



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

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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 Moosomin.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege today to present another petition of behalf of the folks surrounding the Broadview area in regards to a dialysis service in the Broadview Union Hospital. And I read the prayer:

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the petition I present today is signed by the folks of Cowessess and Grenfell. I so present.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have petitions to present today. 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 ensure that the Maryfield School remains open.

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

These petitions come from the good people of the Maryfield and Fairlight communities. I so present.

**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 — you guessed it — Highway 310. And the prayer reads:

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

The people who have signed this petition are from Buchanan and Kuroki. 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 dangerous practice of transferring patients from one ambulance to another on the highway. 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 cease the transfer of patients from one ambulance to another while en route.

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

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

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

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again today I have a petition with citizens concerned of 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 Humboldt, Saskatoon, Lake Lenore, and Burr. 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 citizens of southeast Saskatchewan who are very concerned about the condition of Highway 18. I'll 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 invest the needed money to repair and maintain Highway 18 so it can return to being a safe and economical route for Saskatchewan families and business.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by folks from Radville and Weyburn. I so present. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to present another petition from the citizens of Wilkie who are opposed to possible reductions in their 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 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 Landis and Biggar. I so present.

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

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today to present a petition on behalf of the 600 children under six years of age and their parents in the Saskatoon Silver Springs constituency regarding a much needed elementary school in the Arbor Creek-Willowgrove neighbourhood of Saskatoon. The prayer of the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to implement an allocation of financial resources to build an elementary school in Arbor Creek and Willowgrove.

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

Petitioners today come from the area of northwest Saskatoon — Wright Terrace, Wickenden Crescent, and Kenderdine Road. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Allchurch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the Assembly today to bring forth a petition signed by citizens of southeast Saskatchewan that would like a dialysis unit in the Broadview Union Hospital. 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 implement a strategy that will see a dialysis unit placed in the Broadview Union Hospital.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, signators of this petition are from citizens from the southeast constituency. I so present.

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

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring a petition of Saskatchewan people that are deeply concerned about the presence of sexual predators that are present in a threat to their communities:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take all steps available to speed up public disclosure process so that communities are alerted to the presence of known sex offenders in their community as soon as possible.

And as duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, it is signed by the good people of Cudworth. I so present.

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

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House to present a petition requesting an allocation of funding for an elementary school in the Stonebridge neighbourhood of Saskatoon. The prayer says:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to implement an allocation of financial resources in this year's budget to build an elementary school in Stonebridge.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from Martin Crescent and Gordon Road in the Stonebridge area of Saskatoon Southeast. I so present, Mr. Speaker.

### 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.

### NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 53 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Health: what is the breakdown by profession of the new health care workers that have been recruited as a result of the recruitment grant provided by the provincial government last October, including the number of registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, medical laboratory technologists, respiratory therapists, pharmacists, physical therapists, and other professionals respectively?

I so present.

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

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day no. 53 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for SaskPower: is SaskPower liable for damages to farm equipment if that equipment is struck by an overhead power line when passing underneath?

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House, Bob Meldrum, CMA [certified management accountant] and trustee in bankruptcy from the Saskatoon firm, Saskatoon office of PricewaterhouseCoopers. He's seated in your gallery in the back row.

Mr. Meldrum attended a family services bureau fundraising dinner last year and participated in a silent auction and purchased a day with the Saskatchewan Party. Today he has endured my bad jokes, but this has been more than offset by the wit and wisdom of my Saskatchewan Party colleagues. I'm pleased to introduce him to the House and ask all members to join in welcoming Mr. Meldrum.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly a group of 37, 37 grade 8 students seated in the western gallery. They are from Sacred Heart School. They are accompanied by their teachers, Ms. Hall and Ms. Digney.

Sacred Heart, I've got some very interesting ties in there. I know Ms. Dziaduck. I went to school with her a while back. I don't know if you kids know Ms. Dziaduck. And I even went to school with Ms. Grebinski, but that was a bit before that as well. But Sacred Heart is fairly close to where I live, Mr. Speaker. I know it's a great school. There's a lot happening and I'm looking forward to going to the bingo in about a week and a half. Anyway, please welcome these students to their Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Trew:** — I thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you and to all the members of the Assembly, I want to introduce someone who's certainly no stranger to those of us in the legislature. Seated behind the bar is my young friend, my good friend Dale Flavel, the former MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Last Mountain-Touchwood. Dale blessed us with his presence in our caucus meeting earlier today.

Unfortunately I didn't have much time to visit with him so I'll be catching up on that in a few short minutes. But it's always a pleasure to welcome colleagues from previous legislatures to their Assembly. And I ask all hon. members to join me in a warm welcome for Dale Flavel.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Swift Current.

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I noticed as well in the government gallery there are guests from Saskatoon that are

certainly worthy to be introduced to this House. So through and to you to members of this Assembly, it's a pleasure to introduce two individuals instrumental in organizing the Saskatoon Mayor's Prayer Breakfast. Don Funk and Les Mandtler have joined us here, and members will know that the prayer breakfast this year exceeded 2,400 people at the Prairieland exhibition centre, and it takes a lot of work to put on an event like that.

This year's event honoured those in the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] and in our Armed Forces and in protective services, especially those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our country. And so, Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in welcoming these two hardworking volunteers from the city of Saskatoon.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

### Saskatoon Golf & Country Club 100th Anniversary

**Hon. Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday I had the great pleasure to attend the 100th anniversary celebration of the Saskatoon Golf & Country Club. I was extremely pleased to have the opportunity to take part in this special evening to honour the club's heritage and to recognize the many contributions the club makes to the quality of life in Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatoon Golf & Country Club is a first-class golf facility that is family-friendly and youth focused and has a strong, supportive, and extremely dynamic membership base. The club hosts annual golf tournaments in support of local charities; is a responsible leader in environmental stewardship; and as part of the larger community, actively contributes to the high quality of life that makes the city of Saskatoon and the province of Saskatchewan the best place to live.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Saskatoon Golf & Country Club on their 100th anniversary. And as well I want to thank the club's centennial committee and staff and volunteers for the wonderful evening and wish them every success with the events they have planned throughout the golfing season to celebrate their centennial.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatoon Golf & Country Club has a proud heritage and thanks to the dedicated individuals and the board and management team, I am sure they will have continued success throughout the next 100 years. So I ask all members to join me in congratulating them.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Colorectal Cancer Awareness

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, April is National Cancer Awareness Month. Last week we

learned of a new report that showed that the national death rate for breast cancer had dropped 25 per cent in the last 20 years, thanks for the most part to a comprehensive screening program.

