



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

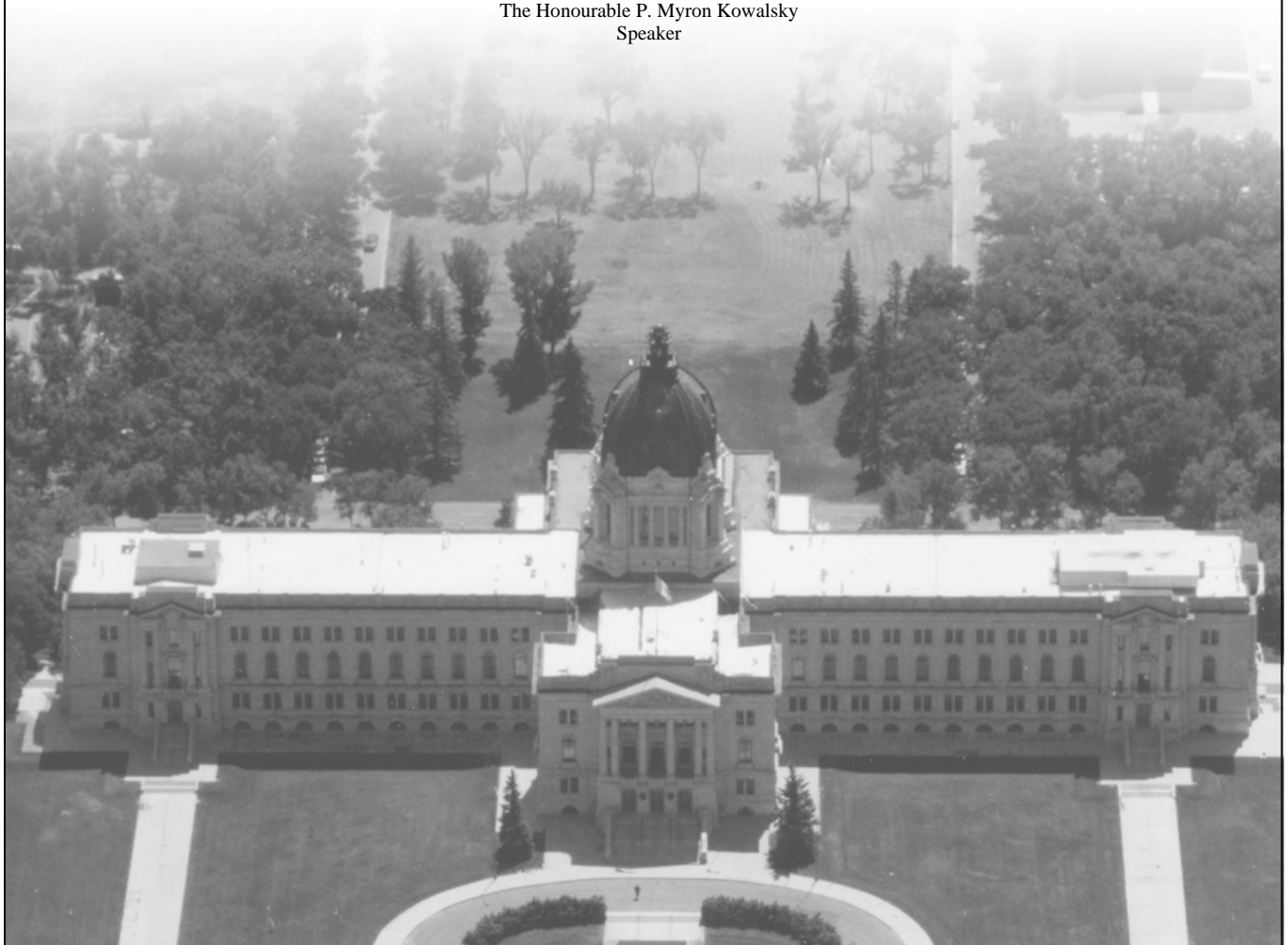
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of

