



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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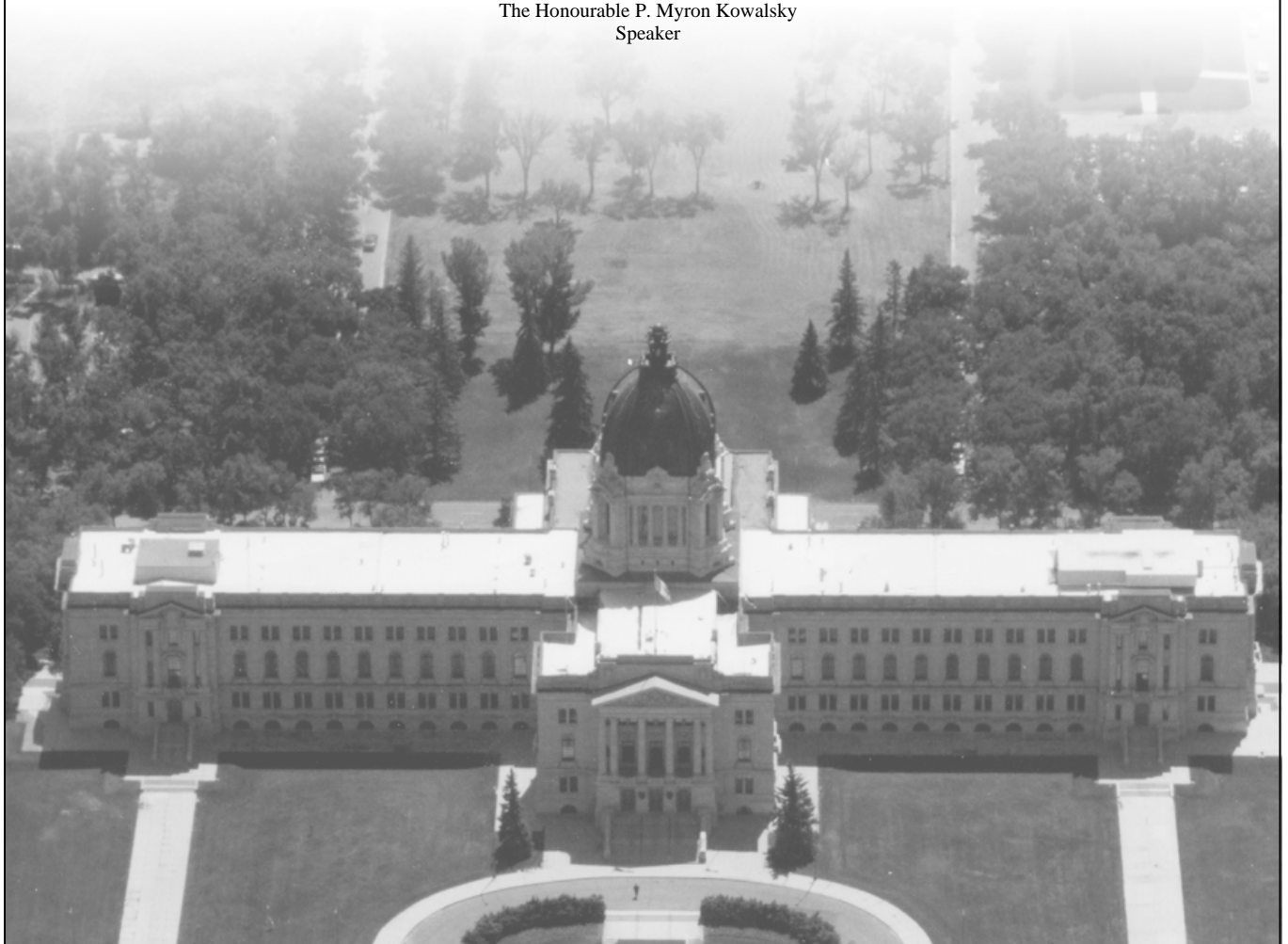
**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
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The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky  
Speaker



# MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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

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
Gantfoer, 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
Heppner, Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hermanson, Elwin	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Higgins, Hon. Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Huyghebaert, Yogi	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kerpan, Allan	SP	Carrot River Valley
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Kowalsky, Hon. P. Myron	NDP	Prince Albert Carlton
Krawetz, Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lautermilch, Hon. Eldon	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
McCall, 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

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Mr. Elhard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I will not be presenting petitions today in order to facilitate the Premier's attendance at question period.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — According to order the petitions received at the last sitting have been reviewed and pursuant to rule 15(7) are hereby read and received.

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Z99 Radiothon

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Rawlco Radio's morning crew found a great cause 20 years ago and have provided a fun event every year since. The Regina General Hospital neonatal unit has 342,600 more reasons to smile today than they had before the Z99 radiothon.

The listeners responded . . . in fact, Mr. Speaker, responded hardly describes the actions of Z99 listeners. They showed their world-class caring and generous spirit March 15 and 16. Because we take up the opportunity to participate through the Z99 radiothon, newborn babies and their families can be confident the neonatal intensive care unit is there for us all in every way.

What a tremendous gift the morning crew give us. CC, Lorie, and Buzz are very modest and properly credit the generous spirit of their listeners. We listeners and everyone involved with the neonatal unit at the Regina General simply love CC, Lorie, and Buzz and we respond with cheerful hearts and generous chequebooks. Thank you to everyone who made this 20th Z99 radiothon the most successful in every way.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Canadian Social Work Week

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, March 18 to 24 of this year marks Social Work Week across

Canada. Social Work Week provides us with an important opportunity to thank the many social workers throughout the province for their efforts to help individuals and families in this great province of Saskatchewan. The theme of this year's week is Social Workers Make a Difference in Children's Lives.