Mr. Speaker, if a screening program can have such a major impact on death rates for breast cancer, just think about what the comprehensive screening program could do for colorectal cancer.

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cancer killer in Canada after lung cancer and if caught early, colorectal cancer is 90 per cent preventable. Last year 620 new cases of colorectal cancer were diagnosed in Saskatchewan alone and an estimated 280 people died from this disease. According to the Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada, a screening program would reduce the mortality rate from this disease by 30 per cent.

Last fall Ontario became the first province to introduce a comprehensive screening program, followed shortly after by Manitoba and Alberta. Yet here at the home of medicare, this NDP government fails to act, Mr. Speaker. With the NDP [New Democratic Party] government refusing to cover the drug Avastin and forcing patients to pay tens of thousands of dollars out of their own pocket for the standard of care, the least this government could do would be to launch a comprehensive screening program for colorectal cancer.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

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

#### **Honorary Consul for the Federal Republic of Germany**

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I take great pride in my German heritage and so it was both a great pleasure and a great honour to attend the inauguration of Ms. Barbara Hoggard-Lulay as the new honorary consul for the Federal Republic of Germany for the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Hoggard-Lulay has been a member of the country's foreign service since 1981.

She first came to Canada for the Open Skies Conference held in Ottawa in February 1990. It was at this conference that an agreement was reached between the foreign ministers of the Federal Republic of Germany, the then German Democratic Republic, France, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and the United States on the start of the historic Two-Plus-Four talks which led to the fulfillment of Germany's dream of reunification.

Since June 2004, Ms. Hoggard-Lulay has lived in Saskatoon where she works for her husband Bruce's company, Hoggard International, as well as for the University of Saskatchewan. She teaches German at the German Language School and chairs the German Days Committee.

Her tasks as honorary consul will include supporting immigrants with German passports and tourists in consular

affairs, but maybe even more importantly, contributing to strengthen the Saskatchewan-German and Canadian-German relations in the various fields.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank outgoing honorary consul, Dr. Gunter Kocks, and congratulate honorary consul, Ms. Hoggard-Lulay, on her inauguration.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **Martensville Residents Receive A&W Gold Award for Excellence**

**Ms. Heppner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise today to acknowledge the accomplishments of business owners in my constituency. Brian and Bernice Buffin own and operate the A&W restaurant in Martensville. The member for Swift Current and I had the pleasure of meeting this hard-working couple earlier this year. They are very proud of their business, and their whole family is involved in helping out.

Having only opened the restaurant in 2001, Brian and Bernice have worked hard to make it one of the best. They were recently awarded the Gold Award for Excellence in A&W restaurants in Canada. They are now in the top three A&Ws in this country, which is quite an achievement for a restaurant in small town Saskatchewan. The Gold Award recognizes excellence based on sales and operating standards.

Brian, Bernice, and their family are hard-working and dedicated, and are committed to providing the best service possible for their customers.

The A&W in Martensville is more than just another restaurant. It is a meeting place where going for a morning coffee is how many local residents start their day.

I congratulate Brian and Bernice Buffin for this great achievement and I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating them on their recent success.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **Writer Disappointed with Federal Government**

**Hon. Mr. Addley:** — Mr. Speaker, on March 28, 50 of Canada's greatest artists were invited to Ottawa to help celebrate 50 years of the Canada Council for the Arts. One of these artists was Saskatoon resident Yann Martel, author of the Man Booker Prize winning novel, *Life of Pi*.

What should have been a great experience for these artists was in fact a disappointment. The governing party barely even noticed the presence of these artists. Minister of Canadian Heritage Bev Oda gave a speech that Mr. Martel described in the April 14 edition of *The Globe and Mail* as "short." Martel

goes on to describe the reception the artists received from this government as, quote, “Fifty years of building Canada’s dazzling and varied culture, done with in less than five minutes.”

And what was the reaction of the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Martel describes how, quote, “The Prime Minister did not speak during our brief tribute . . . I don’t think he even looked up.”

The previous day at a reception held for the artists, the Prime Minister did not even bother to show up. This is shameful treatment of our artists, Mr. Speaker.

Prime Minister Harper needs to learn to better appreciate the arts in Canada. Mr. Martel has agreed to send Mr. Harper a work of fiction every two weeks to help him do just that. The first one sent to Mr. Harper was *The Death of Ivan Ilych* by Leo Tolstoy.

Mr. Speaker, if members of this House would like to learn more about Mr. Martel’s plan, they can visit Mr. Martel’s website at [www.whatisstephenharperreading.ca](http://www.whatisstephenharperreading.ca). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Public Response

**Mr. D’Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Responses to our mailout on the Murdoch Carriere scandal continue to pour into our office and I would like to share more of those responses with the members opposite.

From Lloydminster I quote:

I am quite shocked to learn this. For many years your NDP government has been strongly supported mainly by unionized workers, who as you know, fight for a ‘no harassment’ workplace. We fight for workers’ rights to be treated with dignity and respect. What are you doing? . . . Wonder why you’re losing votes?

From Prince Albert I quote:

I am a card carrying NDP member. I volunteer for the party. I was so surprised that the so-an-so got paid by the government. In my estimation he should have been ordered to make a public apology to these women, following that, be dismissed from his position and never be allowed to work with the provincial government again. Who, in government, were the people who decided to pay him a 1/4 of a million dollars? And WHY! Is it a new government policy for harassers to win a jackpot?

From Saskatoon I quote:

The pay-off of 275,000 was shocking. More disturbing to me was the total lack of transparency.

And also from Saskatoon I quote:

There are law abiding citizens living on small incomes and paying taxes. It is wrong that this tax money is used to pay a convicted civil servant — convicted of crimes against other government employees.