The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Addley, Hon. Graham	NDP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Hon. Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Beatty, Hon. Joan	NDP	Cumberland
Belanger, Hon. Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornrud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Borgerson, Lon	NDP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Calvert, Hon. Lorne	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Cline, Hon. Eric	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Crofford, Joanne	NDP	Regina Rosemont
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Dearborn, Jason	SP	Kindersley
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, Hon. David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
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 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure this morning to present another petition in regards to health care and the health care needs in the province of Saskatchewan and in particular the need for lab services in the Lafleche and District Health Centre. 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 actions to ensure that lab services are continued at the Lafleche and District Health Centre.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petition I present this morning is signed by folks from the communities of Lafleche and Wood River. I so present.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition to present on behalf of citizens of the province regarding rural schools and the issue around whether they should be under review or keeping them open. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary actions to ensure that the Francis and Sedley schools remain open.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by people from Francis, Sedley, Creelman, Odessa, Weyburn, Arcola, Carlyle. I so present.

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

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again today I rise to present a petition on behalf of people from my constituency who are concerned about the future of the basic education classes at the Estevan campus of the Southeast Regional College. 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 ensure that basic education classes continue to be offered at the Estevan campus of the Southeast Regional College.

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

And this is signed by citizens of Estevan. I so present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present another petition from the citizens of Wilkie who are concerned about cutbacks 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 that the Wilkie Health Centre and special care home maintain at the very least the current level of services.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

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

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

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I rise with a petition from citizens of the South that are very concerned about the withdrawal of lab services at the Lafleche and District Health Centre and the hardships it will cause the residents particularly seniors. 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 actions to ensure that lab services are continued at the Lafleche and District Health Centre.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by the good citizens of Lafleche, Woodrow, and Regina. I so present.

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

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the Assembly this morning to bring forth a petition signed by citizens of Saskatchewan that are concerned with our health care system and the potentially dangerous situation that's happening in my area — Rosthern, Shellbrook, Spiritwood, and Hafford. 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 improve timely access to medical treatment.

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

Mr. Speaker, signatures to this petition are all from the fine community of Shellbrook. I so present.

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

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring forward a petition for the people of Saskatchewan who are deeply concerned about the presence of sexual predators that present a threat to our communities. And the prayer reads as follows:

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 a known sex offender in their community as soon as possible.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, it is signed by the good people of Cudworth, Prud'homme, and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition here with citizens concerned about the underfunding to school divisions that's causing schools to close:

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 Imperial, Govan, Nokomis, and Drake schools remain open.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

These particular petitions are signed by the good citizens from the towns of Watrous, Nokomis, Redvers, Regina, Govan, and Lanigan. I so present.

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

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition that the citizens of Imperial, Govan, Nokomis, Drake, and surrounding areas are well served by the schools in their communities and that the closure of these schools would cause undue hardship to residents, particularly young students.

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 ensure that Imperial, Govan, Nokomis, and Drake schools remain open.

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

From the good people of Govan and Nokomis, I so present, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through you and to you and to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce 25 grades 9 to 12 students, I believe, seated in the east gallery. These students are from the great city of Saskatoon and the great high school of St. Joseph's high school. They are English as second language students. They are here today accompanied by their teachers, Lorraine Ratzlaff and Elizabeth de Carle; Sheena Wing and Charlene Boes as teacher assistants. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of ourselves and the government, I'd like to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce a very special group of students here today. They are four high schools travelling together from Saskatoon, and they're seated in the east and west galleries. Now all of these students are English as second language high school students, and they come from many different parts of the world, and now they're making Saskatoon their home.

First I'd like to introduce, from E. D. Feehan Catholic High School, 25 grade 9 to 12 students and their teacher is Roberto Godoy. Now of course he is the coordinator of this trip, accompanied with Theresa Hitchings.

