



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

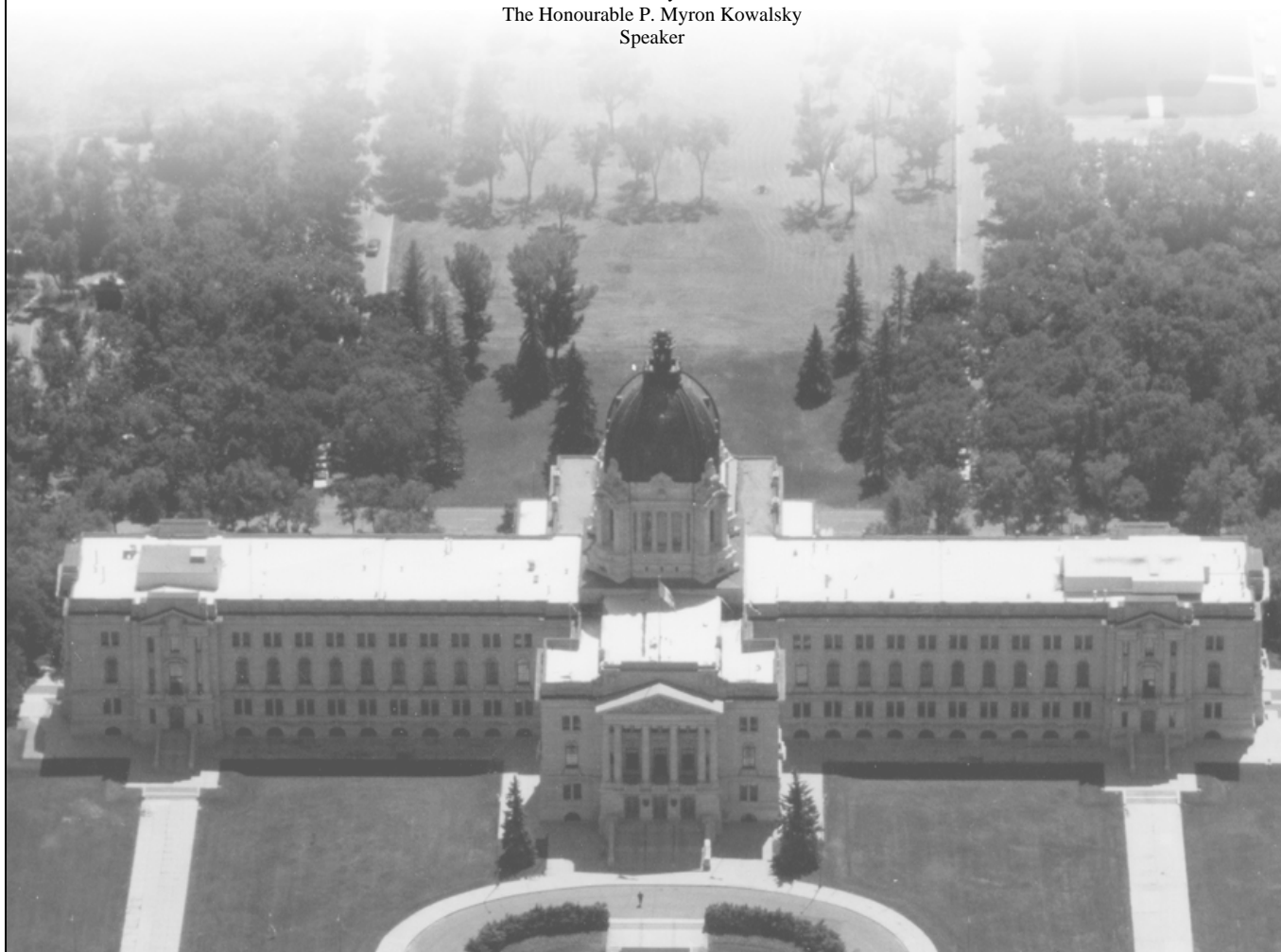
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**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 my pleasure again to present another petition in regards to dialysis in the Broadview area. 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 the 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 is signed by the good folks from communities of Regina, Brandon; I notice Broadview, Whitewood, Indian Head, Grenfell, Cowessess. I so present.

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

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, Mr. Speaker, I present a petition on behalf of individuals from the communities of Claydon and Frontier who are concerned about the possibility or the delay, I guess, in getting the highway paved between Claydon and Robsart. 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.

I so present, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to rise again today on behalf of people who are concerned about Highway 49. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause this government to repair Highway 49 in order to address safety concerns and to facilitate economic growth and tourism in Kelvington, Lintlaw, Preeceville, and surrounding areas.

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

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have a petition to do with lack of funding for the drug Avastin:

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 communities of Carnduff, Glen Ewen, and Oxbow. I so present.

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 provincial government funding for the cancer drug Avastin, and the prayer reads:

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by individuals all from the community of Carnduff. I so present.

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

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too have a petition to present on behalf of citizens concerned with this government's propensity for gravel highways. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to undertake immediate action and provide dust suppression on the gravel portion of Highway No. 99 between junction 6 and Craven.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signatures to this petition, Mr. Speaker, come from the communities of Southey, Craven, Regina, Bulleya, and Markinch. I so present.

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

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again today I have several petitions of citizens concerned about the safety of Highway No. 5. And the prayer reads as follows:

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

And the signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from Quill Lake, Humboldt, Viscount, Saskatoon, Archerwill, Regina, Bruno, Englefeld, Annaheim, Preeceville, Colonsay, and Meacham. 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 constituents of mine who have concerns regarding the future of 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 Macoun as well as other areas. 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 the citizens of Wilkie who are concerned about reduction of health care services. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Wilkie Health Centre and special care home maintain at the very least their current level of services.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

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

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

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the Assembly again today to present a petition with the citizens of Saskatchewan that are concerned about the NDP's [New Democratic Party] two-tier health care. 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 on this petition are from Alida, Estevan, and Oxbow. I so present.

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

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition of citizens calling 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 Jansen, Dafoe, Wynyard, and Lanigan and Lockwood. I so present.

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

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to present yet another petition regarding this government's failure to fund the cancer 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 fully fund the cancer drug Avastin.

And as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by good citizens from the constituency of Saskatoon Greystone.

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 Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 23 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Health: what was the patient demand for each satellite dialysis site in the province for the year 2002 and 2003 and subsequent years '03-04, '04-05, '05-06 and '06-07?

And as well, Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 23 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Health: what was the patient load for each satellite dialysis site in the province for the years 2002 and '03, '03 and '04, '04 and '05, '05 and '06, '06 and '07?

And finally, I give notice that I shall on day no. 23 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Health: what was the total number of dialysis units in Regina for the year 2003, '03 and '04, '04 and '05, '05 and '06, and '06 and '07?

I so present. Thank you.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Meewasin, the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to stand today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, three people who are articling with the Department of Justice. Karen Makohoniuk, Mary McAuley, and Randy King are observing today's proceedings from your gallery, Mr. Speaker. They are joined by Kylie Head, executive assistant to the deputy minister of Justice.

