . . Order. On a point of order, I want to remind the Premier about the use of a member's name. We are to refer to members in the Assembly by their title or by their constituency.

The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can't believe that the NDP government is out of touch with youth, what with the leader of the party, the Premier, encouraging them to dial up their websites or to turn up the websites. We hear about it over and over again in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I read through the Minister of Industry's complete admission of failure in the paper today. Here's what he said, here's what the Minister of Industry said, he said, "I don't think any political party should claim to represent all of Saskatchewan . . ." Oh is that right, Mr. Speaker — oh is that right? I wonder what parts of Saskatchewan they choose not to represent, Mr. Speaker.

We work hard to represent the entire province, even though some don't vote for us. So what parts of Saskatchewan does the Premier's party not want to represent? Is it rural Saskatchewan? Is it cancer victims like Terry Rak? Mr. Speaker, is it vulnerable children who are supposed to be cared for by the most incompetent minister of Social Services this province has ever seen? Who is it in the province the Premier's not interested in representing, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:45]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Very telling happening here. Yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition made some great fanfare about his plan to deal with labour market mobility. The very next day in the legislature, he doesn't want to talk about that. No, he wants to talk about resolutions that are coming to the New Democratic Party convention, about name changes, and so on.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be very interested to talk about a strategy for labour market development; to talk about a strategy that's outlined in the Throne Speech to build the capacity of our young people for their future in this province. I'll be very interested to debate in this Chamber making life better for today's Saskatchewan families. That's what we're here to do.

Because you see, Mr. Speaker, they'll do anything to deflect from their record. They'll do even more to deflect from their lack of policy and future planning for the province of Saskatchewan. Let's debate some substantive issues in here. And let's get a leader over there who for once would debate

some substantive issues.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we understand the NDP's problem in terms of their name. They're not new; they're not very democratic; and based on the grim look from the member for Regina Dewdney, it's not much of a party over there either, Mr. Speaker. So they need a new name. They need a new name.

Mr. Speaker, as always, the Saskatchewan Party is here to help the government. As always, we're prepared to help them out in this quest for a new name. That's why today we're launching a new contest, Mr. Speaker. The contest is in order to help the NDP rename themselves. They just have to go to our website, our . . . they can tune in, dial up our website and they can find out a little bit about our name.

We already have some submissions for their name because everywhere we go, Mr. Speaker, you'd be surprised how creative people are in terms of what they call that governing party opposite. There's many new names. There's the . . . We've seen it already with Highway 368, on signs; the no darn pavement, the new destruction party, new democratic potholes. There's any number of suggestions out there.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier take this latest offer of help from the Sask Party? We're prepared to help him rename his tired, old party, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, it's great that we're here in the legislature debating the names of our political parties because, I'm told, on the website of the Saskatchewan Party, it says, it says Saskatchewan's conservative party.

Now they've renamed themselves all right, but they can't hide from that history. Now they even put it on their website. What we have in Saskatchewan today is the old, the old Conservative Party that we knew about in the 1980s. And now we have a party across the way that's proving themselves, on a daily basis, to be nothing more than apologists for the federal Conservative Party.

Every day we're finding this group over here wanting to apologize for their friends in Ottawa as they destroy the Canadian Wheat Board, as they cut literacy, as they don't stand with the softwood producers of Canada, and on and on it goes.

So, you know, I prefer to debate policy and I prefer to debate philosophy, but today they want to debate the name of a party. Well their name is clear now. It's the Saskatchewan conservative party.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the

Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Industry says they need a new name. The Premier hasn't denied it. He may think that party over there needs a new name. In about a year, in about a year from now they will have a new name, Mr. Speaker. They will be the official opposition party.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Maybe, maybe, maybe. Either that or the third party. We're not sure. The point is this, Mr. Speaker, the point is this. Today and for the last number of days, the member for Northwest has raised . . .

The Speaker: — Thank you. Please continue.

Mr. Wall: — You know, Mr. Speaker, for the last number of days . . . Here's why they're searching. Here's why they're desperate. For the last number of days, the member from Northwest has raised and made a compelling case that that minister of DCRE [Department of Community Resources and Employment] has let down the most vulnerable children in our province. He doesn't know his file. He's not familiar with this most pressing issue before him. He doesn't seem to have a clue, Mr. Speaker, and he's more interested in politics, Mr. Speaker, than he is in the vulnerable children that are under his care. Mr. Speaker, that's why the NDP is desperate. That's why . . .

But you know what, Mr. Speaker? They shouldn't just be worried about politics. They ought to worry about the issues. So if the Premier is really serious about doing the right thing, why won't he let this province have a say in who the governing party actually is? Why won't he call an election in the province?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, let me say this to you and to the people of Saskatchewan. This government, Mr. Speaker . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Let me say this to you, Mr. Speaker, and through you to the people of Saskatchewan, through this Chamber to the people of Saskatchewan. This government is serious. This government is serious about making life better for Saskatchewan families. This government is serious about building a better future here for our young people. And this government and this minister particularly is extremely serious about making life better for the children of Saskatchewan, children some of whom are being exploited sexually on our streets. We are extremely serious about that, Mr. Speaker.

Now the Leader of the Opposition stood in his place and one more time he made a promise. He made that promise again — that come the next election, that we would be the official opposition. You know what, Mr. Speaker? I think I've heard that promise before five elections and just like every conservative, they don't keep their promises.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Changes to Taxes

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to stand in the legislature again today to announce further changes to strengthen our economy and make this an even better place to live, to work, and to raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, today we are in a period of sustained economic growth and prosperity. Our economy has never been stronger. Our businesses, families, and communities are all benefiting from the changes and from the prosperity we're seeing.