Bishop James Mahoney High School is here as well — 25 grade 10 and 11 students. Their teacher is Donalda Gerstmar, and they're with Tami Shirley and Rosanne Cechaniwicz. And as well, 13 grade 10 students from Holy Cross High School, and their teachers are Jean McLachlan and Margaret Schatz. And as well as introduced already, the group from St. Joe's high school, 25 grade 9 to 12 students, teachers Lorraine Ratzlaff and Elizabeth de Carle, Sheena Wing and Charlene Boes.

So I'd ask all members to give them a warm greeting to this House. Thank you.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want also to of course welcome all of the students, but one in particular. Lorenzo Gonzalez is a friend of mine who is living with my wife Lorna's and my son and his wife, Jay and Kaeli Trew in Saskatoon. And Lorenzo is one of the grade 9 students, but he hails from Monterrey, Mexico. Monterrey is a city in the northern part of Mexico, and I just want to acknowledge Lorenzo's part here today. And I want to share with him that I'm looking forward to seeing him over the weekend in Saskatoon at my son and daughter-in-law's place. So please, again welcome my friend, Lorenzo Gonzalez. Thank you.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members, I would like to introduce a couple of noted performers who may or may not be seated in your gallery. Three-time Grammy winner, Walter Ostanek may be up there; I can't see the whole gallery. But Walter will be performing at the Mae Wilson Theatre in Moose Jaw on Friday night and at a sold-out performance at Casino Regina on Saturday.

With Mr. Ostanek performing is Ron Sluga of Cleveland, Ohio. And Mr. Sluga played banjo with America's polka king, Frankie Yankovic, and boasts the distinction of being the musician fired most frequently by Mr. Yankovic over a period of almost 30 years. In addition to their Friday and Saturday performances, Mr. Ostanek and Mr. Sluga along . . . And here they come, Mr. Speaker, a timely entrance.

Mr. Speaker, I was giving the introduction for these gentlemen, Mr. Sluga and Mr. Ostanek. I'd ask Mr. Ostanek to give a wave so people would know who he is; and Mr. Sluga, the most-fired frequently by Frankie Yankovic over almost 30 years.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in addition to their Friday and Saturday performances, Mr. Ostanek and Mr. Sluga, along with Saskatchewan's Western Senators, will be taping 13 new episodes of their hit television series, *PolkaRama*, on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday of next week. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in welcoming our guests to the Saskatchewan legislature. Welcome.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I would like to join the hon. member across the way in welcoming Walter Ostanek and Ron Sluga to our legislature. I understand as well that Mr. Ostanek and his wife, Irene, are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary this year. I congratulate them on that and also 50 years as a band leader. So I ask all members to join me in congratulating them and welcoming Walter and Ron to our legislature. Thank you.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Possession of Confidential Reports

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have found out this morning that the Regina Police Service has launched an internal investigation into how two of their confidential reports came into the possession of someone outside the police service. The Sask Party tabled these illegally

obtained documents in this House on Tuesday. They also posted them on their website for the entire world to see.

The police will, no doubt, be very interested in just how the Saskatchewan Party got a hold of these illegally obtained documents. All the public knows is that a mysterious brown envelope showed up in the Saskatchewan Party caucus office. How did this envelope get there? We don't know. When exactly did it show up? We don't know. Who delivered it to their office? We don't know.

The reason we don't know any of this is because the Sask Party has not exactly been forthright in providing this information to the police and the public. We certainly hope that the Saskatchewan Party will be far more co-operative with the police and their investigation into this than they have been so far with the people of Saskatchewan on this issue.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Fundraising Event for Sofia House

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last night I had the privilege of attending a special fundraiser put on by three Saskatchewan Party candidates from the Queen City. Terrill Young from Regina Coronation Park, Raynelle Wilson from Regina Lakeview, and Christine Tell from Regina Wascana Plains joined forces with Candyce Bakke of Regina's Shear Escape Salon & Spa and hosted Martinis & Manicures, an event in support of Regina's Sofia House.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, Sophia House provides safe and affordable housing, counselling, support groups, and community resource referrals for abused women and their children.