Karen, Mary, and Randy are all graduates of the University of Saskatchewan, College of Law. These students began articles in June 2006 and are being exposed to a diverse and challenging articling experience with Saskatchewan Justice. I am pleased that these individuals are interested in public service and have chosen to article with the department. I'm sure they will find their time with us will equip them with practical knowledge of the justice system and how it operates.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the members to join me in welcoming Karen, Mary, Randy, and Kylie to the Legislative Assembly here today.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, in your gallery today is two of our former interns, Justin Leifso and Michel Carpentier, who I understand have come back to visit the legislature. And outside the Assembly they asked me if there was going to be a good show today, and I told him that there was. So I look forward to all members providing a good show for them.

And I'd also like to join with the Justice minister in welcoming the new articling students. Those articling students will be articling for a 12-month period of time, so they will have the privilege of serving under two different governments. So I welcome them to their Assembly as well and look forward to working with them in a different capacity later next year.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Rosemont.

Ms. Crofford: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite having gotten up, I am now compelled to do the same as we shared the same intern, Michel Carpentier.

And I have to say it's because of Michel's work on facilitating a community process that today there is much less graffiti in the Cathedral district. He also did excellent work on policy and program issues that we worked on. So I want to welcome Michel as well and ask everyone to join me today.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Wascana Plains.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Ms. Hamilton: — So close yet so far away. Mr. Speaker, since 1981, November 25 has been observed in Latin America as an International Day Against Violence Against Women.

Since declared, people have been gathering on this day to give voice to a very serious issue. So serious, Mr. Speaker, that in December 1999, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring November 25 the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. This day represents the absolute condemnation of gender violence.

November 25 was chosen to commemorate the lives of the Mirabal sisters of the Dominican Republic. On that day in 1960, Mr. Speaker, Patria, Minerva, and Maria Teresa Mirabal were brutally murdered by the regime of Rafael Trujillo.

Their assassination caused great public outcry and, within a year, the dictatorship crumbled. The sisters have become a global symbol of the fight against gender violence and the victimization of women, Mr. Speaker. When we observe November 25, we are commemorating the plight of the Mirabal sisters and all women who have been victims of violence.

Violence against women is still very much a reality in all parts of the world. I can only hope that one day, the day will come when women like the Mirabal sisters will no longer be victims with sad stories to tell.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:15]

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

Saskatchewan Judge Receives British Columbia Appointment

Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Judge Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond on her upcoming selection as British Columbia's new children's advocate.

Judge Turpel-Lafond has an impressive resumé. It includes a bachelor's degree from Carleton University, a law degree from Osgoode Hall, a master's degree in international law from the University of Cambridge, and a doctor of law from Harvard.

Before being appointed as a judge in Saskatchewan, Ms. Turpel-Lafond practised law in Nova Scotia and here in Saskatchewan.

Earlier this year the Law Society of Saskatchewan honoured Ms. Turpel-Lafond with its Willy Hodgson Award for her work, "building bridges between aboriginal and non-aboriginal

peoples based on the teaching of elders of respect and kindness.”

Ms. Turpel-Lafond took an activist role in the issues of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, an affliction that disproportionately affects First Nations people. She has a strong reputation through Saskatchewan for being a caring and committed advocate for justice and fairness. Ms. Turpel-Lafond is very active in community events and associations. Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure to serve briefly with Ms. Turpel-Lafond on the Mendel Art Gallery board in Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Turpel-Lafond has some tremendous work to do in British Columbia. I'm sure she will fill her role with professionalism, integrity, and a strong work ethic. I hope that all members will join with me in congratulating Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond on her selection as BC's [British Columbia] children advocate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Community Caring

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today to share with this legislature the good work being accomplished by the parishioners of St. James Anglican Church in Saskatoon.

Particularly I'd like to thank Alice Kuipers for her work in organizing donations for the YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] crisis shelter. The crisis shelter has 22 rooms and provides safe 24-hour, 7-day-a-week emergency sheltering to women, children, and youth at risk. Women enter the shelter due to domestic violence, abuse, addictions, mental health reasons, homelessness, and justice issues. In 2005-06 the YWCA crisis shelter housed 754 women, children, and youth.

On one Sunday recently, congregation member Alice Kuipers distributed a list of all the things that are required by the women and children who come to the crisis shelter and asked people to purchase items on the list and bring these items to church on the next Sunday. The generosity in the church was tremendous, and there were three large containers overflowing with donations, including toiletries and other necessities.

The next phase is organizing gifts for these children for the upcoming holiday season, and I expect people will be just as generous.

Mr. Speaker, I know there are many other religious organizations and community groups who are contributing to their communities. Especially as we approach this season of giving. I'd like to congratulate, encourage all community members who are involved in giving back to their communities. I'd like to invite all members to join me in thanking these groups for their continued good work in helping to make Saskatchewan the great place that it is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for

Melville-Saltcoats.

Recognition of Esterhazy and Area Volunteers

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to commend a group of volunteers in the Esterhazy area, the community of Esterhazy. Each year they hold a charity golf classic out there to raise dollars for the St. Anthony's Hospital and the Esterhazy centennial care home.

Mr. Speaker, the numbers are in again this year and it's just amazing what a small community can do when they get behind their health care facilities.

Mr. Speaker, in 2001 this group raised \$86,000 for their health care fund. In 2002, \$116,000; 2003, 124,000; 2004, 116,000; 2005, 116,500; and this year again, Mr. Speaker, 2006, that community raised \$117,500 for St. Anthony's Hospital and the centennial care home.

Mr. Speaker, they have done many things to make additions to the hospital and to the care home. They've expanded their emergency services for their hospital. And one of the main reasons they do this, Mr. Speaker, is to make their health care facilities very viable and very useful for the people of the area, especially with the mines they have there. Mosaic and formerly IMC were a great sponsor of this fundraiser. The local businesses from the surrounding communities in Esterhazy have been very good, but especially the volunteers that have taken their time and their dollars to make this a very successful fundraiser.

I want to congratulate Marshall Hamilton, Donna McIntyre, Sherrian Kraft, and all the volunteers that have put so much effort and time into making this a success again this year.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

SaskEnergy Supports Vanier Cup Volunteers

Hon. Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As you may know, Saskatoon is hosting the 2006 PotashCorp Vanier Cup this weekend and SaskEnergy is a proud supporter.

Mr. Speaker, as the official champion of volunteers, SaskEnergy is dedicated to supporting events such as Tim Hortons Brier, the Canada Summer Games, and the Vanier Cup. This is one way of ensuring that special events like this make their way to the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first time the Vanier Cup has been hosted outside of Ontario and we are very pleased that Saskatchewan has this great opportunity to showcase our province.

Mr. Speaker, over 600 volunteers and committee members will be part of this great event. I ask all members to join me in commending SaskEnergy, the official sponsor of volunteers for the 2006 PotashCorp Vanier Cup, for its innovative approach to community involvement and support of volunteers. Mr.

Speaker, in thanking the hard working volunteers who'll be sharing this time and energy and their Saskatchewan spirit to make this the very best Vanier Cup Canada has ever seen. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Child Poverty

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tomorrow is the 17th anniversary of the unanimous all-party resolution passed in the House of Commons to eliminate child poverty by the year 2000. Each year it is all too clear that child poverty has not been eliminated. Statistics continue to show that Saskatchewan lags far behind in the fight to end child poverty. More than 40,000 children live in poverty in our province, including half of all First Nation and Métis children. Child poverty has simply become a fact of life under this NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, this serious problem is getting worse. Food bank usage has increased each year under this Premier. He more than anyone else should know this because the Saskatoon Food Bank is in his own constituency. To quote the Premier in March of 1990 and I quote:

It is the sad truth that only blocks from the marble steps of this legislature . . . it is the sad truth that children in this city go to school hungry. And that's a disgrace.