Mr. Speaker, it is worth noting that under the leadership of this Premier, we've undertaken significant changes to simplify and reduce personal income taxes. We've reduced oil and gas royalties to stimulate investment. We've restructured potash and uranium royalties to stimulate production. We've cut the corporate income taxes and corporate capital taxes. We have cut farm property taxes, and we have cut the PST [provincial sales tax] to 5 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, today we will do more. I want to advise the Assembly that on Tuesday, the cabinet approved a series of changes to make our business climate even more competitive. We will do this by introducing changes to the dividend tax credit and by reducing the small-business tax rate.

It's worth noting that when business income is distributed to shareholders in the form of dividends, this income is subject to both corporate tax and personal income tax. The dividend tax credit change will ensure that business income is not any longer subject to double taxation. It will also ensure that this income is taxed at rates similar to other forms of personal income.

As such, I'm pleased to announce that we are establishing a new dividend tax credit rate of 11 per cent for dividends received from larger corporations. This change is effective for the 2006 taxation year. It means that Saskatchewan has now integrated the changes that were introduced by the federal government this spring.

We are also decreasing the small-business dividend tax credit from 8 to 6 per cent to reflect reductions in the business corporate income tax rate introduced by our government. This change is effective for the 2007 taxation year.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to announce that effective January 1, 2007, we are further reducing the corporate income tax rate for small businesses from five to four and a half per cent. By cutting small-business taxes, we are providing further incentive for people to invest and do business in our province.

This change, in fact these changes build on the business tax cuts we've introduced in the 2006 budget and the 2 per cent PST cut we announced last week. By doing so, we are further strengthening our position as one of the most competitive

business environments in Canada.

It's worth noting, Mr. Speaker, that since this Premier took office, we have made unprecedented strides in reducing tax levels in this province. Under his tenure, we have cut the small-business tax rate nearly in half, from eight per cent to four and a half per cent, which is what this announcement reflects today.

It's also worth noting that we've made changes to the small-business threshold, that I announced in the spring's budget, to allow it to rise from \$300,000 to \$500,000 to recognize that small businesses are growing in this province.

This is all good news, Mr. Speaker. It promotes equity in taxation, and it encourages investment here in Saskatchewan business. Mr. Speaker, together we are building a better future for Saskatchewan and in so doing, we are making life better for ordinary Saskatchewan families. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to respond to the minister's statement. Three years ago when I first took my chair in this Legislative Assembly, we talked about the need for competitiveness in the Saskatchewan economy. Mr. Speaker, not only did we talk about it; we did something about it.

Members on this side of the House, members across the province that belong to the Saskatchewan Party put a proposal together towards the Vicq commission. We talked about the need for competitiveness in this province, Mr. Speaker. It's a need that small businesses, large businesses have articulated across this province. They want to be competitive. They want a government that gets out of the way and lets them do what they do best — create jobs and work on this economy.

Mr. Speaker, we're pleased today to hear that the government is finally getting the message, that they're working towards making this place a more competitive place to do business. It's long overdue. A government that's best before date has long expired, Mr. Speaker, I would say it's about time that they're doing this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 2 — The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2006

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

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — I'm pleased to move Bill No. 2, The Provincial . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. Order. Order please. Order please. We'll just have to start over, here. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very happy to say this again and again and again. I'm very happy to move introduction of Bill No. 2, The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2006.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 2, The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2006 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 this Bill be read a second time? The Chair recognizes the minister.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 8 — The Paramedics Act

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 8, The Paramedics Act be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 8, The Paramedics 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: — 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.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Mr. Speaker, at the next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 10 — The Limitations Amendment Act, 2006

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 10, The Limitations Amendment Act, 2006 be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 10, The Limitations Amendment Act, 2006 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.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 11 — The International Interests in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act/Loi sur les garanties internationales portant sur des matériels d'équipement aéronautiques mobiles

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 11, The International Interests in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act/Loi sur les garanties internationales portant sur des matériels d'équipement aéronautiques mobiles be now introduced and read a first time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 11, The International Interests in Mobile Aircraft Equipment 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: — 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.

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 13 — The SaskEnergy Amendment Act, 2006

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

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to move first reading of The SaskEnergy Amendment Act, 2006.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 13, The SaskEnergy Amendment Act, 2006 be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be read a second time?
The Chair recognizes the minister.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

[11:00]

**Bill No. 14 — The Environmental Management
and Protection Amendment Act, 2006**

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

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 14, The Environmental Management and Protection Amendment Act, 2006 be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of the Environment that Bill No. 14, The Environmental Management and Protection Amendment Act, 2006 be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

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 Mr. Trew, seconded by Ms. Hamilton, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Duncan.]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of the Environment, the member for Regina Lakeview.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue with my remarks and we have another day today of evidence of a opposition party suffering from post-Throne Speech traumatic stress syndrome. The first day that they heard the speech last week and then they started understanding what it meant as the days followed, we saw a lot of silence. But now things are starting to pop up all over the place and they're looking at very

many different things than what this Throne Speech is about.