The spa was abuzz last night with women from all over Regina who turned out to find out more about our candidates and to support the women who find themselves in abusive relationships. Other guests last night included Peggy Hennig, the executive director of Sofia House; Saskatchewan Party president, Michelle Hunter; and even my colleague from Wood River. On a lighter note I must say, Mr. Speaker, the aestheticians were bound and determined to give the member from Wood River a pedicure.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the more than 50 women that came out for last night's event, all of the young women from Richard's Beauty College & Esthetics who donated their time and experience, Candyce Bakke of Shear Escapes for hosting the event, and the three Regina Saskatchewan Party candidates for putting on a wonderful fundraising event.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:15]

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

Confidential Document

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recent events make it crystal clear that members of the opposition are willing to trample anything and anyone they think is in their way getting to the Premier's office. That includes, Mr. Speaker, making public an illegally obtained document by tabling it in this legislature — a document that was not only illegally obtained but also contained private, confidential, and personal information about Saskatchewan citizens; a document that in hands of a more responsible and less power-hungry men and women would never have seen the light of day.

And, Mr. Speaker, this unconscionable breach of confidentiality and privacy did not stop there. The Sask Party actually posted it on their website. Now, Mr. Speaker, Regina police are attempting to get all the copies of this confidential document back into their possession where it belongs. But thanks to the irresponsibility of the Sask Party, that's just not possible.

That's how the Sask Party acts in the best interests of Saskatchewan people? No, Mr. Speaker, that's how the Sask Party acts in the best interests of the Sask Party, and the citizen's right to privacy be hanged.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Humboldt Broncos Give Their All for the Anavet Cup

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend the Humboldt Broncos put up the fight of their life in the championship game of the Anavet Cup in Selkirk, Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, after four gruelling overtime periods, the Broncos lost to the Selkirk Steelers 4 to 3.

Following an exhausting schedule of six games in seven nights, the series stretched into its eighth night with the championship matchup going well past midnight. After two goals by the Steelers in the first and second periods, Broncos players, Russ Nielsen and Steven Schroeder scored back-to-back power play goals in the second period. The Steelers gained the lead again, but soon after the Broncos' Matt Kirzinger tied things up in the third period sending the game to overtime.

After three overtimes, Mr. Speaker, the game was still tied with both teams' goalies facing more than 50 shots on goal during six periods of play. The Steelers scored their fourth goal on a power play during the fourth period of overtime. Mr. Speaker, Broncos' goalie Nathan Heinen should be commended for stopping 60 of 64 shots on goal.

The member from Arm River-Watrous would also like to commend his constituent, Tory Allan, for games well played.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating all the members of the Humboldt Broncos as well as the head coach, Dean Brockman, for giving it their all during the Anavet Cup. The fans are very proud of them.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Theft From Saskatchewan Party

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting that the Saskatchewan Party has spent all session, every question period, looking into personnel matters that are 5, 12, or 14 years old. Now the newspaper has another five-year-old personnel issue, but this one is headlined "Sask. Party had its own theft."

What exactly did this theft entail, Mr. Speaker? A story right out of Hollywood movies — there was a hidden spy camera, a complicated sting operation, and a timeline of several weeks of questionable activity before the issue was resolved. But what I found most interesting is how long it took for this information to become public. The Sask Party has been unequivocal in their position. They have a zero tolerance policy for any of these types of incidents. They should be reported no matter how small.

Who planted the security camera? We don't know. Who was the person who took the money? We don't know. Was an audit done? We don't know. Were the police called in? We don't know. How many members of the caucus were informed about this? We don't know. But we do know that the Sask Party did not choose to make the public know of this incident until now, when they were caught, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member from Cannington.

Ethics

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, in 1994, former NDP [New Democratic Party] MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] Pat Lorjé told the police that it was the intention of her caucus to conceal fraud. We also know that all NDP MLAs and staff were fully briefed on this incident in 1994 at two separate meetings. That means that a number of the members opposite were fully aware of the cover-up and chose to sweep it under the carpet.