Mr. Speaker, more than 90 per cent of these cards we are receiving echo that same sentiment. I have more to share but I will be sharing them at a later date. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Employer and Employee Relationships

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party would have us believe that Murdoch Carriere is an NDP insider. He talks about Carriere — how he is a buddy of the NDP cabinet ministers, how he is intertwined with NDP cabinet ministers. If you listen to the Leader of the Sask Party, it’s as if Murdoch Carriere was the best friend ever the NDP cabinet ministers ever had.

The truth of the matter is Murdoch Carriere was an employee of the government. And if the definition of close personal friend is going to extend to employees, then the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party has a lot of explaining to do. I mean the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party was working for Pat Smith in her office. Was he a personal close friend of hers? Was he an insider when she got, according to *The StarPhoenix*, quote, free “booze by [the] case”?

He also worked in Graham Taylor’s office. Was he a close personal friend of Graham Taylor? Was he around when Mr. Taylor ordered \$2,635 worth of free liquor for a big going-away party? Was the Leader of the Sask Party a close enough friend to be invited to the event?

The Leader of the Saskatchewan Party also worked for John Gerich, Mr. Speaker. You remember, the one who went to jail for fraud. I was just wondering if they were close personal friends.

Murdoch Carriere worked for an NDP cabinet minister in a department with thousands of other civil servants. According to Sask Party, that makes him a close personal friend. The Leader of the Sask Party worked with three or four other people in the offices . . .

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

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

#### Flooding Conditions

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, at this moment at Fishing Lake, there’s a caravan of families and trucks and cars and trailers

moving furniture and belongings out, so they won't be ruined. Their homes and cottages will be flooded, some beyond repair. SaskPower and SaskEnergy are on hand, ready to cut off utility services. The situation has passed serious.

Ten years ago when this area flooded, people were told that it was a 1-in-100-year occurrence. Well that 1-in-100-year occurrence has now happened three times in the last 10 years. Mr. Speaker, to the minister: please outline to the people of Fishing Lake what this government has done in the past 10 years to prevent the flooding of homes and businesses in the Fishing Lake area?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course the past year and a half, the past two years have been particularly bad circumstances for flooding — a particularly high snowfall this past winter season, the moisture conditions before that which have led to what some people are describing as a 1-in-100-years circumstance in terms of flooding for some parts of the province.

The Department of Corrections and Public Safety through the past year, but particularly over the past months, has been working very closely with affected RMs [rural municipality] which we expect will be affected by the runoff. There's a regional operation centre that has been set up in Nipawin. There's a command centre that's been set up on Red Earth which is expected to be the worst of the situation. And there's more on the way, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, there's also more water on the way for the people in this area, and we've had 10 years for government to look at this area. I have had pictures of this situation in Fishing Lake, and they were emailed in to me this morning. And I'm going to send these pictures over to the minister right now.

The pictures tell it all. The photographer couldn't even get down one of the roads to take pictures because that road was flooded. The editor of the *Foam Lake Review* says, and I quote, "It is really a disastrous situation." There's still a lot of snow to melt. The ice is still there, ready to wreak havoc if the wind comes up.

Mr. Speaker, when is the NDP government going to come up with a long-term solution so people don't have to be worried about their homes and their livelihoods every year? And what is the real solution from this government?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, myself, the Minister for Government Relations, the president of SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association], the president of SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities], we went out to investigate the situation first-hand out in Nipawin to observe the operations of the regional operations centre that's been set up in the face of this circumstance.

We were able to see what's happening at Red Earth and the great preparations that have been made there in terms of the preparations around dikes, around sandbagging, and in terms of an evacuation plan at Red Earth.

We were also able to go to the town of Arborfield where of course in the past number of years they've had some very drastic experience in terms of flooding. This year those folks, in combination with the right kind of weather conditions and some very dedicated preparations, they're very confident that they'll be able to face the oncoming flood, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that some of the areas are going to be able to face the disaster, but some of them aren't. And some of those people live in my constituency in Fishing Lake, and their situation is disastrous. Immediate assistance is needed right now, Mr. Speaker. There's between 50 and 70 cabins that are going to be flooded this weekend probably.

We all know that a long-term solution is needed, but we also know there's short-term solutions that may be needed. Can the minister tell me, besides looking at the situation, what the plans are to help the people in this area right now?

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Corrections and Public Safety.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to tell the House that the Department of Corrections and Public Safety, together with officials from the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority, together with officials from Sask Environment, Highways, Community Resources, Government Relations, they've not just been watching the situation, but they've been working very closely with the people on the ground in terms of doing the preparation work that needs to be made to do the best possible job in terms of diverting water where possible. Fishing Lake is a particular circumstance where it's of course its own closed watershed, so there's some work that has been done in advance of this circumstance.

It's a very serious situation, Mr. Speaker. We take the situation very seriously, and we're working very hard on a hourly basis with the local authorities to make sure the response is as best as can be possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm



River-Watrous.

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Flooding is becoming a major problem across the province, and my constituency is no different. The flooding has gotten so bad that a huge section of Highway 15 has been washed out. That means people are struggling to get to work, and businesses are incurring extra cost to get their product in and out.

Mr. Speaker, what does the minister plan to do to make sure the flooding problem not does become more severe in my area?

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

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would want to tell that member that within government we have been working together with the different departments. The Saskatchewan Watershed Authority, I have met with them recently to determine what we might be able to expect. Obviously in some areas spring runoff is creating some unusual circumstances. When we see mayors from local communities suggest that in 50 years they haven't seen these kinds of conditions, I think we have to expect that we're going to have some difficult circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Highways in some instances has called seasonal workers back early. We have put more and more dollars into our provincial Highways budget. There's an increase of \$44 million with respect to maintenance and preservation. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the officials and the workers within the Department of Highways are working very hard in terms of public safety and highway safety.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

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

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Highway 15 near Nokomis is basically gone. There's a 40-foot section of the highway that's gone. And that highway is the only section of Highway 15 that's been rebuilt and is in good condition. The rest of Highway 15 is full of potholes.

You were told, when that highway was built a few years ago, that there would be a flooding problem, Mr. Speaker; there would be a flooding problem. Where it was washed out, they put in one 20-inch culvert. They could have looked and put better culverts in that area.