Mr. Speaker, I had a chance to talk yesterday for a little while about what it means to be a person who is concerned about the future and where that future is going to take us. Today all I want to do is quote one part from the Throne Speech and conclude with a poem written by our first Poet Laureate, Glen Sorestad, about the feeling and the emphasis that we, as the New Democrats, have for what it's going to be for our children and our grandchildren and their children and their grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, in the Throne Speech we said that:

All efforts in environmental protection will contribute to our goal of making life better for today's families and help to build a better future here for our young people.

And, Mr. Speaker, we can do that in many ways that relates to the economy. It relates to how we protect the land that we have. It relates to how we build the agricultural economy. It relates to our education system and how we educate everybody to make sure that they're ready for living here in this community and in our country.

But I thought that it was appropriate to read one of Glen Sorestad's poems which doesn't talk about all that, but it gives an emphasis about what it means to have three generations working together. This is called "A Fishing Story" and it's from his *Leaving Holds Me Here*, which was his book of poems that was put together the year that he was named the Poet Laureate.

A Fishing Story

We three stand side by side
along the sandy shore of the river,
fishing rods in hand —
my eldest son, my grandson,
not yet five, and me.
We cast our lures into the water.
Though the youngest has not
yet mastered the casting skills
he, too, is fisherman this day.

His lack of skill does not matter
because he is here with us and we
are three generations of fishermen
here on the pretext of fish.

In truth we have come to share:
this splendid water colour sunset,
two grebes diving and resurfacing
just beyond our casts, but most of all
this time together, the three of us.

And I wonder: will my grandson
remember this, years from now when
he has grandsons of his own? Will he
recall with pleasure some moment past
when he was one of three generations,
three anglers in the fading light
waiting for a fish to strike?

Madam Deputy Speaker, it's this kind of story that our artists,

our writers portray about what it means to live in Saskatchewan, which is really the impetus that leads this government to make plans not for 10 years or 20 years but for 50 years, and especially as we work as it relates to our green strategy and our green economy. It's about these kinds of stories that we want to make sure that future generations can have the same opportunities, the same chance. And, Mr. Speaker, we will work very hard to do that. And with that, I reiterate my resolve to vote in favour of the Throne Speech in support of the government agenda. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Madam Speaker. And it's a privilege to rise and speak on the debate arising from the Speech from the Throne.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, I was not able to be in the House for the first couple of days of this sitting. And so I'd like to take this opportunity to just mention my appreciation, as have many other members, for my friend and former colleague, the member for Martensville, Ben Heppner, who passed away just prior to the session. Ben Heppner was a true friend of mine. Ben Heppner was a man that I loved to work with; I loved to have conversation with. And I appreciated him for his many strengths and his resolve to make Saskatchewan a better province. And so along with Gail we do want to express our prayers and best wishes to Arlene and the children and the many people who loved our colleague, Ben Heppner.

Also I want to take this opportunity on a more happy note to congratulate the new member for Weyburn-Big Muddy. Madam Speaker, an interesting thing happened during that by-election. For the first time in my life — and I have been involved in a lot of elections — I actually got to sit at a poll when the votes were counted. I had never, ever done that before. And I have to tell you I was sitting beside an older gentleman who was representing the NDP, quite an elderly gentleman, but he seemed to be fairly focused on his job as a scrutineer. And then a Liberal was sitting on the other side of me and the Liberal was quite chatty so we had a nice little visit.

So I didn't think too much about this NDP scrutineer that was scrutineering for my colleague, the winner in the Big Muddy by-election, until he got up to leave. And it blew me over because he reached down on the floor — and I had no idea — he reached down on the floor and he put on a cap, a farmer's cap, to leave the hall. And his farmer's cap said WIT, Weyburn Inland Terminal.

And I thought, isn't that funny. An NDP scrutineer scrutineering in Tommy Douglas's riding and promoting the entity probably that most has called for dual marketing and changes to the Canadian Wheat Board. And I thought, well this is really in two ways showing the change of times here in the province of Saskatchewan. It's showing that the former seat of Tommy Douglas was overwhelmingly won by a Saskatchewan Party candidate where the NDP came in not second but third — and a distant third, Madam Speaker.

So I want to congratulate the new member for Weyburn-Big Muddy on an excellent campaign. It's going to be a real privilege to work with him. I have already been impressed with his ability and I know that the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy will be served well by the member.

And the third person I want to acknowledge today is the Clerk of the legislature who announced that she will be stepping down after 32 years of service to the legislature. I want to express my appreciation for the service to the province of Gwenn Ronyk. I saw her the other day and I said that she must have been too young to be working at the legislature 32 years ago. But she certainly has had an outstanding career and I want to express my personal thanks for her service to the province.

Now getting to the Speech from the Throne, I have been here for much of the debate and I have actually been in the House and listening to much of the debate. And I was interested in a comment made by the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow. She in her speech talked about the fact that she was discouraged by some of the . . . what she called personal attacks that were occurring in the legislature. And obviously we want to focus on ideas and issues and plans for the future of the province of Saskatchewan but I did note that that was her concern. That the debate was focused too much on personal attacks.

And, lo and behold, I think either the second or third NDP speaker following the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow happened to be the member for P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote. So I expected well after the little sermon there by the member from Moose Jaw, the member from P.A. Northcote certainly wouldn't launch into any personal attacks. But certainly, Madam Speaker, I was disappointed. He took no time at all in getting into the point of attacking the Leader of the Opposition because he worked in this legislature. He happened to be a young person who had acquired a job working for a member of this Assembly. And it just really struck me as astounding that of all members on the NDP side it would be the member for P.A. Northcote who would somehow think that that was bad or wrong because I'm sure that that member has had young people working for him.