It is a disgrace, Mr. Speaker, but the Premier and his NDP government continue to let the problem grow. They allow children to go to school hungry. They force mothers to beg for food to feed their children. These families are not a priority of this government and that is totally unacceptable. The members on this side of the House will continue to repeat the call to reduce child poverty. We are committed to improving the lives of children and family in this province. I hope the NDP eventually will too.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Member's Statement in Wadena News

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, on this side of the Assembly we recognize that the Saskatchewan Party's overheated rhetoric is a poor substitute for reasoned political debate. But occasionally, Mr. Speaker, some of the stuff they come up with is so over-the-top we just have to laugh.

Mr. Speaker, this is the member for Kelvington-Wadena summing up the spring session in the May 31, 2006 issue of *The Wadena News*. She says and I quote:

Spring session is over and the Government has found a way to spend \$7.2 billion without making a real positive difference to your lives.

Now that's a bold statement. I mean it really puts the hyper back in hyperbole. According to that member, the entire budget

of Saskatchewan, every cent, has been allocated in some way that will not make a positive difference in anyone's life. All the funding for doctors, nurses, diagnostics, and health care in general, Mr. Speaker, wasted. The dollars invested in schools and universities and education — useless, a total wash — squandered without making a positive difference in anyone's life.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm more than willing to give the member opposite the benefit of the doubt. But is she aware that her own paycheck comes out of the provincial coffers? Because by her logic, Mr. Speaker, her receiving a salary as a Saskatchewan Party MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] doesn't do anyone any good at all.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

Election Dates and Senate Reform

Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if there's one thing that really bugs voters, it's when a government plays games with the setting of the election date. We saw it again at the most recent NDP convention where the Premier was musing about maybe the election will happen in the spring; maybe it'll be in the fall; maybe it'll be into the fifth year in 2008. He's playing politics with the election date, Mr. Speaker.

Three provinces — British Columbia, the Liberals there, the Liberal government in Ontario, and the Government of Newfoundland, have already set elections dates, Mr. Speaker. They've already went in this direction in terms of legislation. The federal government has introduced a Bill to establish set elections for the country.

Will the Premier do the right thing? Will he support a Bill to be introduced a little bit later on by the member for Rosetown-Elrose that we will be presenting to give Saskatchewan set election dates, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, as opposed to the tradition of the party opposite, the New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan have had a tradition — a long tradition, Mr. Speaker — of calling regular elections on or about the fourth year anniversary, Mr. Speaker. That is historically documented.

But what we see this morning again, Mr. Speaker, is the contradiction. One day the Leader of the Opposition stands up and says call an election today, call an election today. That's what he says. And then the next day he stands up and he said well, we should have fixed election dates. Well you can't have it either way, Mr. Speaker.

What does he support, calling an election today or setting up

fixed election dates? What is it?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, actually one way for the province to get to set election dates is for the Premier to call an election right away because this side of the House is prepared to make this positive change for the province.

Mr. Speaker, what we have seen from this NDP government is games playing with the setting of an election date. I remember the first election I ran in was called by the then NDP premier for right in the middle of harvest. Do you remember that, Mr. Speaker? They called it in the middle of harvest because they knew rural Saskatchewan was angry with them. They knew they had lost the confidence and the support of rural Saskatchewan. So cynically they called it in the middle of harvest. His party . . .

The Speaker: — Order please, members. I would ask members to just take a breath, and let's have some reasoned debate here. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, his party has played games with the setting of an election. Will he instruct his members to support a Bill proposed by the Sask Party later this day, presented by the member for Rosetown-Elrose, to bring set elections to the province of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — There are a couple of observations to what the Leader of the Opposition has just called upon me to do.

He just said, would I instruct my members? You know, Mr. Speaker, we have a New Democratic Party in this province, a province that believes in democracy, a province that believes and a party that believes in democracy within the caucus, Mr. Speaker — that's point number one — as opposed to a group who all will stand in this legislature and vote against, with the exception of one, and all will vote against the democratic right of producers in this province to choose the future of the wheat board. Now how does that work, Mr. Speaker? Let's talk about elections and let's talk about democratic right.

The other thing that the Leader of the Opposition just reminded us of was when he first ran for this legislature. Well, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is this member, who is now the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party, first attempted to get a seat in this legislature when he sought a nomination for the Conservative Party under Grant Devine. That's the time he ran. And we all remember that history, Mr. Speaker, of that government where they held the election date till one day after the legal limit.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, that sound you just heard was an entire province — or at least the viewing audience — rolling their eyes, sick and tired of that Premier and that government wanting to talk about 20 years ago when the rest of us want to talk about today, and we want to talk about 20 years from now.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the BC [British Columbia] . . .

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

[10:30]

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'd like to say good morning to the member for Regina Douglas Park, and welcome him back here to question period. Good morning to you.

Another thing I think that really bothers Canadians, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that we have an unelected Senate in Canada. I think it's bothersome to Canadians across the country, specifically to people in Western Canada. Now, Mr. Speaker, the Senate could be a powerful ally in promoting the interests of provinces and for example regions like Western Canada.

Later this day, Mr. Speaker, the member for Kindersley will introduce legislation to move Saskatchewan towards electing senators. Mr. Speaker, question to the Premier is this: will he support that legislation?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, this is too good. Here is the party that stands in this legislature and votes against the democratic right of producers in this province to chose the future of the Canadian Wheat Board. And then they stand in this, then they stand here today and try and promote themselves as the agents of democracy on the question of Senate elections, Mr. Speaker.

You bet that Senate in Ottawa, that Senate in Ottawa, if it must exist, if it must exist, it should be an equal Senate . . .

The Speaker: — Let's . . . The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Well, Mr. Speaker, on the question of the Senate, you bet we talk about an equal, effective, and elected Senate. But I'll tell you what. When their Conservative friends in Ottawa make that place equal, when they make it effective, then we'll talk about electing to that body, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, on the issue of democracy and the debates that we've been having in this Legislative Assembly, I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that there were members in this House that voted to give producers the right of choice to do what they wanted to do with their own — with their own property, Mr. Speaker. It was this side of the House. It was this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the legislation that will be introduced later this day . . .

The Speaker: — We'll . . . Order. We'll just, we'll just have to try this again. Order. Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Wall: — I think I do. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, it's pretty . . .

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

Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We know why the NDP seem to be so grumpy over the last number of weeks. But we're asking them, Mr. Speaker, in this case to vote for common sense, vote for a pragmatic beginning to Senate reform. Other provinces are electing senators that the federal government can then appoint to the Senate.

If we are going to have a meaningful Triple-E Senate in the country, we have to start somewhere. This change does not require a constitutional amendment. We don't have to go down that route. It's something constructive provinces can do. Will the Premier support this common sense legislation from the member for Kindersley, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, this is interesting to say the least, that the Leader of the Opposition wants to talk about the Senate of Canada.