Mr. Speaker, social workers can be found in every corner of our province — working in family services agencies, children's aid agencies, hospitals, school boards, correctional institutions, welfare administration agencies, as well as federal and provincial departments. We have social workers to thank for the sometimes difficult work they do with families and individuals that help make our communities a better place to live.

On a daily basis social workers see a side of life and deal with situations that many of us would prefer not to. They often deal with situations involving poverty, domestic violence, abuse, unemployment, and more.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in thanking all of the social workers in Saskatchewan for the important work they do and the positive impact they have on children and families across this great province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Regina District Labour Council Awards Dinner

**Ms. Crofford:** — Mr. Speaker, Friday night I had the pleasure of attending the second annual Regina District Labour Council awards dinner. Guest speaker, John Cartwright, president of the Toronto-York labour council, spoke about Brian Mulroney breaking the social contract between business and labour to share the wealth that we commonly create. He stressed the importance of educating people. There was no free secondary education until people fought for it with support of organized labour.

Friday night, two people were recognized for their contributions through the labour movement to our quality of life. Susan Budson of RWDSU [Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union] Local 454 was named Labour Activist of the Year for her leadership she demonstrated as chief steward during the 450-day Sobeys strike. Janice Bernier received the Community Service Award.

Janice has a background with the United Way, is active in film and music, the SFL [Saskatchewan Federation of Labour] and helped put in place a representative workforce agreement with SaskTel and CEP [Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada] and as well established a food security fund. Her roots are rural, and most recently she was nominated as the NDP [New Democratic Party] candidate in the federal riding of Regina-Qu'Appelle.

Mr. Speaker, for those who wonder how we've achieved the quality of workplace wages, benefits, and occupational safety that we have today, it's people like these two women who have

led the way. I ask all members of the Assembly to join with me in acknowledging their awards.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **Motorcycle Trek Raises Awareness About Autism**

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to applaud the efforts of a Regina father who has packed up his motorcycle and is heading to the Arctic Circle in an effort to raise awareness about autism.

Dan Powaschuk, whose four-year-old son Eric was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder in 2005, has embarked on the 9,000-kilometre trip from Regina to Tuktoyaktuk to ensure the public knows exactly what autism is about.

Mr. Powaschuk says in the February 6, 2007 edition of the *Leader-Post*, quote:

“With autism you can’t take time.” . . . “This drive’s not going to help my son because he’s four now. The message, I say, is early intervention because you have to get them out of themselves into the real world.”

Mr. Speaker, as a fellow motorcycle rider, I have heard many tales about the route that Mr. Powaschuk is taking. This road is known as one of the most gruelling stretches in all of North America. It involves long stretches of gravel. It’s hard on the tires, and the weather is often very unpredictable.

I would like all members of this Assembly to join me in wishing Mr. Powaschuk the best of luck on his punishing 9,000-kilometre journey to the Arctic Circle and to thank him for raising awareness about autism. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **Saskatoon Woman Recognized for Achievements Related to Environment**

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, global climate change experts have been looking to honour brilliant women involved in environmental projects, and they’ve been looking in Saskatoon Nutana. Denise Kouri and Don Kossick have their home in my constituency and are the parents of 23-year-old Rosa Kouri. Rosa has recently been selected as one of only 23 women in the world to be recognized for achievements in the fight against climate change by the largest conservation organization on earth.

Mr. Speaker, the Switzerland-based World Conservation Union chose Rosa from a distinguished list of scientists, activists, and academics to be honoured on International Women’s Day. Though she’s only 23 years old, Rosa has already been an active steward of environmental issues for over 10 years. She graduated from Walter Murray Collegiate in Saskatoon with a

97 per cent average before attending McGill University in Montreal.

While in Montreal, Rosa founded the sustainable McGill project, a project now implemented in 65 different universities, before accepting a job as the national director of the Sierra Youth Coalition in Ottawa. Mr. Speaker, I’d like to invite all members to join me in congratulating Rosa Kouri and her parents, Denise and Don, for her most recent distinction. Rosa is a remarkable young woman and an excellent ambassador for our province.

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

#### **Columnists’ Comments on Murdoch Carriere Case**

**Mr. D’Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the weekend we heard from two provincial columnists on the Murdoch Carriere scandal and I would like to share a few selections from each of them in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, Murray Wood of Rawlco Radio tells us and I quote:

A well-timed budget leak intended to distract attention from Carriere. Anyone who doubts that it wasn’t an approved leak should bear in mind there was a time when such a leak would prompt calls for a police investigation. Instead, the government coyly offers a, “no comment” and “wait and see”.

And he goes on, to quote:

Will it be enough or will it be seen as a desperate government buying votes? Well, the point is the NDP is showing there are still buttons it can push. Will it distract attention from Carriere? Perhaps, but not for long.

And then there’s Bob Hughes in the *Leader-Post* this weekend and I quote:

I wish . . . [someone] would take the premier of the province, Lorne Calvert, and shake him by the shoulders and sit him down on their knee and explain what a mess he is allowing . . . [this] government to create over the Murdoch Carriere scandal. That is what it has become. A scandal of epic proportions . . . Every day this thing is allowed to go on without a serious government explanation is one more day that nine innocent women are humiliated even more . . . The party of the people? Who are they . . . [kidding]?

I couldn’t have said it better myself. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Work-Family Balance and Labour Force Shortages Conference**

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week the Balancing Work and Family Alliance of

Saskatchewan's labour, work, and family unit sponsored the Work-Family Balance and Labour Force Shortages Conference. Mr. Speaker, given that responsibility for child care still very much falls to women and that 80 per cent of single-parent families are headed by women, this is an issue of utmost importance to women in the workforce.