Should this province hold it against the young people that have worked for the member for P.A. Northcote because for six years that member failed to act accurately and responsibly disclose what had happened with SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company]? Now, Madam Speaker, the member for P.A. Northcote, if he is judged by his own allegations, should be ashamed of the people that had to work for him. Madam Speaker, I was shocked. I was shocked.

Now the member for P.A. Northcote somehow thought it was wrong if the Leader of the Official Opposition was undertaking the duties that were assigned to him when he had a job working in this legislature. I don't know what all the member did. I have no idea all of the events that occurred back in this legislature at that time. The member, who I am sure is a teetotaler, indicate . . . you know seemed to say that he thought it was wrong that the member had gone and acquired under a minister's direction some alcohol for a liquor cabinet. I don't know whether that occurred or not but I'm sure the member for P.A. Northcote would never have directed any of his employees to do such a thing being the teetotaler that he is.

But, Madam Speaker, I'm thinking about all the young people in Saskatchewan who are leaving the province and we've heard of the thousands and thousands and thousands of young people who are leaving the province to get jobs somewhere else. And I thought, no wonder, given the attitude of the member of P.A. Northcote who would criticize a young man for seeking a job working here at the legislature.

Madam Speaker, young people recognize the attitude of the NDP. They see that they say one thing and do another and, Madam Speaker, I think that is unconscionable. And I would ask the member for P.A. Northcote to be a little more thoughtful and think things through a little more clearly before he self-righteously gets up on his feet and would criticize falsely the Leader of the Opposition for doing his job and trying to make the province of Saskatchewan a better place, when he himself has one of the most detestable records of any minister in the NDP government over the last six years.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Madam Speaker, that is a shame. It is wrong. And the minister should apologize to the people of Saskatchewan and particularly to the young people of Saskatchewan whom he is helping drive from the province with a terrible attitude like the one he has expressed here in this House and around the province of Saskatchewan.

Madam Speaker, that is the minister who squandered over \$30 million of taxpayer money through SPUDCO. He knew the facts of the deal. He knew that the facts that he had claimed were untrue. We know that's true because the minister actually had to get up in his seat — I was here in the House when it happened — he had to get up in his seat and he had to apologize to the people of Saskatchewan. He was removed from cabinet for a while. And then the Premier in desperation — in desperation — because he had no one else to fill the roles brought him back into cabinet and placed him in the position of Highways.

Now of course, Madam Speaker, we know the minister still continues to distinguish himself when it comes to forestry affairs. I remember the NDP promise — 10,000 forestry jobs. We all remember that. That was part, I think, of their election campaign if I remember. But we've seen nothing but plant closures, and then we see the minister put in charge of trying to fix the problem. And of course we've seen no solutions even on the horizon as we experience the shortage of solutions, the lack of solutions. And we feel for the people whose economies have been devastated by the closure of the Weyerhaeuser mill in Prince Albert and other mills across northern Saskatchewan.

So this is a minister who apparently doesn't care if people get hurt. He didn't care about the people surrounding the SPUDCO incident. And I know of people that went bankrupt. I know of creditors whose bills were never met. I know of families whose lives were ruined because of that minister and his action on the SPUDCO file. And he has the audacity to get up in this House and criticize a young man who is now the Leader of the Opposition because he had a job here in the legislature working for a politician.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the young people on both sides,

on both sides of this House who feel in their bones that they want to work for an elected person. We need those kind of people to become involved. We need to encourage those kinds of people. We don't need to throw stones at them as the minister has from Prince Albert Northcote.

I'm going to leave this issue. But I just want to close with one thought and say, even if the minister was right — and he was wrong — but even if he was right, he had no moral authority to make the statements that he made yesterday. And again I invite him in this House for the second time to apologize for the things that he said.

Madam Speaker, I had hoped in this debate to talk a bit about agriculture. I thought perhaps I might touch a little bit on the Canadian Wheat Board, but I expect there'll be other opportunities to do that in the future.

So I want to talk a little bit more about the whole issue of jobs. We know right now, Madam Speaker, that there is a shortage of jobs right across Canada. In fact, there's a shortage of jobs here in Saskatchewan. There's more help wanted signs out than I've seen for quite some time. And that normally would be exciting. The problem is the NDP government have chased most of the people who could apply for those jobs out of the province of Saskatchewan.

And the Minister Responsible for Immigration was talking about the need for jobs and for people to take those jobs. And I think she actually skimmed through — and I use the word skimmed with purpose — skimmed through a speech that I made in response to the last budget where she seemed to indicate that she thought something was wrong with my concern that immigrants might be coming to Saskatchewan who would not have jobs and end up being unemployed. So because the minister from Nutana skimmed through that speech, I thought I'd read it in its entirety — or at least the two paragraphs that relate to this item in its entirety so that her misunderstanding could be corrected. So I quote from my speech in the legislature last April. I said:

Mr. Speaker, I thought it was rather humorous that the government made a commitment to immigration — which by the way I strongly support and would like to see more of — but their commitment was to bring 5,000 immigrants into Saskatchewan on an annual basis. And yet their own job projections in the budget only predicted that 3,200 jobs would be created in this province.