So my question is to the minister, Mr. Speaker: when are you going to open this highway for the . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I would ask the member to put all of his questions through the Chair.

**Mr. Brkich:** — Mr. Speaker, when will the minister open this highway so the residents of the area can use it?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the minister.

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think perhaps everyone but the members of the Saskatchewan Party will understand that the government does not control weather. We don't control the amount of moisture that is in the areas because of snow and because of rain. And I think most members will understand as well that the department officials are doing what they can in the spring to clear culverts that are frozen and to work with the local municipalities.

But I want to say to that member, with respect to Highway 15 and other highways around this province, this government has put more money to the provincial highway system than ever in the history of this province, Mr. Speaker. Much of it goes to preservation and maintenance. Much of it will go to flood control. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of the men and women who serve these communities, who work for the Department of Highways. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just received the latest update of flooding and damage in the Invermay-Margo area and the RMs that surround those two villages.

Mr. Speaker, in the village of Invermay, homes are in 2 to 3 feet of water. The Invermay School is close to being flooded. And in fact a storage shed that has never been in water is in 2 to 3 feet of water with damage to all equipment that's in that storage shed. Mr. Speaker, as of 11:15 this morning, the school in fact has closed as a result of water that has entered the community. The village of Invermay is unable to keep its sewage plant pumping, and as a result of that, they have had to shut the water system down. There is extreme damage in the community.

And I'm wondering if the Minister of Public Safety understands the significance and the comprehensiveness of this problem. What specific steps is the minister taking to ensure that there is help provided for this emergency?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Public Safety.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I take and the officials in the Department of Corrections and Public Safety take this situation with flooding, particularly in the east central, northeast part of the province extremely seriously. We take it extremely seriously because the officials have been . . . You know the circumstance that we've got here is exceptional in terms of the factors that have come together in terms of snowfall, ground moisture levels, and the way that the melt is proceeding.

But we've been doing work to get out ahead of the situation, working with the local RMs, who are the primary authority in these circumstances, to back them up in terms of what can be

done around protecting key resources in the affected areas, in terms of mitigating the situation, in terms of diversion of water where possible, and in terms of the emergency planning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's no secret that there has been a large snowfall. We've known this for months. And in fact the RMs of Foam Lake and the RM of Invermay are reporting today that dozens of grid roads are in fact closed as a result.

I just went on the highway hotline before question period, Mr. Speaker, and I note that Highway No. 8, north of Swan Plain, closed during to washout, use alternate route; Highway No. 47, south of Preeceville, closed due to washout, use alternate route; Highway No. 5 between Invermay and Rama, washout, flag persons in attendance, one-lane traffic.

Mr. Speaker, these were conditions that the government knew about, that officials in the department knew about. What plan have they put in place to deal with this emergency, to deal with the damage that will be created? Will the assistance that was provided last year to both urban and rural municipalities, will that plan be in effect and in fact will it be enhanced?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Corrections and Public Safety.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Corrections and Public Safety in conjunction with the other relevant departments, particularly the Sask Watershed Authority, have been working on a regional basis not just in the past weeks but in the past months to make sure that the local RMs and the local municipalities are prepared for this circumstance.

Foam Lake in particular, I know that they've done some good work in terms of emergency planning and getting ready to face the kind of emergency that is inherent in a flooding situation. Certainly the town of Foam Lake went through some very serious incidents with fire. There was an emergency planning association conference two weeks ago where they had the highest attendance of delegates in all the years that they've had this conference. The RMs that are affected with the flooding were well represented in that situation, and they're working very hard together with government officials to face this head-on.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this week is a critical week for many communities across the province. Flooding or potential flooding is a reality in many areas

throughout Saskatchewan including Fishing Lake, Wakaw, Invermay, Red Earth, the Carrot River valley, and more.

And more highways than just Highway No. 15 are washed out or falling apart. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we've just been informed that 39 roads are flooded currently in the RM of Foam Lake. This is certainly a dangerous experience.

Mr. Speaker, what steps has this government taken to ensure the safety of Saskatchewan families?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Lautermilch:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the member will probably know that we have been meeting with rural municipalities, that there have been regional meetings. I think the member will also know that we don't control the weather. I think the member will also know we don't the control the amount of snowfall.

And I think the member will understand that the engineers who designed these systems, the roads and the highways, both municipal and provincial, design them for catastrophic years, but they don't overdesign them. They design them for 1-in-50 in a lot of cases kind of flooding arrangements.

But when we have these kinds of circumstances, you do have bridges and roads that are washed out. We have been clearing culverts. We've been working with local municipalities. We have spent an enormous amount of money over the winter on aggregate in preparation for repairing these roads. And I would say to the member opposite that the professionals within the Department of Highways and Public Safety officials around this province have a very good handle on what's happening in our province. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister may be correct in the fact that the government has no control over weather, but the government has a responsibility to put in place a plan of action to deal with the emergencies of this nature.

In fact some of the communities affected by flooding haven't received funds from the province for last year's flooding and are again in the midst of more floods. In fact some claims date back to 2005-2006 and haven't been settled yet.

Mr. Speaker, this situation is dire. MLAs on this side of the House understand the severity of this problem and would like to invite the Premier and members of his government to tour some of these critical areas this Friday, enabling government members to get a clearer understanding of the seriousness and act immediately to help these communities. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier and members of his government join my colleagues in a tour of the flooded area?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious situation, and that's exactly why officials from this government have been working very hard in terms of preparation, holding regional meetings, sharing information with the local authorities. And that's exactly why, myself and the Minister for Government Relations, were in the affected region on Saturday along with the presidents of SUMA and SARM.

And again, Mr. Speaker, we take this situation very seriously. There have been a lot of preparations made for this very unique circumstance. It's something that's being monitored on an hour-to-hour basis. We're working very closely with the local authorities who have that authority under the legislation of this province to be the primary actors in these situations. We're there to back them up, to make sure that's where they need extra help in terms of the regional operation centre and on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **Blackstrap Ski Hill**

**Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night I was asking questions in estimates regarding Blackstrap. And I was absolutely frustrated and quite frankly shocked at the lack of information this minister had at his disposal.