Mr. Speaker, the conference featured presenters from the universities of McGill, Guelph, Quebec, and Saskatchewan. And keynote speaker, Dr. Suzan Lewis from Middlesex University Business School in London, England, spoke about how employers can help manage labour shortages by helping their employees better balance work and family responsibilities. The conference underlined the fact that workplaces are able to accommodate employees' families' needs, attract better workers, have less turnover, and enjoy a healthier bottom line.

Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago Saskatchewan established itself as a national leader on balancing work and family when we became the first jurisdiction in Canada to appoint a public task force on this subject, and this NDP government is continuing that leadership role. Our support and sponsorship of this conference speaks directly to our recognition of the importance of this issue and our commitment to making life better for Saskatchewan families.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the organizers and participants in the Work-Family Balance and Labour Force Shortages Conference for their good work on this issue and for carrying on a very worthy Saskatchewan tradition.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

**The Speaker:** — Before oral questions, members, I'd like to revert back to introduction of guests.

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — It is my pleasure at this time to introduce a special guest who is seated in the front row of the Speaker's gallery today. Mr. Thembekile Msantsi is the Sergeant-at-Arms and head of safety and security for the Eastern Cape provincial legislature in South Africa. Later today Mr. Msantsi will be meeting with Mr. Hasani Ngobeni, the Sergeant-at-Arms from Limpopo province, South Africa, who is here on his second visit to Saskatchewan. These two Sergeant-at-Arms from South Africa are the special guests of our Sergeant-at-Arms, Patrick Shaw.

This delegation has come to our legislature on an attachment to learn more about what we do here and to look at the security hardware and security policies we have in place in Saskatchewan. Their visit also provides us with an opportunity to compare security policies.

Please join me in welcoming Mr. Msantsi and Mr. Ngobeni to our legislature.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, just on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan I'd like to join with you to say welcome to our guests. Saskatchewan is very, very proud of our relationship with South Africa, in particular our formal relationship with Free State province. And we look forward to what has been a continuing working relationship of mutual benefit and one that will long endure.

And we welcome the Sergeants-at-Arms from South Africa here to Saskatchewan. We hope that their stay will be fruitful and friendly and that they'll return and come back and see us again. Thanks.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

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

#### Management of Harassment Complaints

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It appears that the Premier's conscience started to bother him a little bit late Thursday afternoon. Apparently his answers earlier that day in this Assembly weren't quite close enough to reality, so at a hastily called news conference after 5 p.m. on Thursday he performed a dramatic about-face, Mr. Speaker. The Premier contradicted what he has been saying for the last several years, admitting that he was aware of the sexual harassment allegations made against Murdoch Carriere prior to them being made public in the media.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps someone over there can tell us why then the Premier has not been truthful with this Assembly. And more specifically, to the Premier, to the Premier: will he apologize for not telling the truth to this Assembly and the people of the province . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Order please. The member has made reflections upon another member in the House. And I think before we do proceed, the member ought to withdraw the remark regarding the reflection on another member in the House.

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I would ask the member for Cannington to just be patient and not interfere while the ruling is being held. And I apologize to the member for Swift Current who was about to make a remark.

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the remark.

**The Speaker:** — I would just ask all members to not comment on any ruling or comments that have been made by the Speaker, not to reflect. The question has been asked. We are now proceeding with question period.

The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Public Service Commission.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well one of the things I would like to say to the member opposite is that I have had an opportunity to review an ad that the Sask Party is running on Rawlco radio station. And what's interesting is that the Leader of the Opposition continues to try and exploit the women that work, still work in the provincial government for their own political purposes, Mr. Speaker, I might add.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what's so amazing about their advertisement is that they are saying that the Government of Saskatchewan compensated Mr. Murdoch Carriere for harassment and that is patently untrue, Mr. Speaker. It's patently untrue. The Government of Saskatchewan compensated Mr. Carriere because we were advised by legal counsel we were going to lose the case. And since the members are always looking for statements of claim, they can find on May 13, 2003, Mr. Carriere's statement of claim where he outlines his cause of action against the province of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order please. When taking into account language used in the legislature, the Speaker takes into account, not only the language but also the reaction that the language may evoke. And I would ask the member from Nutana to withdraw her remark because obviously provoking and causing uproar, uproar in the debate here in the legislature. The member for Saskatoon Nutana.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, in their ad they say that rewarding harassment . . .

**The Speaker:** — And simply . . . Order please. Just ask the member to withdraw the statement.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the patently untrue comment.

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, everything that the NDP says about this Carriere scandal is hard for the people of the province to believe. They find it hard to believe the Premier didn't hear the question last week posed by the member for Canora-Pelly, and that's what he said. He said he couldn't hear the member for Canora-Pelly. When the member for Canora-Pelly asked a question in Regina and I'm in Swift Current, I can hear the member. We've reviewed the tape. It's completely audible. Mr. Speaker, people of the province find it hard to believe that after receiving a letter from one of Mr. Carriere's victims, the Premier chose to do nothing. They find it hard to believe that until 5 o'clock Thursday, the Premier had conveniently forgotten about the letter.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier said he couldn't hear the member for Canora-Pelly. The problem is, is he hasn't heard the plight of these nine women, Mr. Speaker. That's the problem.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Wall:** — So I ask the Premier again, who had to clarify his remarks at 20 after 5 on Thursday: why did he not have the complete, the accurate, the truthful answer earlier that day in question period?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Public Service Commission.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, what the member needs to know is that the Premier is presently listening to the federal government budget, Mr. Speaker, and he's preparing, he's preparing for the budget. That's point number one. Point number two, when you are sitting in this Assembly on this side of the House and there's a lot of noise, you don't always hear the question. Now you do hear it on TV, but you don't necessarily hear it on the floor of the legislature. And if you ask people sitting in the galleries, there are many times when they can't hear either, Mr. Speaker.