Who was sitting around the caucus table at that time? Well that would include the current Premier, the member for Moose Jaw North, Saskatoon Nutana, Prince Albert Northcote, Prince Albert Carlton, Regina Coronation Park, Regina Douglas Park, Saskatoon Massey Place, Regina Wascana Plains, Yorkton, Meadow Lake and Regina Rosemont. The member for Regina South was a caucus staffer at that time.

Speaking of the member for Regina Rosemont, I wonder if any of the members opposite feel they pass her ethics test as outlined in her recent CPA [Commonwealth Parliamentary Association] report. Her ethics test includes three checks:

The Gut Check: Does this action feel like the right thing, or does it feel "funny?"

The "Mom" Check: Could I reveal my conduct to my

mother or father without shame?

The *Washington Post* Check: Would I be willing to have my conduct reported on the front page of *The Washington Post*?

Mr. Speaker, I think members opposite would have to answer no to these three checks, but being NDP perhaps not.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Personnel Problem

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it turns out that the Saskatchewan Party caucus had a bit of a personnel problem. One of their members was concerned about missing money. This indeed is a very serious concern. We know the caucus Chair was involved, and we know the party leader was involved. We also know that the member for Canora-Pelly was involved in the decision on what the appropriate course was to deal with this incident.

We know the caucus chief of staff asked for and received the employee's resignation, but what happened next, Mr. Speaker? Was this employee turned over to the police, Mr. Speaker? No, this employee was turned over to a completely different group. This employee got a job with the Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

I wonder if the Sask Party offered a letter of reference to those new employers. I wonder if they informed the taxpayers federation that this employee may have misappropriated taxpayer dollars, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Alleged Concealment of Wrongdoing

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, an editorial in today's *Leader-Post* says it's decision time for the Premier. And the only decision he should make is to accept the resignation of the NDP House Leader. Mr. Speaker, on Monday the Premier said the reason he had not accepted the minister's resignation is that the Premier believed the minister was telling the truth, and he was not involved in covering up fraud.

Mr. Speaker, in light of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, in light of Pat Lorjé saying it was the intention of caucus to conceal fraud, will the Premier now accept the minister's resignation?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I just want to say this. There are families in the province of Saskatchewan today who have 3 feet of water in their living rooms, Mr. Speaker. There are students today who are graduating from our universities and our colleges who are beginning their careers in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. There are seniors in this province concerned about their drug plan, Mr. Speaker, and their drug costs. And what do we get from the Saskatchewan Party opposition? We get a session of questions about four-year-old and 15-year-old personnel matters, Mr. Speaker.

I have asked the Conflict of Interest Commissioner to look into all of the outstanding questions around this issue. I am not seeking the resignation of the minister, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you what's going on. We've got an opposition so desperate for power they will just play politics. Well this is a government that cares about the people of Saskatchewan and that's not going to change. Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, the very first day the Saskatchewan Party raised the Murdoch Carriere harassment scandal back in 2003, you know what the NDP said? They criticized us for breaching confidentiality. Of course, if the Carriere harassment report hadn't been leaked, he would probably be still working for this government and victimizing women.

Let's fast forward five years, Mr. Speaker, and the government is saying the exact same thing about the NDP fraud scandal. The Premier should be less concerned about how we got the report and more concerned about what's in the report.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, the intention of the NDP to conceal fraud and clear evidence that the minister was part of that cover-up — Mr. Speaker, is the Premier going to accept the minister's resignation?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Cline: — You know, Mr. Speaker, there's an old saying that people who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. Now what is the complaint of the opposition here? The complaint is that it took two years, Mr. Speaker, for the New Democratic Party to refer a theft to the police for investigation. That is their complaint.