He does not want to talk about the number of jobs that exist in this province. He does not want to talk about credit rating upgrades being received by this province. He doesn't want to talk about 5,000 new training opportunities being created by this government. He doesn't want to talk about making life for Saskatchewan families. He doesn't want to talk about building a future here for our youth.

No. He wants to talk about the Canadian Senate and promises made by his Conservative party in Ottawa.

Well if he wants to talk about promises made, why don't we talk about the promise made to the people of Saskatchewan for a fair return for our non-renewable natural resources under a fair equalization? Why doesn't he want to talk about that?

Mr. Speaker, when you know you have no new policy, when you haven't got a new idea for the people of Saskatchewan, you start talking about Senate reform.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Screening and Treatment for Cancer

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's a very interesting segue the Premier just gave me. A few days ago I urged this government to establish a colorectal screening program. The minister rejected the call saying the program wasn't necessary. However now, the Canadian Cancer Society in a news release dated November 21 supports the call for implementation of a screening program.

Will the minister today reconsider his answer, a couple days ago and follow along with another new idea presented by the Saskatchewan Party?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting that the member opposite is taking credit for work being done by the Canadian Cancer Society, Mr. Speaker. This is a new low for the members opposite.

But secondly, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite again, his research department and himself, are misrepresenting my words in this Chamber and outside this Chamber. Mr. Speaker, we have not ruled out a colorectal screening program in the province of Saskatchewan. We are working, Mr. Speaker, with other provinces because there is currently no national screening program. This is not a simple matter for a simple problem, Mr. Speaker. We are working towards it. We have not ruled it out. We will continue to do so.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. McMorris: — Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad the Canadian Cancer Society supports our call for a screening program, Mr. Speaker, in their news release dated two days ago. I mean this government is very adept at stealing our ideas. Well here's another one that they can steal which actually saves lives. Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in this province. An organized screening program would significantly reduce those deaths, according to the cancer society.

I know the minister hates setting targets. We've heard that for the last year or two. But here's a target he could set. He could set this province as being the leader in this area and establishing a screening program here in Saskatchewan as the first province to do it. Will he commit to that today?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let's talk about leadership in Canada, Mr. Speaker. As much as the

opposition talks to the contrary, significant progress is never made overnight, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan has got in the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency now more professional people working than ever before in the history of this province, Mr. Speaker. We've got one of the most comprehensive drug programs for cancer care in the country, Mr. Speaker. We've got more equipment and technology working on our behalf than ever before, Mr. Speaker.

And more importantly, let's look at outcomes, Mr. Speaker. For breast cancer we've got the second lowest mortality rate in all of Canada, Mr. Speaker. We are leaders. We will continue to be leaders in this country, Mr. Speaker. And we are determined that, even though we've got more to do, we will be doing more, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I would agree with the minister in the fact that we are leaders. We have three times the national average for first visit to oncologist here in our province. We learned yesterday, Mr. Speaker, regarding breast cancer, that we are among the longest waits from operation to radiation treatment of anywhere in Canada. That's what we lead in this province, Mr. Speaker. And that's an absolute indictment of this NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, it's a strange combination in this province. The Minister of Finance can set away \$1 billion for an election slush fund, and yet we have the longest waiting lists of anywhere in Canada. We have people sick and dying of cancer, where they have to buy their own cancer drugs.

Under this government, it's a two-tier system, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the health system is under stress. Early detection and screening would help reduce this stress by saving lives. Will the government cough up a couple of million dollars from its election slush fund and deal with the real issues facing people in Saskatchewan — the longest waiting lists in cancer?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It serves no purpose whatsoever to compare data that was not collected using the same database or during the same time frame, Mr. Speaker. In fact it does a disservice to all of the hard-working people at the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency who have made reducing waiting times and improving care for cancer patients in this province a priority.

Mr. Speaker, this province put an additional \$10 million into the cancer centre this year. We are working on the national level with representation from the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency on the national body that the federal government is working with, Mr. Speaker. We are determined to reduce waiting times in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and improve the care of cancer patients. We are committed and dedicated to that and in fact, Mr. Speaker, we will carry that out.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. McMorris: — Excuse me. Mr. Speaker, it's interesting. The only person that seems to believe the numbers that come from that side of this Assembly is the government itself, because other people aren't buying their numbers.

If you talk to the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses, they don't buy the number of vacancies this government comes up with. They've done their own survey and find that we have far more vacancies than the government will admit. The Health Quality Council doesn't agree with the numbers put forward by this minister. Of course his numbers are very self-serving, trying to make the situation look as good as it possibly can be.

Mr. Speaker, when will he start listening to people like Saskatchewan Union of Nurses and the Health Quality Council dealing with the real numbers that people on the streets of this province are facing — some of the longest waits in Canada? When will he start dealing with those numbers?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The real number that I quoted earlier is the one that the member should concentrate on, and that's outcomes, Mr. Speaker. We have the second-lowest mortality rate for breast cancer in all of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — That proves that the people that we are working with in the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and throughout the regional health authorities, Mr. Speaker, are doing their job to help Saskatchewan people who are afflicted with this tragic and horrible disease.

Mr. Speaker, at the same time we are making significant progress. We support the Health Quality Council, Mr. Speaker, but since the Health Quality Council's report come out, we have demonstrated, Mr. Speaker, our number is about half what the quality council reported. We have made significant progress on wait times, Mr. Speaker, significant progress. We still have more work to do, and we will continue to do that work.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Perspectives on Tobacco Control Legislation

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

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday this NDP government introduced legislation allowing lawsuits against tobacco companies for smoking-related health costs. Yet just a few short days ago at the NDP's convention a booklet featuring a full page add encouraging marijuana use was found. Can anybody explain this contradiction? Why is this

NDP government encouraging and promoting marijuana usage? Why is the NDP taking money from a group encouraging the use of a harmful substance?

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

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to rise in this House to acknowledge the support that the Sask Party has provided for our legislation to enable this government to hold the tobacco companies to account for the damages that they are providing and causing to Saskatchewan people here in Saskatchewan.

Each and every year, Mr. Speaker, more than 1,000 people die in Saskatchewan due to tobacco-related illnesses. It costs Saskatchewan people almost \$150 million each and every year just on health care costs, Mr. Speaker. So I appreciate the support that they are going to be providing. Let's get this legislation passed. And let's hold the tobacco companies accountable for the ravages they've held on Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the ad features a quote from the federal NDP leader, Jack Layton. Mr. Layton says and I quote:

Our party is in favour of modernizing our marijuana laws and creating a legal environment where people can enjoy marijuana in the peace and quiet of their own home or in a cafe.

Mr. Speaker, this NDP government went to great lengths to ensure that you can't smoke a cigarette in Saskatchewan yet the...

The Speaker: — Order please. Order. Order. The member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP went to great lengths to ensure that you can't smoke a cigarette in a café in Saskatchewan. Yet the federal leader of the NDP Party says you should be able to smoke a joint in a café.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier support this leader? To the Premier: should you be able to smoke up in a Saskatchewan café where other people including children may be present and harmed by second-hand smoke?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:45]

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

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, we see again the inconsistency of this Saskatchewan Party. Just when they're

starting to make some positive contribution to Saskatchewan in the area of tobacco control, now they start to undercut that by demeaning the smoking in cafés, that somehow that that's not a necessary thing. In fact even in Lloydminster, Saskatchewan...