In other words, they want to bring people into Saskatchewan to be unemployed because their wrong-headed policies are not creating the jobs that are required to employ people already in the province, let alone others who would come into the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Madam Speaker, I will admit, I will say that there is more demand for jobs now than when the budget was brought down a year ago. But I was merely reflecting on the facts, or not the facts but the content of the NDP budget. The NDP budget said that they expected only to create 3,200 jobs. That was in the budget last year. They hoped to create 3,200 jobs.

The Deputy Premier seems to doubt that so he should grab the budget from last year and he can read the words for himself. It's there in black and white presented by the Finance minister in the last budget.

Obviously if the government expects to only create 3,200 jobs, that's a real problem because other provinces — Alberta, British Columbia — are creating tens and tens and tens of thousands of jobs. Manitoba, I think, was creating in the neighbourhood of 20 or 30,000 jobs on an annual basis. And yet Saskatchewan, in the midst of a boom, with oil and gas prices at record highs, with uranium prices at record highs, couldn't anticipate more than 3,200 jobs being created.

Obviously that was because, as the Deputy Premier points out, the NDP were driving the private sector out of the province. They were driving youth out of the province. They were, through their policies, creating a climate where people didn't seek jobs in Saskatchewan even though they were starting to become available and more are available now. NDP policies and attitude I might add — attitude like the minister from P.A. Northcote — have driven away the very people that could take the jobs that are available today.

Now, Madam Speaker, what we need in this province is a change of government. We need a government that knows how to create a climate where there are jobs, not 3,200 jobs, but where there are 32,000 jobs or more created on an annual basis. And then, Madam Speaker, maybe 5,000 immigrants coming to Saskatchewan looks like a modest number and could actually be increased, which is what I would like to see. Because heaven knows and the people of Saskatchewan certainly know that we need more people in this province.

If we're going to have a thriving economy and if we're going to maintain the infrastructure that developed countries have, if we're going to see a future for our children and our grandchildren, we've got to take action now and begin to grow the province. And I've watched over the last seven years that I've been in this legislature that NDP government do precious little to encourage growth in the province, and do a whole lot to discourage that growth here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Madam Speaker, I also want to just quickly touch on the Oyate affair, because as Chair of the Public Accounts Committee we have dealt with this issue and will be dealing with the issue in the upcoming weeks because of an investigation done by the Provincial Auditor. But what I've noticed as Chair of Public Accounts is that there are certain departments of government that habitually fall short of the mark placed before them or the goals and measuring sticks placed before them by the Provincial Auditor. One of those departments has been DCRE, the department of resources and employment or Community Resources and Employment, and they consistently have fallen short of the auditor's recommendations.

And ministers and deputy ministers have appeared before various committees, deputy ministers and their officials before the Public Accounts Committee saying, we accept the auditor's report. We're going to get it right. We're going to get it right. And, Madam Speaker, I won't rehash all of what happened. But DCRE was one of the departments that always had to come

before our committee and say, yes we've made mistakes in the past, but we see the error of our ways. And we're going to get them right.

Well, Madam Speaker, now more and more evidence is coming to light as a result of a story broken by the CBC that in fact the NDP were playing games with the people of Saskatchewan. They were certainly playing games with those of us at Public Accounts. They had no intention, they had no desire to correct the failures in their department, the shortcomings in their department.

And as a result it was bound to happen, and it had to happen sooner or later. And unfortunately it did happen in the case of the Oyate House where the administration fell apart, where guidelines were not adhered to. And the tragic part of this whole story is that children were the victims. Children were the victims.

Now the Deputy Premier, the member for Yorkton, doesn't care about children. He doesn't think they can do any better. He doesn't think that that matters a whole lot. He criticizes the opposition for raising this issue. He thinks we should keep those things secret and hidden from the people of Saskatchewan. He chirps in his seat about how terrible it is that we raised the issue of the Oyate House where children's lives and well-being were put at risk.

Well, Madam Speaker, I make no apology for the work of the opposition, for the work of the Provincial Auditor, for the work of the CBC, and everyone who worked together to bring to light the abuse of children and the danger that children were subjected to because of the irresponsibility of the Minister Responsible for the Department of Community Resources.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hermanson: — Madam Speaker, some things you can let go by. Some things you can apologize and say, well government make mistakes from time to time. But when it comes to the well-being of children and when so many warnings have been forthcoming, that is beyond an apology. And there needs to be action.

And if the Premier was worth his salt, if the Premier really was a leader, if the Premier wasn't more concerned about protecting his inefficient and incapable cabinet ministers, he would fire the minister responsible. He would clean up the mess. He would allocate budget money to care for children who are at risk. And he would do it immediately.

Now talking about doing things immediately, as I mentioned, Madam Speaker, I was away for a couple of weeks. It was a happy occasion. Gail and I were celebrating our 30th wedding anniversary and we were able to go on a little holiday. And so I turned the BlackBerry off and I didn't answer the phone. And I came back to... I got actually to Toronto and I turned my BlackBerry on and I scanned the news. And I said to Gail, I said, the NDP have lowered the PST by two points.

And my first thought, well are they calling an election this fall, because I know that every time they lower the PST it means an election. I mean we know that. And of course once the election

is over then they raise the PST back up again. That's become such a habit nobody's surprised at that any more. But I thought, no they're not going to call an election this fall.

And then the light came on and I realized the Premier is in trouble. As we know there was a little challenge within his caucus and there was some repercussions there and a bunch of members had to come suddenly suck up to the Premier and say that they were loyal after all. But we know that there's trouble in the NDP house. We know that there's some dissatisfaction with the Premier. And so he had to do something. Their convention is coming up. Their convention I believe is this November, and the Premier is under a lot of heat and a lot of scrutiny. And there are some unions that are pretty unhappy with the Premier because there are no jobs and there are no people to fill jobs. And they're pretty unhappy with the way the Premier fired one of his members.