But I do want to say this. I do want to say this to the opposition. On April 1, 2003 — and I've reviewed *Hansard* — they not only called for the firing of Mr. Carriere not once, not twice, not three times, but four times they wanted Mr. Carriere fired. That is point and fact number one. Mr. Speaker, the minister complied on April 2, and Mr. Carriere was terminated.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, you bet members on this side of the House called for the firing of Mr. Carriere. What we did not call for, what the people of this province didn't call for, what isn't called for is for him to receive a quarter of a million taxpayers' dollars, Mr. Speaker, while the women who were harassed get \$9,000 each. Let's be very clear. Let's have the whole truth.

Mr. Speaker, the truth of this government is this. They're not prepared to come forward with clarifications, with the actual truth until it looks like they're going to get caught, Mr. Speaker. That was the case in SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company]. That was the case with the Oyate Safe House scandal. And now, Mr. Speaker, it's the case with this very serious scandal surrounding the Carriere situation.

Mr. Speaker, this question is for the Premier. The budget federally hasn't even started yet, will he not stand up and answer as to why he did not correctly answer the member for Canora-Pelly's question? Why did he have to scramble and call a press conference and clarify what he really meant, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Public Service Commission.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Fact number three — because I've

given the first two facts — is the leader of the opposition of the day who is now Rosetown MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] what did he call for, what did he say? He said that the government, no doubt, would have a costly legal action. That's what the member from Rosetown, who was the leader of the Sask Party, had to say.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what's so fascinating, what's so fascinating about the present leader of the Sask Party, he's referred constantly, he's referred constantly to Murdoch Carriere's discipline as a promotion, his firing as a promotion, Mr. Speaker.

And I can just say this, that member every day goes outside of this House and, Mr. Speaker, he misleads the public. His ads are misleading the public, and I think it's time . . . and why do they do this? Because they want a showcase trial. They want a scandal of the century, and what for? Is it about the women? No, it's about their own . . .

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, the members on this side of the House and the people of this province, they don't want a scandal; they don't want that at all. What they would like though is a government that's going to answer some questions on the scandal that they have caused. Better yet, they'd like a government in place that wouldn't provide compensation to someone fired for harassment, convicted of assault when the women who are the victims in this case, Mr. Speaker, received one-tenth of what they're prepared to pay for the one that did the harassing.

Mr. Speaker, the question again is to the Premier. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday the Premier answered a question in this Assembly. He had to take the unprecedented step of scrambling to call a press conference after 5 o'clock on Thursday because he knew what he said here wasn't the truth. When are we going to get the facts, Mr. Speaker? When are we going to get the disclosure of the document, the settlement document with Carriere? When will we get these questions answered by this government intent on hiding something, on covering up the Carriere scandal, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Public Service Commission.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, the Premier is preparing to respond to the federal budget and isn't in the Assembly. But I will say this. You know what the Sask Party really wants? What they want is a showcase trial of the century. That's really what they want. They want a Conrad Black trial. Do they care about the women? Do they care about putting women through this?

In fact I listened very carefully to a woman on Gormley on

Friday, and what did she say? She really wants this to sort of settle down, Mr. Speaker. She wants to get back to her life, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it was a horrible thing that happened to the women in the Department of the Environment. It was a horrible thing. They called for his firing. The minister of the Public Service Commission of the day responded. The man was fired, Mr. Speaker. We knew at the time that this was a cause of action. The action was launched, and we settled. He was not, he was not compensated for harassment like they continue to say.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Ministers' Knowledge of Disciplinary Action

**Ms. Heppner:** — Mr. Speaker, what the Saskatchewan Party wants and what the victims of Murdoch Carriere want is justice, and they want answers from this government.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Ms. Heppner:** — Mr. Speaker, last week just outside the Assembly the Minister for PCS was asked when the former minister of the Environment knew about the decision to suspend and then promote Murdoch Carriere. The minister replied, and I quote from a tape of that interview, "You need to ask Ms. Crofford and you need to ask every other member of the cabinet of the day."

So, Mr. Speaker, let's begin with the former minister of the Environment. Was he aware of the decision to promote instead of fire Murdoch Carriere prior to this information being made public in the media?

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Public Service Commission.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, on this matter I answer for the members in the Assembly. And what I can say is that the former minister of the Public Service Commission in this Assembly said that the minister of the Environment and herself were briefed on approximately February 12, 2003, and that has already been reported in the Assembly if you review *Hansard*.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Heppner:** — Mr. Speaker, the people of this province are going to have a hard time believing anything that this NDP government has to say. First of all, the entire cabinet claimed to know nothing about the Murdoch Carriere scandal until the Gillies report was leaked to the newspapers.

[14:00]

A few days later, the minister for PCS said that they didn't understand the significance of this harassment. Last Thursday, the Premier said he was never briefed on the issue and then held a news conference to say that, oh yes, by the way, he knew about it. And the former minister responsible for PCS said that both she and the former minister of the Environment knew at least two months before Murdoch Carriere was fired for this harassment.

My question is for the former minister of the Environment: when was the very first time that the former minister heard of the Carriere scandal happening in his own department?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Public Service Commission.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, do you notice how the opposition keeps moving this? They keep moving this. It is now a scandal. Do you notice that? They sort of keep trying to frame the language — a scandal, Mr. Speaker. It's a scandal, a scandal of the century . . .