The Speaker: — Order please, members. Order. Order. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Healthy Living Services.

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, Lloydminster, Saskatchewan had plebiscite on this issue, and 75 per cent of Lloydminster residents endorsed the direction that this government is going. In fact we led the issue on the Saskatchewan side of Lloydminster. And now all of Lloydminster including the Alberta side is now protected, and their youth are protected where children have access.

Mr. Speaker, this government has taken a leadership role with the former Minister of Health and others within this all-party committee for tobacco control. I'm very proud to be part of this legislation, and I wish the Saskatchewan Party would get on board and stay on board, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously this minister and this government doesn't understand the contradiction. You can't advertise tobacco products in this province, and yet the NDP has no problem accepting money from a lobby group to run a full-page ad promoting marijuana usage. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't make any sense, and it's hypocritical. You can't condemn one and endorse the other one.

Mr. Speaker, for health reasons if nothing else, will the NDP vow it will never again accept money from groups promoting the use of a harmful substance?

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

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, I can understand the Saskatchewan Party. They are losing so badly in this House they now want to take the debate to Ottawa and talk about federal issues. I don't understand... I understand why they're doing this. Let's stick to the business of what's happening in this House, Mr. Speaker.

We've introduced legislation that will hold tobacco companies to account for the damages that they...

The Speaker: — Order. Order. The Minister of Healthy Living Services.

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, I have a simple question for the Sask Party today. We've introduced legislation to protect young people, to protect Saskatchewan peoples, to hold tobacco companies account for the damages that they're providing here in Saskatchewan. Will they pass this legislation before Christmas? Yes or no.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, my question is, will these guys stop being so hypocritical? On one hand they're talking about smoking legislation. On the other hand they have a federal leader who says that they're going to modernize laws and allow people to enjoy marijuana in a café. Now that's a contradiction.

Mr. Speaker, two years ago the Saskatchewan Party lead the charge against crystal meth. We had to drag this government kicking and screaming . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. Order please, members. Order. I would ask members not to holler out so it interrupts the flow of the person who has got the floor at the time. And right now the floor belongs to the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. We had to drag this government kicking and screaming into taking action on drugs, and hence we have the Premier's own resolution. He has Project Hope.

It's extremely disheartening to see this NDP promoting the use of marijuana now. And the latest trend, according to police and according to the kids on the street, drug producers lace marijuana with crystal meth making it even more addictive. Mr. Speaker, we have fought very hard against crystal meth. Why is the NDP now minimizing this fight by promoting marijuana usage?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, our focus is on making life better for Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan young people right here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the inconsistencies from that opposition would take longer than the minute that I have to finish up question period. The member for Saskatoon Southeast is spreading misinformation that there are no beds when there's been beds already announced.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Saskatoon Northwest is advising families to go out of the province for care when there's already world-leading care here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we have the best possible chance for people to grow up free from addictions and they call that project no hope, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we've introduced legislation that's going to hold the tobacco companies account. Will they support that legislation? Yes or no, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — The member from Meadow Lake has requested leave for introductions. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Seated in the west gallery are four individuals that are making up a group that I'll be meeting with in a few minutes. First of all I'd like to . . . If they'd just give a little wave. Vince Robillard is the director of operations of the Prince Albert Grand Council. Deanna McKay is the executive assistant to Grand Chief Michel, TeeJay Sumners is the executive secretary to Vince, and Doris Morin is from the Lac La Ronge Indian Band; she's a councillor.

I'd like to ask all members to please join me in welcoming them here. I'm a bit disappointed that there wasn't a bit more energy here for you to see. This is a bit quiet here today. So anyway, please join me in welcoming them here today.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Why is the member from Kelvington-Wadena on her feet?

Ms. Draude: — Leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. The member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister to welcome the individuals here from PAGC [Prince Albert Grand Council]. I had the opportunity to meet with them earlier this week, and I found the meeting very interesting. We are talking about a group of people who are very progressive. They have lots of idea that are going to make Saskatchewan a better place for everybody in this province. And I'm sure that the work that they are doing is of benefit to everyone. So I'd like to welcome them to their Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 202 — The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council (Set Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2006

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

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to

move that Bill No. 202, An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Set Election Dates) be now introduced and read a first time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Rosetown-Elrose that Bill No. 202, The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council (Set Election Dates) 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: — Order. Order. When shall the Bill be read a second time? The Chair recognizes the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

Mr. Hermanson: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 203 — The Senate Nominee Election Act

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

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 203, An Act to provide for the Election of Saskatchewan Nominees for Appointment to the Senate of Canada be now introduced and read for a first time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Kindersley . . . Order. It has been moved by the member for Kindersley that Bill No. 203, The Senate Nominee Election Act be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The motion is carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

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

Mr. Dearborn: — Well I don't think any of us are really sure, sir, but next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Government Whip.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government, I will table responses to written questions no. 71 to 118.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Responses to questions no. 71 to 118 inclusive have been submitted.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

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

Motion No. 1 — Loss of Confidence in the Government

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Elhard.]

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to again stand in this House and discuss the lack of confidence that we have in this government.

On I believe two Thursdays ago I had the opportunity to just speak for a few minutes. My colleague from Cypress Hills certainly got a number, quite a few remarks on the public record. Maybe he wanted a few more, but I ended up getting a few minutes at the very end of that debate. And I'm certainly glad to carry on today regarding the issue of confidence in this government. And as I was thinking . . . I only had a few minutes a couple of weeks ago, so I just mentioned a few things about how I thought this government had been operating. But since that time I've certainly had a lot more time to think. And I just . . . I really quite honestly wonder where to start when it talks about the issue of non-confidence in this government.

So I don't think I'll have too much trouble filling the rest of the time that we have today when I talk about this government and the lack of confidence that not only the people on this side of the House have but people throughout the province have.

And the first issue I have to talk about was an issue that we raised yesterday, the issue regarding population and the astounding numbers that this government has put together when it comes to population. Now I know they like to look at every other factor as to how this . . . how its performance is, how the government's performance is, how the economy performance is. The one number they just detest looking at, that they don't ever want to look at or acknowledge — and they didn't acknowledge it yesterday when we asked the questions — were the issues around population and out-migration in this province.

It's astonishing that after 15 years we could have done worse than . . . for example the first 13 years of their mandate that the last two years that we have experienced could be worse than the first 13, Mr. Speaker. The last two years have been the worst out-migration in the last decade. We have lost 18,000 people . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . In a boom, as the member from Wood River says. We hear about the boom that they keep talking about and we're experiencing because commodity prices

like oil and gas are high, but we continue to lose population.

We've lost 18,000 in two years and 37,000 people in the last five years I believe it was — or four years since this Premier has become Premier. That is astonishing when you look at a province that is as rich in resources and potential as we have, that this NDP government would be chasing that many people out of the province. And you know they'll always say, well it's really not us. It's not the government that's chasing them out; people are leaving for other reasons.