What I learned last night is that a contract was let to an individual to operate a ski hill that was supposed to stay open till April 15. Everybody in Western Canada knows that ski hills will not operate well into April that this government had signed the contract for. In fact it closed in March.

In the end Blackstrap was operated for roughly 36 days. The taxpayers of Saskatchewan wound up paying the operator \$373,000 to operate a ski hill from February 9 to the end of March. That's just over \$10,000 a day for this operator, Mr. Speaker.

Taxpayers are also on the hook for two lifts and — get this — \$10,000 to build a hut for the lifties, absolutely astonishing. Mr. Speaker, this was all installed at great expense because it was done in the middle of the winter. Mr. Speaker, at \$900,000 for seven weeks, how can the minister justify that?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, after many years of receiving questions from that member, I'm not surprised that, even though he had different information what he actually laid out today given to him last night, he went back to his original false perspective on what's going on here.

Mr. Speaker, this is a provincial park where there was an activity where we wanted to continue with skiing in this year as we move forward to looking out for a long-term plan for Blackstrap to provide recreation for the Saskatoon area. And there are a number of details around what happened this year where we have preliminary figures. I assured that member that I would be providing him with more detail, but the information that he has just laid out now is his misconception at the start of this, and he does not take into account even what I told him last night.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, I was absolutely astonished when asking this minister, after spending \$900,000 on this ski hill, there was absolutely no long-term plan. Mr. Speaker, it wasn't bad enough that they didn't have a short-term plan going into the fall and winter. They finally made up their mind that they're going to operate the ski hill in December. So what had to happen is they had to install some new lifts. Taxpayers had to foot the bill for pouring cement and running power to these lifts in January and February when it should have been done July and August or even next July and August.

Mr. Speaker, the taxpayers are on the hook for \$900,000 in this ski hill, and there's absolutely no long-term plan. What is the government's plan next year? This operator has no obligation to operate the ski hill next year. What's the government's long-term plan after it's put \$900,000 into this boondoggle?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the funds that were expended this winter included a number of capital items which will remain with the parks system, and they will be used in any of the proposals as we move forward. The plan is to develop a long-term relationship with operators who will run this ski hill in the park, and that is what's being worked on right now. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to look out for the young people of the Saskatoon area who want to learn how to ski and use what has been a long-term asset in the Saskatoon area because it's also a valuable asset in the provincial park system. And, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to providing information that that member can understand at the earliest possible opportunity.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Community Resources to respond to a question from yesterday.

#### **Saskatchewan Government Insurance Rebates**

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to provide a response to the oral question that I took notice of on our last sitting day.

The response to the member from Cannington's questions

yesterday regarding the deduction of SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] rebate cheques from income support benefits is this. I would like to point out that my department was preparing documents to make sure that this rebate was exempt as we've made other rebates exempt in the past. So, Mr. Speaker, I have instructed, as we have in the past, to exempt the SGI rebate cheques from being considered as income. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member from Swift Current, the Leader of the Opposition.

[14:15]

### **Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement**

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some time ago now the Minister of Government Relations committed to table, to present, to make public the study that this government has commissioned on the potential impact of Saskatchewan joining with BC [British Columbia] and Alberta in their trade agreement. We've still yet to see it. They've turned down a written request we made by the rules of this Assembly for such a report the taxpayers have funded.

The question to the Premier is, will he now release that to the public of the province today?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I look forward in the next few days to release a public consultation strategy with respect to the Trade, Investment, Labour Mobility Agreement. At that time we will be releasing various reports that we have commissioned so that these can be made available to the public.

The question I have is, Mr. Speaker, given the fact that the Saskatchewan Party has consistently said we should be signing on to this agreement, would they release to the news media after question period their study that suggests that Saskatchewan should be signing on? Would they do that without delay, Mr. Speaker?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Taxpayers have funded this Conference Board of Canada study. It's been in the government's possession now perhaps for longer than a month; perhaps it's been in the government's possession since early in the new year. Mr. Speaker, last fall that minister said he would present this report. The government would actually make a decision by January. They continue to miss deadlines.

Mr. Speaker, the taxpayers have paid for this study. What's he

afraid of? Why won't he table it? Why won't he release it? And with respect to the consultation process, will he assure this Assembly today that that consultation process will be done by an all-party committee of this Legislative Assembly?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — . . . same taxpayers that are funding the Saskatchewan Party caucus, the opposition research caucus to a greater extent than we've ever seen in history. They too are funded by taxpayers. Where is their study? Why don't they release it? They've made a definitive statement as to where we should go with this, Mr. Speaker. Why don't they release those studies right after question period? Don't equivocate on that. Provide the information to the media.

Mr. Speaker, I note with great interest, I note with great interest, Mr. Speaker, that the president and CEO [chief executive officer] of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce says that TILMA [Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement] will be of great benefit to her and other employers in Calgary because it means our greater access to employees from jurisdictions such as Saskatchewan.

My question is to the Leader of the Opposition: has he studied that, or is he simply shilling for interest in Alberta, or is he standing up for Saskatchewan? Which is it?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order.

### **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

**The Speaker:** — Order. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice for a ministerial statement.

#### **Provincial Strategy on Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation**

**Hon. Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to announce that Saskatchewan children will be safer from sexual predators thanks to new government funding that will help the RCMP investigate crimes such as Internet luring and the distribution of child pornography.

The Department of Justice is providing \$250,000 to expand existing RCMP tech-crimes capabilities by providing for two new RCMP investigators and the purchase of specialized software and equipment.

The safety and security of Saskatchewan children is paramount to this government. This new funding will strengthen our capacity to protect children from those that would do them harm. This funding is part of a \$1.3 million expansion to the provincial strategy on child sexual exploitation that will provide five new municipal police officers that deal with street-level child sexual exploitation. It establishes a team of prosecutors to strengthen the use of the national filing system that identifies long-term or dangerous offenders and develop a public education campaign aimed at preventing child sexual

exploitation. These initiatives were announced last fall and will be fully implemented this year.

The best news of all, Mr. Speaker, is that front-line service providers are telling us that this strategy is working. Police are reporting traffic reductions in the stroll areas. Intervention committees have improved networking among service providers. Training has been incorporated into regular staff training for service providers and police. And there are more safe places for sexually exploited children and youth.