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Public Service Commission.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the scandal of the century. And that was when former members of the Conservative Party were hauled into court in the 1990s, and they were charged and convicted with taking money from the public. And the Leader of the Opposition, where did he work? He worked in one John Gerich's office, and he was one of the people that went to jail, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Order. The minister has 10 seconds.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — And Mr. Speaker, he said, the Leader of the Opposition said, I didn't know. Well I say he didn't want to know, Mr. Speaker. That's what I say. The opposition members — and there's plenty of them over there — they know about . . .

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Heppner:** — Mr. Speaker, this is a scandal. It is a scandal that nine women were harassed under this government's watch. It is a scandal that these nine women were forced to all sign a settlement agreement or threatened to get nothing by this government. It is a scandal.

Mr. Speaker, it absolutely defies all logic that the former Environment minister did not know about Murdoch Carriere's harassment earlier than February 2003. The minister has had a long-time personal relationship with Murdoch Carriere. In fact *The StarPhoenix* reports in April 2003 when writing about Murdoch Carriere, and I quote, "What's more, he has known

Environment Minister Buckley Belanger for 20 years and even phoned him for help last December." The same article states, quote:

If Belanger knew about Carriere's misdeeds, he could have taken action himself sooner. If he didn't know, he's hopelessly out of touch with his own department.

The fact that the minister was out of touch with own department is easy to believe, Mr. Speaker. But it's even easier to believe that he doesn't want to admit what he knew and when. Will the former minister admit what he knew and when?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Public Service Commission.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister of the Public Service Commission on April 2, 2003, indicated that both she and the minister of the Environment on approximately February 12 were provided with information regarding Mr. Carriere. But she also indicates that they were told disciplinary action was taking place, but they were not given details, Mr. Speaker.

But what I will say to the member opposite is that they want to keep this going for their own political purposes. They call . . . it's all about politics. It's not about the women that still work in the Department of the Environment. It's all about them, Mr. Speaker. And I find that, Mr. Speaker, callous and very insensitive.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Heppner:** — Mr. Speaker, the former minister of the Environment has an obligation to these nine women who were harassed and to the people of this province to tell us what he knew. We were talking about a man the former Environment minister has known for over 20 years, a man who has been moved from his high-profile job in the former minister's own department, a man who spoke to the minister and met with the minister often.

To the member for Athabasca: will he admit today to this Assembly that he knew about the Murdoch Carriere harassment of women long before the Gillies report but did nothing to stop the harassment?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for the Public Service Commission.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — There are members over there that actually worked in the very office of cabinet ministers that were charged and convicted. I think the member from Silver Springs, I think the Leader of the Opposition — they were actually in the office of the minister that was later charged and convicted. And I say, what do you know? When did you know it? Why didn't go to the public? That's what I say to them, Mr. Speaker. You



know what this is all about . . . Or why didn't they go to the police, the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police]? They must have known what was going on in those offices, Mr. Speaker. They knew but they didn't come forward.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister of the Environment has indicated that Mr. Carriere called him in December. He told him he could not speak about the case to Mr. Carriere, end of story. He was advised in February that disciplinary action was going to take place, and he was not given the full detail which we all read about on April 1, 2003, on the front page of the newspaper.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Budget Presentation

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NDP is so desperate to deflect attention away from the Murdoch Carriere scandal that they are now leaking their own budget. There was a time when this type of thing would get a Finance minister fired. But in this NDP government, not telling the truth about SPUDCO doesn't get you fired. Not telling the truth about putting children at risk in a so-called safe house doesn't get you fired. And now, even the Premier has been caught, Mr. Speaker. So I guess the Finance minister leaking his own budget is no big deal to members over there, to this tired and increasingly desperate NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, why is this NDP government now leaking its own budget to deflect attention away from the Murdoch Carriere scandal?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Mr. Speaker, I find it very interesting to see the response that the Sask Party has to the stories in the weekend paper. I find it interesting that they say that there should not be money to support seniors and their drug costs. I find it interesting for them to say that we should not be providing incentives to help young people stay in this province. I find it very interesting the Sask Party has no money for this but has lots of other demands for us to spend money on business tax cuts and on property tax cuts for some of the richest landowners in the province.

Shame on that opposition if that's where their priorities are. We will see on Thursday in this House where this NDP government's priorities are.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Unbelievable, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in 1988 when specific details in the 1988 budget were leaked to the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation], the

NDP called for the minister of Finance's resignation. Here exactly is what NDP MLA Murray Koskie asked then Finance minister Gary Lane. He said and I quote, quote:

. . . if it comes to pass, [referring to the leaked budget measures] I ask you whether you are in fact prepared to do the honourable thing and to submit your resignation as Minister of Finance?

Mr. Speaker, that is the question that the NDP asked after the budget leak in 1988. Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Finance the same question today; is he going to do the honourable thing and resign today?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Well the quick answer is, it's not on my list of things to do today, Mr. Speaker. But I can tell you this, as I'm preparing for the budget on Thursday, what this NDP government is going to make sure is that there are initiatives that benefit Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan families, that benefit our seniors, that help make this a more attractive place for young people to live, to start their careers, to raise their families. They'll be money in this budget that'll help working class . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I'll ask members to come to order so that the person who is on his feet can be heard. Order please. Minister of Finance may complete his statement.

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Mr. Speaker, this NDP government on Thursday will present a budget that will speak to the values of Saskatchewan families and Saskatchewan people. It will support our seniors in dealing with health care costs. It will help make this a more attractive place for young people to start their careers and raise their families. It'll focus on the question of how we fund our education system. This budget will make life better for Saskatchewan people. I hope the Saskatchewan Party sees it.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, if there's any more leaks or many more details, we won't need a budget on Thursday.