Mr. Speaker, it has been revealed that a theft occurred in this building in their office, the Saskatchewan Party MLA offices. That was five years ago, Mr. Speaker, and they have never reported it to the police, Mr. Speaker. And I say to them

through you today, Mr. Speaker, have they reported it to the police as of today, Mr. Speaker? And if they have not, any fair-minded person watching this would know, Mr. Speaker, that they do not come to this building with clean hands.

The Speaker: — The member's time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't know who leaked the police reports, but I think I can guess why. I think I can guess why they leaked those reports. There is, Mr. Speaker, there is someone in this province who saw a clear case of NDP covering up fraud, and they wanted to bring it to light.

Mr. Speaker, when that kind of information comes to the Saskatchewan Party, when there is clear evidence of the government concealing fraud, when there is clear evidence of cover-up in the NDP government, we are going to make that public every single time. And, Mr. Speaker, would I do it again? You bet I would.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, we did our job. Is the Premier going to do his job and fire that minister?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the problem is this is a case of don't do as I do, but do as I say. They say, Mr. Speaker, that wrongdoing . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order. The Chair recognizes . . . Order please, members. Order. The Chair recognizes the Minister of Industry and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, five years ago they obtained a videotape of a person stealing money from one of their members in their caucus office, someone who was on the public payroll in their office, Mr. Speaker. They did not call the police. They did not reveal that to the police, Mr. Speaker, now for five years.

Their complaint is that there was a similar incident in our caucus office that wasn't brought to the attention of the police for two years, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, they have never gone to the police. Now that same member asked this question to the minister, Mr. Speaker, about the NDP caucus theft. He said:

. . . why didn't they immediately go to the police? Why was this information withheld from the police?

Mr. Speaker, why didn't . . .

The Speaker: — Member's time has elapsed.

[10:30]

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, don't you find it a little more than a bit ironic that the NDP is criticizing us for not taking this report immediately to the police? If the NDP had taken the confession letter immediately to the police in 1992, they wouldn't be in the mess that they're in today.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, Pat Lorjé told police it was the intention of caucus to conceal fraud. She told reporters that there was a group in caucus who wanted to cover this up, but she wasn't part of that group. Mr. Speaker, who was in that group? Was the Premier part of that group? Mr. Speaker, it sounds like there was two camps. There was the reveal camp, and there was the conceal camp. Which one was the Premier in?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, they had a theft in their office. Mr. Speaker, they recorded it by videotape. What did they do? They concealed it, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Every one of them. That member asking the question, what did he do? Did he go to the police? No. He concealed it, Mr. Speaker. That's what he did. And every member sitting over there was part of an effort to conceal the fact that a theft had occurred in their office and it was recorded on videotape. And what did they do? They swept it under the carpet because they didn't want to be embarrassed.

And then they have the audacity, Mr. Speaker, to criticize this government that — we did what? — we went to the police. But they say it took us too long. They have never gone to the police to this day about the theft in their office, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, obviously it wasn't just Jim Fodey who knew about the missing money in 1992. The Government House Leader knew. He must have told other members. He must have even told the member from Massey Place. He must have mentioned it to the Premier.

So when the Premier picked up the newspaper in 1992 and saw that the police were saying that there were no complaints, and Jim Fodey said that there was no money missing, what did he do? Did he talk to Jim Fodey? Did he talk to his friend, the

NDP House Leader? What did, what did the Premier do when he learned that the evidence had not been turned over to the police?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the evidence was turned over to the police in 1994. That question has been asked and answered.

And, Mr. Speaker, the evidence of a theft that is recorded on videotape in the Saskatchewan Party office has never been turned over to the police to this day. And I've asked the opposition through you, Mr. Speaker. Are they now going to report this theft to the police, and if not, why not, 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 funny how no one seems to know anything about this NDP fraud cover-up. That's not quite what the Premier said last year when he was talking about another government fraud scandal. The Premier said, and I quote:

I am sure that anybody that works in my office has a pretty good idea [in] what goes on in my office.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier was a member of the NDP . . .

The Speaker: — Order members. Order. Order. Order. I invite the member to continue.