So the Premier had to do something spectacular to kind of take the focus off him and his leadership. The fact that the NDP is 29 points back in the polls. So what he did, he said, the way to take the heat off is I'll lower the PST and I won't do it by one point like I usually do; I'll do it by two points, and I'm sure I can hang on to my leadership going into that November convention. And then we'll have to think of some other strategy I guess when we do call the election. I don't know what they're going to do. Maybe they'll do something with property taxes; I sure hope so.

Anyways the people of Rosetown-Elrose — and I want to conclude with this — the people of Rosetown-Elrose want to thank the Premier for his desperation because they want to see lower PST. They're tired of seeing Alberta consistently beat us out and seeing retailers suffer in Saskatchewan because of higher taxes, particularly higher, much higher PST here in Saskatchewan than to the west of us in Alberta.

So because of the Premier's insecurities, because of the Premier's fear of losing his job, because of the Premier's desperation over being 29 points behind in the polls, he lowered the PST. And the people of Rosetown-Elrose say hallelujah, thank you that the Premier's in trouble. I hope he gets into more trouble because he might do more good things for the people of Rosetown-Elrose.

Now, Madam Speaker, I see the Deputy Premier smiling. I think he knows I've hit more truth than he would care to admit. I know that the Deputy Premier is one of the close counsellors of the Premier, so perhaps maybe even it was the Deputy Premier's idea. And he's just maybe a little bit surprised that we figured it out so quickly and came so close to the truth.

But nevertheless, nevertheless if we can bring this NDP into more discredit, if they hit rougher ground and start doing things like lowering taxes, that will be a step in the right direction. It's not going to save their hides in the next election. They are going to, they're going to lose anyways.

And the reason I know that, by the way, is history has a way of repeating itself. Many members on the NDP side have correctly pointed out that I thought we would win the last election. We should have won the last election. And I'd be the first one to express my disappointment that we came so close without

winning.

But it's very similar to what happened in British Columbia when Premier Glen Clark was supposed to lose, but he held on by a very thin margin. I would state some unethical politicking happened in BC [British Columbia] as happened here in Saskatchewan. Of course the result of the delay — and the inevitable — was that the NDP got wiped out in the subsequent election. I think they were lowered down to two members. Therefore, Madam Speaker, the NDP don't have much good to look forward to.

Given all of these facts, Madam Speaker, it's very clear that I will support the amendment and not support the Speech from the Throne. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections and Public Safety, the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Hon. Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise in this Throne Speech debate and to add my voice to those who are supporting the Throne Speech. I'd like to start my remarks off, Madam Deputy Speaker, by first of all thanking our mover and seconder on this side — the member from Coronation Park and yourself, Madam Deputy Speaker — for making an excellent start on an excellent Throne Speech. Thank you for your insight and your intelligence that you brought to bear in this debate so far. I hope I live up to the standard you have set.

I'd like to also start out my remarks by congratulating the new member for Weyburn-Big Muddy. I'm no longer the youngest in this legislature, Madam Deputy Speaker, but I'll get by somehow, somehow. Though we come from different parties, Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to say that I've had the chance to talk with the member opposite on a number of occasions, had the chance to meet him and his wife, Amanda, and I find him in person to be a very congenial, very thoughtful person. And I wish him congratulations in terms of the by-election, and I wish him the best of luck in terms of his career as a legislator.

[11:30]

Madam Deputy Speaker, I've got some more to say about the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy and his intervention in the Throne Speech debate. Obviously I disagree with his amendment, but I'm sure he'll get over that somehow, somehow.

But, Madam Deputy Speaker, I do want to say that one more thing about the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy is he's a congenial person, but he's also a hockey player. He's not scared of the corners but neither, Madam Deputy Speaker, am I. So we'll see him in the corners for sure.

I'd also like to say we share a history professor. The member opposite received education at the University of Regina, and one of the first sort of intelligence reports I received about the member opposite was from a former history professor of ours, who said that he's a pretty thoughtful young fellow.

And it's also very interesting, Madam Deputy Speaker, because that history prof we shared in common wrote a book called *Privatizing a Province* which was dedicated to Tommy Douglas. And I can't help but wonder if the member opposite has ignored reading it because it tells quite the story about what happened in this province in the 1980s and the importance of history. I know the member opposite is a student of history, and I'll have a bit more to say about that in my remarks.

I'd like to thank, Madam Deputy Speaker, my family, my wife, Kelly, my parents who have supported me throughout, right down the line in terms of working in this busy life that is elected life. I couldn't do it without them and for their support, I am hugely, hugely thankful.

I'd like to thank my constituency assistant. Right now it's a woman by the name of Anna-Marie Kowalsky who is filling in on a mat leave. She's doing a fine job, Madam Deputy Speaker. And I'd like to thank Colleen Smith who does a great job and will be back start of the year and congratulate her on the birth of her brand new baby daughter.

I'd like to thank the residents and the voters of Regina Elphinstone Centre for their support in the by-election of February 2001 — by-elections are heady times for sure — and for their continued support in November 2003.