Mr. Speaker, back in 1988, the NDP also called for an investigation into the budget leak. Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister today: has he ordered an investigation inside his department? Outside his department? With his staff? With his colleagues? And if not, Mr. Speaker, is it because he orchestrated the budget leak himself to deflect away attention from the Murdoch Carriere scandal?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Mr. Speaker, in fact we have asked for

a review to be undertaken to find out the circumstances of the report that was in Saturday's paper. But I can see why people would be so eager to find out the good news that was reported in the Saturday paper.

I can see why people would be excited to learn that this NDP government is thinking about capping drug costs for our seniors. I can see why people would be excited to see the type of bold initiative that's being promoted to help young people stay in this province. And I can see why people would be concerned about a Sask Party opposition that cares only about its own politics and not about the interests of Saskatchewan people. This will all be revealed on Thursday, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — The only good news we've seen so far, Mr. Speaker, is that it might lead to this minister's resignation.

Mr. Speaker, in the last few months this desperate NDP government has gone on a pre-election spending spree, desperately trying to buy votes. Many people are questioning whether the NDP spending spree is sustainable in the long run, including former NDP Finance minister, Janice MacKinnon. Janice MacKinnon calls the NDP's spending plans, and I quote, "unsustainable." And she says that this NDP government may be driving the province back into a deficit. Mr. Speaker, the NDP's own former Finance minister — the one who did balance the budget — says that this government's plans are unsustainable.

Mr. Speaker, to the Finance minister: why is he driving Saskatchewan back into deficit financing?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — I find it interesting that this morning the Sask Party leader puts out a press release that says that our priorities are wrong, that there's not enough money in this province to pay for a drug plan to support our seniors, but there's enough money to cut more business taxes. He says there's not enough money in this province for us to be able to find a new way to help young people get their careers started here, but there's money for property tax cuts.

Mr. Speaker, this budget that comes down on Thursday will be a budget that will present a set of choices to Saskatchewan people. Do we spend the money in this province to support our seniors and our young people and to build our economy and build our communities? Or do we spend it on those kind of things that the Sask Party's calling for? That is a choice Saskatchewan people are going to make.

The budget I table in this House on Thursday, Mr. Speaker, will ask people to support a budget that makes life better for Saskatchewan families, regardless of what the Sask Party's politics are.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

### Transportation Strategy for Saskatchewan

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago the Premier and the Highways minister unveiled an ambitious and innovative transportation strategy for Saskatchewan called transportation for economic advantage, a 10-year, \$5 billion strategy to realign our transportation system to meet the needs of our thriving, 21st century economy.

In addition, an announcement was made by the Premier at the recent convention of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities indicating that rural municipalities will receive \$10 million in new money for transportation infrastructure in the upcoming provincial budget — \$5 million for the roads to resources program funded by the Department of Highways and Transportation which will provide assistance to rural municipalities in the heavy oil area of the province that face . . .

[14:15]

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Order please. Order please. Order. I would invite the minister . . . Order please, members. Order. I would invite the Minister of Government Relations to continue.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, \$5 million for the roads to resources program funded by the Department of Highways and Transportation which will provide assistance to rural municipalities in the heavy oil area of the province that face large road maintenance costs due to high volumes of heavy-truck traffic. Five million dollars will also be provided for a new municipal primary weight corridor program funded by the Department of Government Relations, increasing to \$10 million in 2008-09.

I want to commend SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] for their work on Clearing the Path and the recommendations for development of RM [rural municipality] primary weight corridors. SARM and the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, along with Government Relations and the Department of Highways and Transportation, have worked together over the past three years to identify these corridors.

The corridors will provide access to remote communities and industry where primary weight highways will not be developed. They will provide interconnecting links to the primary weight highways system and redirect traffic from TMS [thin membrane surface] highways to parallel RM roads.

With these two funding announcements, the potential exists to achieve a true integration of the municipal road network and the provincial transportation system for the first time in the province's history. We remain committed, Mr. Speaker, to continue working with leaders at all levels of government to build a foundation for excellence in economic growth and social

progress for all municipalities and to ensure Saskatchewan remains the best place to live, work, and raise a family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to respond to the minister's ministerial statement. Well again we see more evidence of a deathbed conversion on the part of the NDP concerning highways and roads in this province. After 16 years of neglect by the NDP, they start to make some announcements.

But of course, Mr. Speaker, as we see in the previous announcements, it's announcement about . . . They claim to be new spending even though when you take a look at the amounts that they are talking about, given inflation and the need and the so-called six pillars, it's very little money for the highways and roads of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to thank SARM for all the hard work that they've done in Clearing the Path initiative, but, Mr. Speaker, this old and tired NDP government has piggybacked this SARM initiative, now is taking credit for their work.

Mr. Speaker, as we saw in the previous announcement of the \$5 billion over 10 years, it came down to on the average of \$500 million per year. And when you take into account the \$404 million that's in the present budget in Highways, Mr. Speaker, that leaves very little for new money in the budget for future years.

And really, Mr. Speaker, all we see here is another announcement to try to deflect the problems that the government have had in the last 16 years of underfunding highways and roads in this province. And it's going to take many, many years of sustained budgets, sustained money putting into roads and highways in order to bring them up to a world-class standard that this province so desperately needs, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP has not had a plan for highways for 16 years. This province has had eight different Highways ministers spending millions of dollars without a plan. And the Premier said it himself: now with an election on the horizon, the NDP finally came up with a plan.