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier was a member of the NDP caucus in 1992. The Premier and the minister were quite close. They were the two members for Moose Jaw at that time. So based on the Premier's own words, he should have had a pretty good idea about what was going on with this NDP fraud cover-up. So, Mr. Speaker, did the Premier know, did the Premier know about the NDP fraud cover-up, and is that why he won't fire the minister?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, that member and his colleagues get on their high horse and point fingers at everybody else because it took two years for this caucus to go to the police, but we went to the police.

There was a theft in their office five years ago. They've never gone to the police. They want to talk about 1992, something that wasn't reported, you know, 15 years ago, Mr. Speaker. Well a few short years before that their leader, Mr. Speaker, worked in this building for a minister of the Crown, and he and that minister ordered the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming

Authority to deliver to cabinet ministers' offices \$19,000 worth of booze that was paid for by taxpayers' money. Did the Leader of the Opposition ever report that to the police? No, Mr. Speaker, he didn't report that to the police either.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, isn't it funny how the NDP is always more interested in going after the whistle-blower than going after the people who did something wrong? Mr. Speaker . . .

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

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, on the day they sent out the letter praising Murdoch Carriere and transferring him to Regina, they sent a letter to his women victims telling them to keep their mouth shut. And what are they saying today? That the official opposition should have kept its mouth shut about this NDP fraud scandal. Mr. Speaker, can you imagine? They wanted us to be part of the cover-up.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has now had several days to review the overwhelming evidence that his minister took part in a fraud cover-up. Will the Premier do the right thing and accept his resignation?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Mr. Speaker, in the courts they have a saying that when you go to court and you ask for equity, you have to come in with clean hands. Mr. Speaker, they have been using stolen documents from the Regina police department which they received and did not report to the police. They have been violating the privacy rights of Saskatchewan citizens on their website. Mr. Speaker, they refused and continue to refuse to report a theft that occurred in their office to the police.

And the point is, Mr. Speaker, that we may have made a mistake in not reporting the theft in our office to the police for two years — let's acknowledge that — but they do not have clean hands, Mr. Speaker. This is a very hypocritical position for them to take. And what we need to know, Mr. Speaker, is who stole the money?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. The members will come to order. Order. Order. Member for Canora-Pelly.

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, let's just review this Premier's record of scandal and cover-up. For six years they covered up SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] and that minister is still in cabinet. During the election, Mr. Speaker, the NDP covered up their plan to hike taxes.

The Speaker: — Order. Member for Canora-Pelly.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during the election the NDP covered up their plan to hike taxes. The minister of Finance admitted it after the election, but that minister is still in cabinet. They are still covering up their secret legal opinion on the Murdoch Carriere harassment scandal, but that minister is still in cabinet. And now we learned the Government House Leader covered up fraud, and he is still in cabinet. Mr. Speaker, the only minister who ever got punted out of cabinet was the guy who questioned the Premier's leadership. Mr. Speaker, if we made any mistake, it was simply calling for the minister to go. It's time for the Premier to go as well.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, when is the Premier going to do the right thing and fire that minister?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order please. Order please. In this debate . . . Order please. Order please. Order please. On a point of order. In this debate members have been conducting themselves rather well under certain circumstances by generalizing their comments. However, I did pick up two comments today, the second one just now, where there were personal allegations — one against the Government House Leader just now and one against the opposition critic who's making the statements. I ask members to be very careful and not to make personal charges. Let's stick to the issues and let's not have any more personal charges.

The Minister for Industry and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Well the difficulty here, Mr. Speaker, is we know that they caught somebody red-handedly with the video camera stealing money in their office. We know that they didn't go to the police. We know that they haven't gone to the police to this day. And the serious question I think is this, Mr. Speaker, besides the question of why they haven't gone to the police. Was it because if they went to the police and the police interviewed the person who conducted the theft that there were things going on in that office that they wanted concealed, Mr. Speaker, that they wanted concealed? And if that isn't the case, Mr. Speaker, then let them go to the police and let the police interview that employee and we'll see what the employee has to say about what they're trying to conceal about what's going on in their office, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked a series of questions to determine exactly how much taxpayers' money was missing from the NDP caucus but, Mr. Speaker, the minister was in one of her moods and, you know, I'll be asking the questions in this legislature. Well today, Mr. Speaker, I would like one member on that side of the House, one of the cabinet ministers . . .