In addition to this recent strategy, there have been a number of other initiatives that this NDP government has undertaken in the past few years to help fight child sexual exploitation in this province.

Amendments to The Highway Traffic Act were proclaimed in 2002 which have contributed to a marked reduction in traffic in stroll areas and enhanced the safety of the people living in those areas. Since November 2004, The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act has improved community safety by targeting and if necessary shutting down residential and commercial buildings that are used for unlawful activities such as prostitution.

Since 1997 public prosecutions has directed prosecutors to divert prostitution charges laid against children and youth whenever appropriate, and to seek meaningful penalties when persons are convicted of sexually exploiting children. Since 1999, the Saskatchewan Police Commission has directed police to view sexually exploited children and youth as victims and to work with child protection staff to ensure their safety. It also strives to ensure that those who offend against these children and youth are charged.

In closing, I thank all of the partners involved in this strategy for their hard work and dedication in keeping our children safe and making Saskatchewan communities better and safer places to live, work, and raise a family. Thanks to our combined efforts, crime rates are declining in our province. And through initiatives like this one I am announcing today, they will continue to fall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party is supportive of any initiative that will make our province safe and will provide better protection for our children. The Saskatchewan Party, through former Sask Party MLA Arlene Julé who — I might add, Mr. Speaker, will be the next MLA for Saskatoon Nutana — pressed the tired NDP government until it created an all-party committee to deal with the child sex trade, that committee, the child exploitation task force, was effective in bringing about legislation and funding for this very serious problem.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party, through its members from Kelvington-Wadena and Saskatoon Northwest, pressed the government to do something about crystal meth. The member from Regina South, who is now the Finance minister,

pooh-poohed the concerns of the Saskatchewan Party and called crystal meth nothing more than the flavour of the week. The Saskatchewan Party continued its pressure until the same tired and worn-out NDP appointed the member from Sutherland to do a review. And surprise, surprise, Mr. Speaker, he came to the same conclusion: that crystal meth was dangerous and highly addictive. Now the NDP is playing catch-up to develop facilities and treatment for young crystal meth addicts.

Mr. Speaker, we know child luring on the Internet and child pornography are rapidly growing, serious threats. We have pressed the NDP before to commit resources for these problems. While we respect today's initiative, we have grave concerns that it is too little, too late. The Saskatchewan Party will always be there for the children of this province.

While today's announcement is a start, it is only that. We want to see a serious, comprehensive plan to deal with sexual predators dealing with the Internet and using the Internet to lure Saskatchewan children and to deal with child pornography. The province regularly receives police tips from out of province and needs to be able to act on them promptly and with appropriate resources.

Mr. Speaker, our children are our most precious resource. We owe it to them to provide safety and security. The NDP should do better. The Saskatchewan Party will do better. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 64 — The Graduate Tax Exemption Act

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Advanced Education and Employment.

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 64, An Act respecting a Graduate Tax Exemption and repealing The Post-Secondary Graduate Tax Credit Act be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister for Advanced Education and Employment that Bill No. 64, The Graduate Tax Exemption Act be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — First reading of this Bill.

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

**Hon. Ms. Atkinson:** — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 65 — The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2007**

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

**Hon. Mr. Thomson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 65, The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2007 be now introduced and read for the first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 65, The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2007 be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — First reading of this Bill.

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

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

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**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. 1,117 through 1,122 inclusive.

**The Speaker:** — Responses to 1,117 through to 1,122 have been submitted.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Culture, Youth and Recreation.

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Before proceeding to my remarks related to Bill No. 63, I would ask leave of the House to make introductions of guests.

**The Speaker:** — Is leave granted for introductions to the minister?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and members of the legislature. I'm pleased to introduce some guests who are in the gallery here today who have come to the Assembly, to their Assembly this afternoon, particularly to be

here to observe the second reading of The Royal Saskatchewan Museum Act. And I'd like to introduce them to you. I'd ask that if they would just simply give a wave as I introduce them so that you can see who they are, and then we'll welcome them all together at the end.

First of all, I would like to introduce to you Elder Velma Goodfeather, and Elder Goodfeather has been involved in working together with a number of other First Nation elders with the Royal Saskatchewan Museum in the process of developing policy regarding the access to and the care and handling and the repatriation of sacred and culturally sensitive artifacts. And that is a significant subject in the legislation that we'll be talking about today.

Elder Goodfeather is joined by the director of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, Dave Baron, as well as Harold Bryant who is the curator of earth sciences at the RSM [Royal Saskatchewan Museum] and Margaret Hanna who is the curator of Aboriginal history at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum.

And they are joined by an enthusiastic band of supporting actors who also are employed at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum and take great interest in the legislation. I believe from left to right — if I've got these in the correct order — are Lee-Ann Irvin, Alyssa Becker, Evelyn Siegfried, Michele Kraetzig, Paula Hill, Jan Brace, and Mike Benoit.

I would ask all hon. members, Mr. Speaker, to show welcome to these folks in their gallery of the Assembly today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**SECOND READINGS****Bill No. 63 — The Royal Saskatchewan Museum Act**

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, it is my honour today to move second reading, at the conclusion of my remarks, of Bill No. 63, The Royal Saskatchewan Museum Act, 2007.

Mr. Speaker, the Royal Saskatchewan Museum is an important asset and institution for the Government of Saskatchewan. It contributes to the province's heritage, education, scientific knowledge as well as our tourism industry. The government is tabling this new statute to set out in law the mandate and purpose of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum and to establish in law some important principles related to the museum's operations.

The Royal Saskatchewan Museum already serves the people of Saskatchewan as the steward of the provincial collection of artifacts and life sciences, earth sciences, and ethnology. These artifacts have significant scientific, educational, and interpretive value. This statute that we're talking about today lays out that stewardship role and clarifies how that role will be realized.

However the scope of the museum goes well beyond housing artifacts. Although not widely known, a major focus of the museum is primary research. The Royal Saskatchewan Museum for example discovered one of the most complete and largest T.Rex [Tyrannosaurus rex] fossils in the world that we've lovingly come to know as Scottie in the Frenchman River

Valley near Eastend.