Mr. Speaker, the government's announcements are neither plans nor historic, Mr. Speaker. As the Premier admitted previously, that it has a tradition of just making ad hoc announcements. There's no plan in place. And as we see again, Mr. Speaker, this government is making an announcement today with no plan in place. We don't know where it's going to go, and basically it's another leak from the budget that's coming up, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have suffered long enough under this desperate, old, tired government, and the next announcement they should make, it should be is to call an election. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Government Whip.

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government, I'll be tabling responses to written questions no. 381 through 484. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — Answers to questions 381 to 484 inclusive have been submitted.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 46 — The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2007

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

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today to present to the House second reading of legislative amendments to The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2007.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments, along with those of The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act, will allow Crown-acquired crude oil and natural gas production to be treated as if the production is Crown production for royalty and tax purposes. As well, they will eliminate the need for having the separate Crown-acquired mineral ownership category for royalty tax purposes and significantly simplify regulations and future administrative systems related to determining the royalties and taxes.

The Crown-acquired mineral ownership category within Saskatchewan's royalty tax fiscal structures has existed since January 1974. Crude oil and natural gas production associated with the mineral rights acquired by the province under The Oil and Gas Conservation Stabilization and Development Act, 1973 became known as Crown-acquired production.

Mr. Speaker, since 1973, three separate mineral ownership categories, namely Crown, freehold, and Crown-acquired, needed to be considered within the fiscal regimes applicable for oil and gas production in the province. Crown-acquired production was subject to both the production tax and a royalty in accordance with the freehold lease that existed in December 1973.

On March 1, 1998 the freehold royalty liability was eliminated and the production tax was increased to equate to the Crown royalty that would otherwise be payable if the production was pursuant to a Crown lease issued under The Crown Minerals Act. The extra administration associated with levying a tax on the Crown-acquired production, instead of a standard Crown royalty, was not addressed at that time because of the difference in treatment of Crown-acquired production and Crown production within the corporation income tax system.

Mr. Speaker, in 1974 the federal government eliminated the

deduction of provincial royalties and production taxes within the federal corporate income tax system and introduced a deduction called the resource allowance in lieu of the royalties and production taxes. Then in 2003 the federal government implemented a phase-out of the resource allowance and the phase-in of full provincial resource royalty tax deductibility.

Mr. Speaker, starting this year provincial royalties and taxes are now fully deductible for corporate income tax purposes. This being the case, full consideration can now be given to eliminating the Crown-acquired mineral ownership category within the royalty tax systems, and treating this production as if it were produced pursuant to a Crown lease issued under The Crown Minerals Act.

The changes we are proposing have no revenue or netback implications to the province or oil and gas companies, but have the benefit of significantly simplifying The Crown Oil and Gas Royalty Regulations, The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Regulations, 1995, and the associated industry and government administration systems.

The recommended amendments to The Crown Minerals Act, in conjunction with the recommended amendments to The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act, would effectively treat Crown-acquired production as if it were Crown production for royalty tax purposes. In addition, companies looking to make oil and gas investments for the first time in Saskatchewan would no longer have to learn about or be concerned with the Crown-acquired mineral ownership category. The changes will make it easier for these companies to understand the royalty tax systems applicable to crude oil and natural gas produced in Saskatchewan.

As we make these changes I want to remind the House, Mr. Speaker, that the oil and gas and mining industries contribute a great deal to the Saskatchewan economy. These industries create jobs, build capital investment, and create opportunities for business and communities and families across our province. They are the key economic drivers for prosperity in Saskatchewan, ranking above agriculture in provincial GDP [gross domestic product].

Mr. Speaker, this legislation only affects certain companies producing crude oil and natural gas classified as Crown-acquired production in Saskatchewan. The two major oil and gas producing associations — namely the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and the small explorers and producers of Canada — have reviewed these legislative amendments and agree with these amendments.

Mr. Speaker, I now present the legislative amendments to The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2007. I move second reading. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Industry and Resources that Bill No. 46, The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2007 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

**Mr. Gantefer:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and speak on Bill No. 46, An Act to amend The Crown Minerals Act. Mr. Speaker, as the minister outlined, the oil and gas production company and the oil and gas production department are very, very important to Saskatchewan's economy both now and into the future. Saskatchewan is in a very enviable position about having a great number of assets in the oil and gas sector and I think that any streamlining of the regulatory framework under which these companies operate is an improvement upon which we would certainly look very favourably.

The minister outlines rather technical considerations that are embedded in this Act. And I know that we will want to speak as well to the various representatives of these oil and gas acquired companies that this legislation and legislation under, I believe, Bill No. 48 are going to affect. And in order for that consultation to happen between our critics and these companies, I would at this time move to adjourn debate.

[14:30]

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member for Melfort that debate on second reading of Bill No. 46, The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2007 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

#### **Bill No. 47 — The Fatal Accidents Amendment Act, 2007**

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

**Hon. Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of The Fatal Accidents Amendment Act, 2007.

Mr. Speaker, The Fatal Accidents Act allows family members of deceased persons to recover damages for the death with the result of another person's wrongdoing. The wrongdoing must be such that the deceased would have been entitled to maintain an action and recover damages if he or she had lived.

Presently, Mr. Speaker, the Act allows the recovery of non-monetary damages for grief and loss of guidance, care, and companionship. The Act allows spouses, parents, and minor children to recover these non-monetary damages in the amounts specified in the Act. The Act also allows minor children of the deceased to recover \$30,000.

Presently however, there is no ability for adult children to recover any damages for grief and the loss of guidance, care, and companionship on the death of a parent. The proposed amendment will allow children of all ages, not just children who are under the age of 18, to recover damages for grief and loss of guidance, care, and companionship when a parent dies as the result of a wrongful act.