[11:00]

But, Mr. Speaker, there isn't a province in Canada that is experiencing the out-migration that our province is. We have lost so many people in the last year and two years that it beats the 10-year record that this government has overseen. It's unbelievable. So right with that very argument of population decline and the effects that population decline has on this province . . . Because I would say that of the 18,000 people that we have lost out of this province in the last couple years, I would bet that the average age of that population would be about 25 years old. I don't have the numbers to back that up but I would, I would guess, I would guess that the average age of that population — 18,000 — would be around the 25 . . . say the 20 to 30 mark, Madam Deputy Speaker, which is the earning potential of a person's life. That's the most important part of a person's life as far as earning potential and paying tax and spending money, buying homes. They're usually big consumers, Madam Deputy Speaker, and those consumers, those big consumers are taking themselves and their families and moving out of this province in record numbers.

If there was ever an indictment of a government it would be the fact that you cannot hold on to your youth. And that's exactly what is happening in this province right now. They can talk certainly that the job numbers are looking better and the commodity prices are better but a fair measure of how you are doing as a government is how you're doing as far as growth of population. And on every account this government is failing.

People around the province see it. We had a very good example of people in Weyburn-Big Muddy. I mean there's a community there that has lost a number of its youth. It's doing well as far as oil and gas, but the youth are continuing to leave and it's certainly . . . it causes some huge problems. It causes problems with health care — funding of health care.

Certainly the budget is at record levels and we're calling on the government at times to spend more money. But it's a tough situation to be in when you continue to lose your tax base. And as long as you lose your tax base and costs keep increasing, you're going to get squeezed. And that's where we are; that's the issue that we're facing in this province.

We have been blessed with the fact that commodity prices have been high. I can't imagine the situation that our province would be in when we're losing population that we are and have the commodity prices drop down to record lows. What would we be doing in this province to support health care and education had the commodity prices not stayed at record highs?

And the issue is population loss. You cannot sustain the

programs that we need in this province when you continue to lose the young people that we continue to lose out of our province. And I think there's a lot of reasons why youth are moving out. And sometimes they want to explore and find other . . . you know, learn about other areas of Canada or internationally, but there are some issues that I think directly point back to the government that are chasing the young people out of this province. I think when they look at the government that has very few new ideas they say, why would we stay here when a government is old and tired like this government is and can't come up with any new ideas? The only ideas that they do come up with are ideas that we've put in front of them that they choose to adopt. And well, the minister from . . . the member from P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote is shaking his head. He doesn't agree with that, but we could list . . . I could list dozens of ideas that they have come up with that we have put forward.

Well I mean, I remember in the 1999 election campaign we talked about all . . . We talked about personal tax cuts and the government said there was no way that could be done. We could never look at personal tax cuts like we had campaigned on. And the very thing that we talked on is the exact same thing that this government implemented.

We talked about business tax reductions in the last general election. Well of course the government said that could never be done and, three years into their mandate, they're adopting the very policies that we have said, that we had campaigned on. And, Madam Deputy Speaker, I'm certainly glad that we have been able to put ideas forward. Because if there was not the ideas coming forward from this side of the House, there would be absolutely nothing changed because that government seems to have few or no new ideas.

The area that I want to talk about for most of my address here is health care. And certainly I've been raising a number of issues, as other members have on this side of the House, regarding health care. Some of the cases that have come before this Assembly have just been absolutely heart-wrenching over the last year and a half to two years that I have been the critic. And I know there were many, many cases that came before this House prior to that.

I mean, the most recent one of course was the Crystal Bonderud case and the whole issue around her husband Doug and the misdiagnosis of his health problems that cost him really . . . quite frankly it cost him his life and, for Crystal and Doug, their future really. They were just recently married.

And it's a tragic story that a person in Saskatchewan would have to go through misdiagnosis — number one — for eight months, the lack of a CT [computerized tomography] scan that probably would have . . . probably would have identified the problem and that wasn't done. And then when they finally did the research that they did and the work that they did and went out-of-province, that this government wouldn't cover the cost that they incurred — the cost of the Mayo Clinic — where they found out that if the government had, this medical system had acted quickly, the tumour could have been removed early and the prognosis would have been much better than what it was.

Unfortunately his health had deteriorated by the time they got down there. They had to do an emergency procedure to remove

the tumour and I think the rest . . . I mean we've talked about in this House, but of course we know what had happened after that. But it's really an indictment again of this government and the way it's handling the health care system.

And there are many, many other cases, whether it's Avastin and the Bob Loeppky and Terry Rak and the situations that they have gone through, Madam Deputy Speaker. There are some huge concerns with the way health care is being delivered in this province.

So those are personal cases. And those personal cases I think highlight the situation that we're in in many jurisdictions around our province, whether it's in the Saskatoon Health Authority or the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Authority or many of the other health authorities, Cypress Hills or the Yorkton area.

There are some huge concerns with the delivery of health care, and it's mainly because of a lack of health care professionals. I believe that many of the situations that come before this House are a direct result of the shortage that we have, whether it be registered nurses, LPNs [licensed practical nurse], psychiatric nurses, general practitioners, or specialists. And we've talked about these issues for many, many years. This is not new information that I'm bringing forward, but it seems to be information that this government fails to act on.

When we talk about hospital closures, and they're temporary closures, but I have been absolutely amazed at the number of facilities that have been closed over the last number of months because they can't have a full complement of doctors or registered nurses on staff. Whether it was Central Butte that was closed a couple months ago because the one nurse that they had, had to go I believe on disability for a little while . . . and they are so short-staffed as soon as one nurse left, the hospital or the facility had to close.

I heard of another story actually last night of a nurse who has got severe back pain. She's in a small community, small town community. And really in any other situation, she would be put on disability until she recuperates. But she won't go on disability because if she goes on disability, it means the closure of their health care facility. That's a terrible onus to put on any one person's shoulders, that if you can't look after yourself and take the time off . . . if you do take the time off to look after yourself, it means the closure of the facility in your community and it puts the care of others in jeopardy. It's a huge responsibility to put on anyone.

Whether it's in Bengough or Vanguard — the story of the young fellow that broke his arm in Vanguard, the father took him to the hospital in Vanguard — that should never happen in Saskatchewan.

But it seems like this government right now, I mean they don't have . . . or they may have one what you would class as a purely rural seat. They represent the cities more than anything else. And they seem to have turned their back on, they've turned their back on rural Saskatchewan.

They have health care facilities closing on a weekly basis — only be it temporary — when people are relying on those

services, whether it's the story in Vanguard or the story from the member from Canora-Pelly when he took his father to Canora and they had to say no, you can't come in here because we don't have the health care professionals to maintain the service of care that his father in this situation would have needed.

So I think just in the situation of health care and the amount of hospital closures — albeit temporary — that we have seen over the last number of months, that alone would cause a person not to have much confidence in this NDP government. How could you have confidence in a government when it can't deliver basic health care in rural Saskatchewan in many, many of these communities?

But that begs the question, why is it that so many of these communities have to close their hospitals on a temporary basis? And why is that? Well it's the very issue that we have talked about for as long as I have been elected. I was elected in 1999, and I can remember the member from Melfort as the Health critic talking about how we needed to start increasing the seats for, example, registered nurses .