[14:30]

The museum has also conducted archaeological research at the original site of Stanley Mission. This research has contributed to our understanding of early European settlement in Canada and the relationship, the very important relationship of European settlers with First Nations peoples of this land that we have come to know and love and we now call Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most important aspects of this new Act for me personally and for the Government of Saskatchewan is that the Royal Saskatchewan Museum will establish a policy regarding the access to and the care, use, and repatriation of sacred and culturally sensitive artifacts. The museum and the province has and will continue to work with First Nations elders and members of First Nations cultural community to ensure that this policy responds to concerns raised by First Nations people that culturally sensitive artifacts are held in museum collections. The Royal Saskatchewan Museum currently has more than 100 objects in its collection that would be considered sacred or culturally sensitive.

These items are not used in the museum's research, in their exhibition, or educational programs because of their sacred nature. This new Act will ensure that the sensitivity of these artifacts is protected and that they are managed respecting the concerns and the wishes of Saskatchewan's Aboriginal peoples. The Royal Saskatchewan Museum has already agreed that if the communities from which these artifacts originated would wish, the artifacts will be returned. Conversely, if it is the wish of First Nations people, the Royal Saskatchewan Museum can be a keeper of artifacts.

This agreement opens the door for the museum to play a role, a very important role. And while I predict it will be increasingly important as the decades march past in Saskatchewan history, the agreement opens the door for the museum to play a role to work with First Nations to facilitate the repatriation of artifacts from outside the province as well.

In concluding, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to point out that the Royal Saskatchewan Museum has been serving the people of Saskatchewan proudly for over 100 years and celebrated its centennial in 2006. I would suggest that it's time to have its own Act. And, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to move second reading of Bill No. 63, The Royal Saskatchewan Museum Act, 2007.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation that Bill No. 63, The Royal Saskatchewan Museum Act be now read a second time. The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

**Mr. Gantefoer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to rise and speak briefly on Bill No. 63, An Act respecting the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. And in rising to speak to the motion, I would like to join with the minister in welcoming the guests in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and particularly note our vote of appreciation to the First Nations people and elders who

are here and have been working with the Royal Saskatchewan Museum on this very important project over the years.

Mr. Speaker, the Royal Saskatchewan Museum is a very integral and important part of the fabric of Saskatchewan. For 100 years this organization has undertaken to make sure that the natural history of Saskatchewan and in particular of its First Nations Aboriginal people have been properly safeguarded and have been a focus of a great deal of respect and attention.

Mr. Speaker, countless numbers of young people over the years can mark with a great deal of pride a trip to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum as an important learning experience that they've had in their class projects. And I think it is very appropriate as the minister outlined that it is time that the Royal Saskatchewan Museum indeed had its own piece of legislation, and embedded in that legislation is the absolute necessity to properly respect and understand the culturally sensitive objects and traditions of our First Nations people.

Mr. Speaker, I note in the mandate section 4(1) it says and I quote, that:

... the museum is responsible for undertaking any measures that the museum considers advisable to increase interest in, knowledge and understanding of, and appreciation and respect for Saskatchewan's natural history and Aboriginal cultures.

Mr. Speaker, I think that says it all. I think that is a very important mandate. We very much are supportive of this legislation. We think it is important. We are looking forward to the discussion that is going to occur. We look forward in a very timely fashion of indeed speaking to individuals from the Royal Saskatchewan Museum and the First Nations elders to make sure that this legislation meets all of the needs of making sure that the safeguards that are undertaken in this are going to be appropriately undertaken. We count on this happening in a very timely manner and in order to allow that discussion and consultation to occur, at this time I would adjourn debate.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member from Melfort that debate on second reading of Bill No. 63 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 17

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen that **Bill No. 17 — The Miscellaneous Statutes (Municipal Collection of Other Taxes) Amendment Act, 2006** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to rise and enter the debate on Bill No. 17, miscellaneous statutes referring to municipal taxation. Mr. Speaker, this Bill introduces new requirements of municipalities and the possibility of new penalties for municipalities that decide to not to pass property tax revenue on to school boards.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is a reaction to the tax revolt that had actually happened in the past. And the government come forth with this Bill, but in typical fashion the consultation process was very much ignored. It was a reaction to the tax revolt and how they could respond to ensure that money would be forwarded if something like a tax revolt was coming again. But what this does, what this Bill has done now, municipalities now face the prospect of having to pay interest on any tax funds that are withheld from school boards or any other taxation authority.

Since the NDP actually failed to adequately address the education portion of property tax, many RMs felt that the only way that they could get the attention of the NDP government was to revolt. And that was their only choice to bring this to the front lines. With the NDP unable to provide anything more substantial than band-aid solutions, they now feel their best option is to legislate these RMs into ending their revolt or fear financial penalties.

Mr. Speaker, there're changes to this Act that are slightly more benign, there's no doubt about that. Municipal hail insurance premiums will no longer be collected in the same manner as municipal taxes.

Through this Bill, Mr. Speaker, the government would also be able to take further action toward municipal governments that withhold property tax monies from school boards. The minister would be able to reduce or withhold revenue-sharing grants to an offending municipality.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's kind of the nuts and bolts of the Bill. But when I mention the consultation process or lack thereof of the consultation process, we can understand from the school boards that this Bill, they would like this Bill in place because that would ensure that the monies would not be withheld from the school boards. But what does it mean to other municipalities? And this is the part that was totally ignored in the preparation of this Bill.

And I know there's been some correspondence with the minister, whether he in fact has responded to the literature that's been sent or the letters that have been sent him. But it's interesting — for the record, I'd like to put some of the comments on record that is coming from municipalities. It was indicated that the changes being considered in this Bill are considered in order to halt the inappropriate and illegal actions taken by some municipalities.

Now the question that came from some municipalities, if the minister has already stated that these actions are already illegal, why are there changes required? Because this Bill is stating that they're illegal, but the minister's already said what they did before was illegal. So it doesn't really make much sense.