In 2004 the Alberta Court of Appeal struck down an Alberta provision that restricted the recovery of non-monetary damages to minor children. The court found that such provision

contravenes the equality rights in the Charter. The court considered that the grief a child feels on the death of a parent is not dependent upon the age of the child.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment will allow children of all ages to recover damages for the loss of guidance, care, and companionship in the circumstances of a wrongful death of a parent. This amendment will ensure that the Act meets the requirements of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of an Act to amend The Fatal Accidents Act.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 47, The Fatal Accidents Amendment Act, 2007 be now read a second time. The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

**Mr. Gantefer:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise to speak to Bill No. 47, an Act to amend The Fatal Accidents Act.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister outlined, certainly in the times of a tragic accident involving children that this legislature and this province needs to do everything that it possibly can to alleviate the stress and anxiety and grief of these individuals. And so, Mr. Speaker, it certainly would seem that the legislation that's proposed in this Act is indeed something that is worthy of very positive consideration. I know that we're going to want to speak to members of the legal profession to make sure there are no unintended consequences of this legislation. And in order to facilitate that discussion at this time I'd move to adjourn debate.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member from Melfort that the debate on second reading of Bill No. 47 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

**Bill No. 48 — The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Amendment Act, 2007**

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

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — Yes, thank you. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to move second reading of The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Amendment Act, 2007. Mr. Speaker, these amendments, along with The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, are designed to allow Crown-acquired crude oil and natural gas production to be treated as if the production is Crown production, royalty tax purposes, to eliminate the need for having the separate Crown-acquired mineral ownership category for royalty tax purposes, and significantly simplify regulations and future administrative systems related to determining the royalties and taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I just spoke to the companion piece of legislation a few moments ago. And in fact the reasons for the two pieces

of legislation are really the same so I'm not going to repeat everything that has already been said. But I do want to say, Mr. Speaker, that these changes will result in greater simplicity for both government and industry. And while I'm on my feet, I'd just like to say that they are part of several changes the government has been making with respect to oil and gas and its treatment by the Government of Saskatchewan in an effort to encourage that kind of activity.

And as I said in my previous remarks, Mr. Speaker, these industries — mining and oil and gas, but we're talking about oil and gas right now — are a very important driver for the Saskatchewan economy. And over the last several years we've been trying to simplify regulations, make royalties and taxes more competitive, and generally grow these industries.

And I'd like to report to the House, and through you, Mr. Speaker, in relation to these two pieces of legislation which add more simplification, that what we are hearing on a constant basis from the oil and gas sector is that they like doing business in Saskatchewan. Many companies have told me that they prefer doing business in the province of Saskatchewan to Alberta in terms of the regulatory structure and dealing with our department personnel. And we have a very good relationship with the industry, Mr. Speaker.

And I'd like to say, Mr. Speaker, that last year drilling in Saskatchewan increased quite considerably while it decreased in the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia. So we're definitely headed in the right direction, Mr. Speaker. And on a final note, I'd like to tell the House, through you, Mr. Speaker, that I just reviewed the most current numbers I have for drilling in Saskatchewan this year, so far this year. And it is approximately 35 per cent higher than it was last year.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Cline:** — So it's fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that the oil and gas sector, which is producing twice as much in Saskatchewan as 10 years ago, is really doing well. That benefits them, but it also benefits all the people of the province. These amendments help us simplify the regulatory framework, and so I'm very pleased to move second reading. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Industry and Resources that Bill No. 48, The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Amendment Act, 2007 be now read a second time. The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

**Mr. Gantefer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and speak to the Bill No. 48, An Act to amend The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act as well The Crown Minerals Amendment Act that was presented earlier this afternoon by the minister, because as he indicates both circumstances, and these are companion pieces of legislation and probably should move together in consideration as they proceed in the normal process of consideration in this House.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed true that over the last number of years the oil and gas sector has become an increasing component of

the GDP of the province of Saskatchewan, and that's indeed good news for the province of Saskatchewan. I just hope that they're going to be able to continue to explore and develop wells and production of oil and gas that will keep up with the pace of the leaks that are happening in the budget travelling out on the other side so that what they are doing is something that'll contribute to the sustainable future of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I know that our critic for this segment of our economy is going to want to speak to the affected industries and make sure that nothing has been overlooked in the development of these two companion pieces of legislation. And in order to allow that to happen properly, at this time I move to adjourn debate.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member from Melfort that debate on second reading of Bill No. 48 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask leave of the House to introduce a motion related to the time of adjournment on Tuesday, April 3.

**The Speaker:** — Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

## MOTIONS

### Time of Adjournment on April 3, 2007

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Opposition House Leader by leave of the Assembly:

That notwithstanding rule 6(1) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan* on Tuesday, April 3, 2007 the time of the daily adjournment shall be at 5 p.m. in order to facilitate the participation of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Saskatchewan Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy.

I so move.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by leave by the member for Moose Jaw North, seconded by the member for Melfort:

That notwithstanding rule 6(1) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan* on Tuesday, April 3, 2007 the time of the daily adjournment shall be at 5 p.m. in order to facilitate the participation of members of the Legislative Assembly in

the Saskatchewan Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, in light of the time and the schedule of work to be done, in order to accommodate the work of the Standing Committee on Human Services, the Standing Committee on House Services, and the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:38.]

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# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

## CABINET MINISTERS

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**Hon. Lorne Calvert**  
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  
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**Hon. Joan Beatty**  
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**Hon. Buckley Belanger**  
Minister of Community Resources  
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**Hon. Eric Cline**  
Minister of Industry and Resources  
Minister Responsible for Investment  
Saskatchewan Inc.  
Minister Responsible for Information Services  
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**Hon. David Forbes**  
Minister of Labour  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
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**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  
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