In 1991 when this government came to power, we had 500 graduating nurses a year. And there wasn't a shortage at that time. But under the decisions, because of decisions made by this government and its priorities — and I know there were challenges in the '90s, definitely challenges in the '90's — but the priorities that this government . . . the decisions regarding priorities that this government made are what is costing us the problems that we are having right now in the province.

We had as low as about 120 nurses graduating in one year in this province. When you look at the retirement levels, when you look at the retention levels, 120 nurses is nowhere close to what we need. And as a consequence of a number of years of low graduating classes, low numbers graduating, we've put ourselves in the situation that we're facing today. This situation didn't happen in one or two years. This situation has come about because of 10 years of decision making by this NDP government. And it's put us in this position. Even as we speak, this year there'll be about 100 and . . . No, there'll be about 230 nurses graduating, which is far below the demand that this province will need.

When you look at Manitoba and what that province has done, they are graduating far more. And I know the members opposite, that they will get up and they'll start saying, well you want the Manitoba program. Manitoba has two programs — diploma and degree. As far as comparing apples to apples, degree nurses . . . they graduate far more degree nurses than we do here in the province of Saskatchewan. So if we compare apples to apples, Manitoba is graduating more nurses and has for a number of years.

And had we been as progressive thinking as they were, I don't believe we would be in the problem we are right now. In fact the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses states that if we would retain the number of nurses over the last 10 years that Manitoba has retained, we would have 800 more nurses on the floors of our hospitals which, quite frankly, I think would allow a number of these facilities to operate — whether it's Spiritwood or whatever community — would allow these facilities to

operate to their full capacity.

But unfortunately the decisions made 10, 15 years ago by this government has put us in this position. And it's interesting that the members on that side will not admit to the fact that the decisions they made have caused the problem we're facing today. None of the elected members on that side will admit that.

However many of the members that were there at the time who are no longer elected — albeit whether it's the former premier, Roy Romanow, whether it's former cabinet minister, Janice MacKinnon — many of these people are saying now the decisions they made through the '90s with the 52 hospital closures and the reduction of health care seats, be it registered nurses or physicians, has caused the situation we're in today.

What also happens when we've made those decisions and we haven't graduated enough nurses and we start relying on fewer to do more and more and more, is we start then having problems with retention. In Saskatchewan we have the worst retention rate. So first of all you've got the declining number of seats, training seats, so we're declining there. Workloads are increasing. More and more nurses then are deciding, I don't need this. I can go somewhere else and work in a different province or country where I don't have the stresses that I'm experiencing here. So then what we end up having is the worst nurse retention rate at 67 per cent of anywhere in Canada.

So you've got declining numbers of seats, more nurses leaving, and the government says, I don't know why we're having trouble retaining nurses. Mr. Speaker, I don't think it's really that tough but it's just been interesting that none of the elected members on the government side will stand in their place and admit that.

[11:15]

I had a very interesting talk with the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses a couple of days ago, and what they were talking about is that this message has been delivered to the government over and over and over again. I remember shortly after I was elected. At that time there was a minister of Health — I believe she was from Nutana — an associate minister who had come from that Saskatchewan Union of Nurses, who was supposed to carry the message, who was supposed to deliver the goods. And it simply hasn't happened.

It seems like that they just really turned their back on that health care profession and have left them really twisting in the wind with not enough professionals to do the jobs that they need to do to keep the facilities open that should be open. There are some huge problems when it comes to the nursing shortage. The other area that we're definitely short in is physicians, be it general practitioners or specialists. We know that we're extremely short in both of those areas, and yet the government has been very, very, very slow to react. We had 40 training seats in Saskatchewan for a very long time. Now we're up to 60 training seats.

But let's compare that to our neighbour, not Alberta because I know they don't like that comparison. Let's compare it to what Manitoba is doing. And presently Manitoba has been training 100 physicians for a number of years where we're finally

getting to the 60 mark.

And then when you bring out the statistic, or the number, that Saskatchewan is more reliant on foreign-trained doctors than any province in Canada, it's no wonder. If you don't train enough . . . and I mean we may never be able to train enough to meet all our needs. But when you don't train enough to meet some of the demand, you have to rely on foreign-trained doctors which this government has done.

And I would bet that most of the facilities that we would talk about — whether it's Canora, Preeceville, or Kamsack or Spiritwood or Bengough or Central Butte — many, many of those facilities have had foreign-trained doctors in those facilities that finally at times get fed up and move on. They may come to the province and work for a few years and decide they want to try something different in a different province or in a different jurisdiction, and they move on. A lot of the impact that we're seeing with these hospital closures are directly because of physicians moving in and then moving on a couple years later. And it seems to be very hard to retain some of these physicians.

Tomorrow I have the opportunity of going out to Indian Head and meeting with a physician out there who is a foreign-trained doctor, has been in Saskatchewan for about three years. And just in the phone call that we had — the initial phone call that we had — he was talking about some of the concerns that doctors have that don't seem to be addressed, and so the doctors move on. They get tired of kind of banging their head against the wall because some of the concerns they have aren't being addressed and so they move on. And this is not uncommon. We have brought this up before.

I can tell you of a situation where an oncologist was in this province and eventually moved to BC. She had some very harsh things to say about the way the system was being run. Unfortunately she said them when she was in British Columbia instead of . . . I think she was at wits end and probably tried to raise the issues and didn't get the response that she wanted.

But what I called on this government to do over and over again is find out why these people are leaving. It's great to recruit but what we need to do is retain. We have physicians here that are leaving because of reasons. What are those reasons? And I have yet to hear from the government's side to list off a list of five or six or a dozen reasons why a physician would leave the province, why an oncologist would leave the province. She spoke out after she'd left. But many leave and we don't have an idea of why they've left. And I really believe it's this government's responsibility to find out the reasons why we are not able to retain physicians. And if we are unable to retain physicians, that we find out the reasons why that would be.

So health is a huge issue in our province. Over and over again it's the number one issue and I can certainly see why. We have people that go through the system that go through very cleanly and easily, but unfortunately far too many people — and I believe more in this province than any other province — have difficulty navigating the health care system.

So on that alone would be more than enough cause to have no confidence in this government. Okay. Because certainly we hear it over and over again from people that come through our

offices, that phone to our offices, that have had trouble navigating the health care system.

You know the classic example was yesterday and the day before when we were talking about the issue with the Health Quality Council and the numbers, the weeks or days that it took to get treatment. And a lady watching TV was in that very situation and although the minister was saying, no our numbers were wrong, the numbers that we were citing were the numbers that she was experiencing. She was actually experiencing that type of a wait, Mr. Speaker. And it's amazing that you bring the subject up again today and he still continues, the minister still continues to disagree with the numbers that people are actually experiencing in the province.

He can do whatever survey he wants and even the Health Quality Council can do whatever survey they want. When people are phoning in and saying the numbers that we at the Sask Party have been citing are what they're experiencing, I really think it's time for the government then to start listening.

One of the areas that . . . And this isn't health care; this isn't related to health care. But I really believe it's a whole attitude of the government that we are seeing right now. It's a government that's been in power for 15 years. It's a government that won't admit that it's done anything wrong. It's a government that will take credit for anything that happens to be right and will avoid anything that was . . . that may be negative. It's, at times it seems self-righteous. And I think there is examples of that earlier this week.