Regina Elphinstone Centre, it's a very diverse place, Madam Deputy Speaker — people from all different walks of life, a large and vibrant Aboriginal population, lots of young people, lots of older people. We've got the downtown and all the thriving activity there. We've got the old warehouse district. We've got part of the Cathedral village which has their thriving arts festival and many, many people involved in the arts in that community. We've got part of the core which is part of the historic German town in Regina — one of Regina's very interesting communities — and we've got part of Regent Park. And the largest neighbourhood in Regina Elphinstone Centre, Madam Deputy Speaker, is north central which is my stomping grounds where I was born and raised and where I proudly live to this day.

There have been a lot of things happening in Regina Elphinstone-Centre. Just to name a few, very recently we had the renaming of the Treaty Four Education Centre in honour of Richard Ostrosser.

Richard was a dedicated educator, a bridge builder, somebody who wasn't Aboriginal but worked with Aboriginal people, with First Nations people in such a thoughtful and committed way. Saw a lot of people go through the Treaty Four Education Centre. Helped them to get their adult grade 12. And he died very tragically, Madam Deputy Speaker, this spring of a brain aneurysm, and he is sorely missed. But his spirit lives on with the renaming of the Treaty Four Education Centre in his honour, and the work that carries on there, Madam Deputy Speaker, I know will be affected in large part by the legacy that he leaves us to live up to.

Downtown Regina we've seen the opening of Century Plaza. We've seen the reclamation of what used to be the Derrick Building. It sat vacant for many years, Madam Deputy Speaker, so that people had taken to calling it the derelict building. It's

been reclaimed and opened up as the Renaissance Retirement Building, and it's a great addition to a very vibrant downtown.

This Saturday, Madam Deputy Speaker, I'll be participating in Ehrlo Community Services annual Dress a Champion event and the great work they do with the outdoor hockey league in ensuring that all kids have the chance to play hockey and to have that great physical exercise and to not just have dreams about playing hockey but actually live them out.

Tonight, Madam Deputy Speaker, there's a gala celebrating the 80th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Legion's branch 1, which is located of course right in downtown Regina, and it's going to be one heck of a night. The Chair of the gala is 85-year-old Harold Hague who I had the pleasure of speaking about certain of Mr. Hague's accomplishments in World War II in the last year about this time. And certainly he and the committee for the gala are putting together a tremendous event — an event that will showcase not just the past of the Legion but a bright future that the Legion and people in a group called ArtsAction are working towards in terms of ensuring that this wonderful monument, this wonderful touchstone of downtown Regina continues on in a very vibrant way.

I'd also like to say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that it's been great. The school year's started back up. Enrolments are up throughout north central and throughout Regina Elphinstone-Centre, and they're particularly up at Scott Collegiate where I had the pleasure of going to grade 9. Enrolment there is 450 this year, Madam Deputy Speaker. And for the past three years, they've had graduating classes, the largest they've had since the early '80s. And I think that's hugely encouraging, hugely inspiring, Madam Deputy Speaker. And it's signal to the good work and that revitalization that's going on in our inner city.

And it's also important to point out, Madam Deputy Speaker, that whereas those classes in the early '80s were maybe 80, 85 per cent non-Aboriginal and you'd have only a few Aboriginal people in those graduating classes, these graduating classes, Madam Deputy Speaker, are on the order of 85, 90 per cent Aboriginal people graduating. First Nations and Métis people getting their grade 12, getting that key to a brighter future to move forward and make a better life for themselves and their families. And I think that's hugely encouraging, Madam Deputy Speaker.

There's a lot going on in housing. There's a lot going on in crime prevention. There's a lot going on in terms of community economic development. There's a great program, the north central inner city youth employment program, and we'll be visited by them in about a week's time, Madam Deputy Speaker. They were here last year and, you know, these are young people, 18 to 30, that are getting another chance to get their lives back together, to do some work in terms of life skills, in terms of getting employment skills, and to get stabilized and then to move out into that labour force and to take their rightful place in society and the economy. And it's very encouraging, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I want to touch upon, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I've recently been entrusted with the portfolio of Corrections and Public Safety. I want to thank the Premier for placing that trust

in me, and I want to state for the House that I will work very hard to live up to that charge, to that responsibility. And I want to work on the good work of those who preceded, Madam Deputy Speaker — the member from Greystone and certainly from the member of Regina Dewdney. I want to build on their good work, but I also want to thank very much the Premier for placing that trust in me.

I recently attended the sod turning at the . . . for the replacement section of the 1913 portion of the Regina Correctional Centre, Madam Deputy Speaker. And it was striking, you know, just how far that is coming. We've got a ways to go yet, but it's good progress. And it brings to mind the fact that keeping Saskatchewan communities safe does require a balance of corrections approaches, the necessary supervision and controls, but effective interventions that help reintegrate people safely back into the community. So I look very much forward to doing that work, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Now on Monday in his reply to the Throne Speech, the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy said that young people don't care about the past 15 years. They don't care about the past 15 years; they just care about the next five. And while I partly agree with him, young people do very much care about the next five years, I think it's a little different. I think young people do care about the past 15 years. And as another young person, younger person in this House — admittedly I'm getting older — but as a younger person in this House, 1991 was the first time I had a chance to vote in an election in this province, Madam Deputy Speaker. And of course I cast my vote for the NDP. And it was such an honour to see some of those people that fought the good fight in terms of the situation they inherited and the hard decisions and the hard work they did with the people of Saskatchewan to put this province aright.