Now if the intent of these changes is to allow for taxes collected on behalf of school divisions to be provided to respective

school divisions sooner, municipalities fail to see how such changes will accommodate this. Under the structure of some of the municipalities or most of the municipalities now, taxes are collected, 30 per cent of the property taxes are collected in January and discounts for early tax payments are granted by municipalities. A January of a 4 per cent in some — I won't say all of them — but in some municipalities a 4 per cent discount in January. And it goes down 3, 2, and 1 per cent discounts up until April. Now if you take that into consideration, this gives the municipalities some operating cash flow.

Now if this Bill is enacted the way it is, what's going to happen to the municipalities is they're going to have trouble generating significant cash flow early in the year. And rather than pay interest to a financial institution for the privilege of borrowing money to operate the taxes for this period of January until the levy date of 1 July, by allowing the discount it allows the municipalities to pass on the savings along to the taxpayers. It makes sense.

So with this Bill, the way it's structured, this discount would not be allowed, therefore why would one want to pay taxes early in January if you're not going to get a discount? So you would actually delay paying your taxes until the tax date, and now you've left this void of a five- to six-month period without a cash flow, with a cash flow problem for the municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to quote from one of the letters that I have received, and I've received calls and letters from municipalities on this particular issue. And I'd just like to quote one paragraph here:

The property tax concerns that have provoked a few RMs to choose to withhold education property taxes are unique to RMs. That being given, if the problem does not affect all municipalities, why has the government's so-called solution targeted all municipalities, including those that were never engaged in any "inappropriate and illegal" activity? Furthermore, the proposed amendments will do nothing to address the root of the problem — an excessively high proportion of the education tax burden being shouldered by owners of agricultural land — but will instead serve only to perpetuate the city/rural divisions that are so evident in this province and to further alienate the rurally based population.

Mr. Speaker, that's the sentiment that's being raised to us by a number of municipalities.

I would also like to, I'd like to, again from a municipality, just to highlight a couple of points. And again it deals with the discounts for the prompt payment of property taxes after the tax notices have been sent out. And again, the 5, 4, 3 and some of them are different. There's a minimum of 5 and a max 7. There's various discount rates that would be in there. And in this letter, it quotes that:

The government is planning other changes that are equally distressing. Whereas the proposed changes will allow for a Council to choose whether or not to provide discounts for the *prepayment* of taxes, if a municipality does choose to provide such a discount, the proposed regulations will prescribe discounts that are "*equal to not less than 5%*"



*plus 1% for each month prior to September that the taxes are paid and not more than 7% plus 1% for each month prior to September that the taxes are paid”.*

Mr. Speaker, this whole issue of the discounts is quite disturbing to some of the people in the RMs. They also state that since these discounts must also be applied to the collection of school taxes, school divisions will also have no choice but to raise their mill rates to recover lost revenue. And that again goes to the cash flow issues of the six-month period that is in question here.

[14:45]

Mr. Speaker, there is just a number of questions that need to be answered in this Bill. And these questions have been raised, raised to us. And again it goes to the point that there was no consultation done on this Bill with the municipalities.

And a few of these questions about the amendments I would like to put into the record. That is:

What will such changes cost . . . [municipalities]? Given that the changes will only make things more difficult for affected municipalities, what other purpose will they serve? Who is going to benefit? Why have rural and small urban municipalities been singled out? Why haven't municipalities been consulted about how changes that will so dramatically impact the way they conduct their operations? [That's what I mentioned.] How can the government feel that it is appropriate to so quickly take away the very autonomy that we were promised in order to sell us on the new act in the first place?

Those are very, very good questions, Mr. Speaker.

Now when we look at, we look at these changes doing, again from a municipal point of view, and what a concerned citizen has said is:

At best, these changes are ill-conceived and lacking the appropriate consideration of their impact on Saskatchewan's rural residents. At worst, they are a punitive measure designed to penalize rural municipalities who have been acting against the level of school tax that they are forced to bear. If that is the case, why are the small urban municipalities who never withheld a dime from their respective school divisions being targeted by these measures?

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of questions that I've posed in my statements. And I understand, I understand that the minister is now considering an amendment to this Bill because I'm sure he has received some of the same correspondence that I have received, and I'm sure he understands that the lack of consultation resulted in an ill-conceived Bill.

And so if he has read and understood the concerns addressed by the municipalities, that I'm sure he will agree that an amendment is necessary to this Bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I also am aware that amendments can only be introduced once the Bill is in committee, so I would at this

time like to move Bill 17 to committee so we can have the amendment brought forward. If the minister will bring an amendment to this Bill forward and then we will have time, we will have time to go out to the municipalities and to the stakeholders to have their input on what the amendment might be or will be. And at that time it would be discussed whether we are going to require public hearings on this Bill or not.

So with that being said, Mr. Speaker, I would now like to move this Bill to committee.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion proposed by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill No. 17, The Miscellaneous Statutes (Municipal Collection of Other Taxes) Amendment Act, 2006 be now read a second time.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

**The Speaker:** — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

**Clerk:** — Second reading of this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? The Chair recognizes the Minister of Government Relations.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 17, The Miscellaneous Statutes (Municipal Collection of Other Taxes) Amendment Act, 2006 be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill No. 17 be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt that motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried. Bill 17 stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure.

The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, I ask leave of the House to introduce a motion related to the sitting of the House on Tuesday of next week.

**The Speaker:** — Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

## MOTIONS

## Hours of Sitting

**Hon. Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, all members of the Assembly will be aware of the passing of the late Jack Wiebe, our lieutenant governor, and the fact that there is a state funeral being held on Tuesday of next week. And therefore I move, seconded by the House Leader of the opposition, by leave of the Assembly that:

Notwithstanding rule 6(1) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the Assembly shall not meet on Tuesday, April 24, 2007 in respect of the state funeral service of the Hon. John (Jack) Wiebe, former lieutenant governor of Saskatchewan.

I so move.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member for Moose Jaw North, the Government House Leader, seconded by the member for Melfort, the Opposition House Leader that:

Notwithstanding rule 6(1) of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the Assembly shall not meet on Tuesday, April 24, 2007 in respect of the state funeral service of the Hon. John (Jack) Wiebe, former lieutenant governor of Saskatchewan.

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 order to facilitate the good work of the Human Services Committee as well as the Standing Committee on the Economy, 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 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:52.]



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