And I want to touch on some of the situations or issues that happened earlier this week in this Assembly, and how I think it really shows where this government is at, how it feels about itself, the aura that it presents in the general public. Because there are reasons why people don't vote for governments. And I think they are given many, many reasons from this government. And we saw it in Weyburn-Big Muddy. We'll see it again in the future. Because it's the attitude this government is giving off about what they do is right and if anybody else challenges them, they're wrong.

And I just think of the situation that went on earlier this week when we were talking about, we were talking about protestors outside of the credit . . . I think it's the Teachers Credit Union centre in Saskatoon. And some protestors were there. And what members did, whether they walked by or whether they stopped and talked. As I said in my question, a number of members stopped and talked.

But I remember after when we were talking about it and about a videotape that was taken. And members on that side thought it was appalling that a videotape would have been taken of them walking through, passed the protestors. They thought it was appalling and maybe I would too. I don't know. I mean that's a new area that is new. There's YouTube now and you can put it on there. And maybe that's something that just is not something that should be done.

But they said it was appalling. They couldn't believe how low the politics have gotten to be able to do something like that. But it was very interesting because once they went through that and were video taped, they got to a session that talked about the

very same thing. They talked about what they should be doing in the next campaign. They showed videos of how it had been done in the States. They talked about the very thing that they were finding so appalling here in . . . that had been done over the past weekend.

It's funny how if they do it, it's okay. But if anybody else does it, it's absolutely terrible. You know they can't have it both ways. The government cannot have it both ways. But that's what happens when it's an old and tired government.

Now I was told that I have to speak much clearer than I did on Monday. So I'll certainly speak clearer in that I'm not calling the individuals old and tired. I'm talking about the government being old and tired. Because I wouldn't want that to be misconstrued. I mean they're a year older than they were last year and so are we. But that doesn't mean I'm talking about the individuals, Mr. Speaker. What I'm talking about is a government attitude that's old and tired — that if we do it it's okay, but if somebody else does it it's not okay.

And the minister from Regina South is not understanding quite what I'm saying so I'll try and be clearer. I'm talking about a videotape that is on YouTube showing members of the government side walking passed protestors and how absolutely appalling it has been for some of the members. They've said it in the House here. I've heard the heckles back. But they walk through that protest only to be instructed on how to do the very thing that they were so angry against. The very thing.

And it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, you know I've gone on the NDP website and some of the pictures have been there for a number of years. But there's a picture of a number of . . . some of us from this side of the House that could not be . . . I mean . . .

An Hon. Member: — They're not flattering.

Mr. McMorris: — They could be . . . Yes, that's it. They're not flattering. There's probably even a better term for that. But they're on their website. They have no problem posting . . . I know there's a picture of myself, Mr. Speaker, and I have got my eyes three-quarters closed and my mouth wide open — I don't know how they ever got that picture — but my mouth wide open and my eyes three-quarters closed. They've got the most grainiest looking picture of me and that's not a bad shot, but it was just amazing. Now they can post that on their website. That's perfectly fine to post those things on the NDP website. But my heavens, if we happen to take a video of somebody rushing through a protester, that is appalling.

It's funny how they want it only one way. You can't have it one way. If you do things like that you're going to get them done back. If you're going to talk in a convention about using videotape to slam the members opposite, you're going to have it done about yourself. How can you have it both ways? It's amazing.

It's simply shocking . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well it's irrelevant. No it isn't irrelevant because you know I had a member, a member stand in the House on Monday and have to apologize for using unparliamentary language. And she was extremely upset. She was extremely upset. And I can see why,

because she was hollering, not listening to the question, and misunderstood what the question was. So she was very upset that I would have besmirched her integrity. Besmirched her integrity. But that member had no problem . . . I mean she had to apologize in the House for unparliamentary language. But that member had no problem going out in the rotunda and saying some things that besmirch my reputation, that's fine. If you're going to be able to dish it out, you better be able to receive it. If the members are going to dish it out, they'd better be able to receive it.

And it's funny how you can have members talking about, you know, what we're doing on this side of the House, but then we question and go the same way after them, and oh my heavens, how would you ever, why should you ever do that about me, talk that way about me? And that's exactly what that member did. She wasn't happy with what was said in the House, even though she was hollering so loud she couldn't hear the rest of my question. But she could go outside and talk about me in the rotunda, using the language that she couldn't use in here — unparliamentary language — and that for some reason seems to be perfectly fine.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have too many minutes left, but in the minutes I do have left, I do want to look at where this government is today and kind of use an analogy. It's kind of a different analogy but I really . . . Well the member from Saskatoon Greystone says we're on the way up, and I guess we'll see. The next test will definitely be Martensville, and we'll see how far up they're going in Martensville.

But I do want to talk about how this government and this Premier, and compare him to an old TV show that I used to watch when I was a kid. And I'm not comparing literally to this TV show, but figuratively. That's what I want to do, compare figuratively.

I don't know if any of you remember the TV show *Mr. Dressup*. And that used to be one of my favourites. In the small town that I grew up in we had one and a half channels of TV, and on the one channel we had *Mr. Dressup*. And I always remember sitting and watching that show. And I always liked the part when Mr. Dressup really did his namesake — he dressed up. He went to the tickle trunk. I never did like that part about Casey and Finnegan because I never really understood who Casey was. Was it . . . you know, what the role that person was playing.

But anyway, I do remember the issue when Mr. Dressup would dress up and he would go into the tickle trunk and he'd put on a coat and he'd look in the mirror and he'd look at himself in this coat and he thought he looked pretty good. And you know it kind of reminded me of the Premier, putting on the coat of, oh I don't know, business tax reform. It's really doesn't fit him very well. It's not really what he's about. But he puts this coat on as if it's going to change things. He'll put the coat on and then he'll also talk . . . as far as the Premier is concerned, he'll talk about greedy corporate hucksters, and they'll try and ram through legislation on most available hours. But now he'll put the coat on of business tax reform, thinking that people won't see through who he really is.

He'll put on a pair of glasses and look in the mirror and think, oh those look pretty good. And it reminds me of the campaign Imagine that the government will talk about.

The government will talk about a campaign Imagine and expect the federal government to come through with better equalization, but then in a speech to their convention and to the media talk about the Minister of Finance from the federal government drinking Harvey Wallbangers when he is supposed to be at work.

You know, you cannot have it both ways. You can't talk about how we're going to need this equalization and then on the other hand absolutely falsely slam the Minister of Finance. But now it's okay for that side to talk about . . . and trying to draw the Leader of the Opposition in with that when he was on his way to Swift Current to a birthday party. That's okay to say that.

I don't remember any apologies coming from that. And I don't remember . . . as I talked about the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow who didn't want her reputation besmirched, when you can talk about the Leader of the Opposition in those terms. It's absolutely appalling coming from the Premier of the province. Well you can't have it both ways.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Pursuant to a sessional order passed by this House on November 9, 2006, it is my duty at this time to adjourn this House at 11:30 a.m. Therefore this House stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

[The Assembly adjourned at 11:30.]

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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

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Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation
Provincial Secretary
Minister Responsible for Gaming
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance

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Minister Responsible for Literacy
Minister Responsible for Liquor and
Gaming Authority
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