And I guess it's like this, Madam Deputy Speaker. As a history student . . . And I'm sure the member opposite is quite familiar with this quote and it was touched upon by the member from Saskatoon Nutana. George Santayana said, "Those who can not remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

And I guess it's like this, Madam Deputy Speaker. There are some people in this Chamber that would be very anxious to have us repeat that past. And they've been part of the Devine administration, they're proud to be part of the Devine administration, and they support that vision of Saskatchewan. For example, the member from Arm River-Watrous who of course was entering into the debate just a couple days ago, he said this and I quote — and this is from *Hansard*, March 26, 2004 — "You look at the Devine government. It did a lot of good things . . ."

It did a lot of good things. And you know it's always good to keep your remarks general like that, Madam Deputy Speaker, because in some I couldn't disagree with him more. And you know, well I'll get to some of the information in terms of the financial situation of the province when the people took power in 1991. But a lot of good things — and I guess I'd be interested to hear precisely what.

And we know very well, Madam Deputy Speaker, that there's a close interaction between the conservatives opposite and the Conservatives in Ottawa and the Conservatives of past in this

province. Some went over to the Liberals briefly, but they very enthusiastically joined in with the conservatives of present day in this province.

And we know that, Madam Deputy Speaker. And I guess what we're tired of, what we're tired of in this House and what's getting old in this House, Madam Deputy Speaker, is the fact that they just won't admit it. You know, just own up to who you are. We know who you are. You're not fooling anybody.

And as if to prove my argument, Madam Deputy Speaker, we've got the member from Wood River talking about communists from his chair and we know who engages in that kind of red-baiting in the history of this province — it's the members opposite. And anybody to the left of Attila the Hun gets included in that.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, while they're bellowing and yelling from their chairs, we're going to keep on working. That's what we're going to do. We're going to keep on building and we're not going to worry about the people who've been yelling and bellowing for decades now. And it's getting old and tired for sure, Madam Deputy Speaker. But we know they're Tories, we know they're conservatives, we just wish they'd own up to it.

And I guess it's interesting, Madam Deputy Speaker. We're joined by the member from Canora-Pelly, and oftentimes he likes to protest that he's not a conservative. What are you talking about you're not a conservative? I'm not a conservative, that's what he likes to say in this House oftentimes. And you know for one it's the exception that proves the rule, Madam Deputy Speaker. But I'd also like to say that when he was seeking the leadership of the Saskatchewan Party, Madam Deputy Speaker, he said in the *Leader-Post*, August 12, 1997, he said he welcomes the endorsements of people like former premier, Grant Devine.

You know I guess if I was a pure laine Liberal like the member opposite purports to be, I'd be kind of leery about welcoming the endorsements of people like Grant Devine. But apparently that's fine with him then; maybe it was some kind of situational thing in terms of a leadership contest. But there it is, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Fifteen years ago when this government took over from that Devine government, the province was near bankruptcy. The Leader of the Opposition as well as many members was part of the government whose irresponsibility and recklessness in decision making left this province with a huge financial burden.

To quote from the Gass Commission, the Saskatchewan Financial Management Review Commission, the public debt as of October 31 — 15 years ago, Madam Deputy Speaker — was \$12.704 billion. Further in the Gass Commission report in the financial position of the province, summary and conclusions:

The province's October 31, 1991, financial statements indicate that the Government of Saskatchewan has a very large accumulated deficit which has affected its ability to borrow sufficient funds to meet its on-going financial requirements and to maintain its programming at current levels of service.

The province was in a ruin, Madam Deputy Speaker, and you know very well because you were one of those people that came in to clean up the mess left to us by the people opposite.

Now something that the members opposite like to talk about again and again is that somehow, you know the '80s, that was an aberration, it wasn't really the situation. And even if it was, that was somehow the responsibility of Allan Blakeney and that the situation left to the province of Saskatchewan was terrible in terms of Allan Blakeney.

[11:45]

And I just want to point out that in 1981-82, the debt-to-GDP [gross domestic product] ratio of this province was 22.9 per cent, Madam Deputy Speaker. And 1985-86, a mere four years later, Madam Deputy Speaker, it was 46.5 per cent. In terms of the situation when the Devine Tories left office, it was 61.7 per cent in terms of debt-to-GDP ratio. It was a basket case and the sooner the members opposite own up to it, Madam Deputy Speaker, I think the better off we'll all be in terms of having an honest debate in this House.

I note the time in terms of the agreed-upon hour of adjournment and at this point I will move that this debate do now adjourn.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — . . .debate do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Madam Deputy Speaker, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — This House does now stand adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m. Enjoy your constituencies this weekend.

[The Assembly adjourned at 11:46.]

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GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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Premier

Hon. Graham Addley
Minister of Healthy Living Services
Minister Responsible for Seniors

Hon. Pat Atkinson
Minister of Advanced Education and Employment
Minister Responsible for Immigration
Minister Responsible for the Public
Service Commission

Hon. Joan Beatty
Minister of Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. Buckley Belanger
Minister of Community Resources
Minister Responsible for Disability Issues

Hon. Eric Cline
Minister of Industry and Resources
Minister Responsible for Investment
Saskatchewan Inc.
Minister Responsible for Information Services
Corporation of Saskatchewan

Hon. David Forbes
Minister of Labour
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation

Hon. Glenn Hagel
Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation
Provincial Secretary
Minister Responsible for Gaming
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance

Hon. Deb Higgins
Minister of Learning
Minister Responsible for Literacy
Minister Responsible for Liquor and
Gaming Authority
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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