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the September 1992 report by Mintz & Wallace Chartered Accountants places the losses at about \$6,166. However page 9 of the 1994 police report describes how a caucus employee, Gail Fehr, found a note in a folder from Ann Lord to then caucus Chair and Jim Fodey. The amount of that note was for \$10,000 that supposedly Ann Lord had misappropriated. Mr. Speaker, the question is: what is the actual amount that was taken from the NDP caucus?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:45]

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

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd just say to the members opposite that I'm getting a bit old for one of those moods. But anyway I just . . . You know, he was talking about my mood. I'm getting a bit old; I'm moving into my senior years, Mr. Speaker.

But I do want to say this to the members opposite. You know, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, these men and women believe that they are going to become the next government and they're going to become the government shortly. But you know, Mr. Speaker, what I find most disturbing . . . According to them. But what I most find disturbing, Mr. Speaker, and I listened to the member from Canora-Pelly. You know what he said? He said that he would release people's private, personal information if he thought it was in the public interest. Well, Mr. Speaker, people of this province have the right to go to the police. They have the right to give information to the police and they have a right not to find it on the Sask Party website.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, the calls that are coming into our constituency offices, the talk on talk shows across the province is starting to be, actually how many dollars are we dealing with here? There's so many numbers out there, Mr. Speaker, anywhere from 6 to 8 to 10,000. And now, Mr. Speaker, in the report that we have received and the government has received — they've had time to go over it — Carla Douglas said the amount was almost \$20,000.

I think, Mr. Speaker, this government owes it to the taxpayers and they owe it to the public to come forward and give the exact amount of taxpayers' dollars that were defrauded from those same taxpayers. How much was it, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — The caucus office did a KPMG report that was tabled in this House. It was done in November, tabled . . . It was done in 1994, tabled in this legislature — \$6,000.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. The Minister for the Public Service Commission.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, these people are serving to obstruct justice in this province by releasing people's private information, and it makes people reluctant to go to the police now, Mr. Speaker.

We now have read in the front page of the *Leader-Post* that they had a little problem in their caucus. Someone stole money in their caucus. They put in a private security system to find out who it was.

We want to know who stole the money. Why didn't they go to the police? Was it because the person who stole the money had something on members over there and threatened that if they went to the police, they'd make that information public? That's what we want to know, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Okay. Okay. Order. Order please. Okay, I would ask . . . Order please. Order please. I would ask the two members to take their discussion elsewhere so we can proceed with the orders of the day. Order please.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 68 — The Status of the Artist Act, 2007

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

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 68, The Status of the Artist Act, 2007 be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation that Bill No. 68, The Status of the Artist 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 the Bill be read a second time? The Chair recognizes the minister.

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting. Orders of the day.

For what purpose does the member seek recognition?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, to seek leave of the House to make a statement about an anticipated visit of the Princess Royal before Orders of the Day.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted for the Premier to make a statement with respect to this visit, royal visit?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. The Chair recognizes the Premier.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Princess Royal to Visit Saskatchewan

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to announce that a member of the royal family will be visiting our province. Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, is scheduled to visit Saskatchewan in June 2007. It is an honour and a privilege to receive the Princess Royal in our province once again and it's my pleasure today to inform you of the purpose of her visit.

Mr. Speaker, from June 1 to 4, the Princess Royal will be in Saskatchewan to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Royal Regina Rifles. The Princess is Colonel-in-Chief of the regiment which has served its city, province, and country in times of peace and war throughout the century.

The specific details of her visit will be announced in the weeks to come but I know that the Princess Royal will have an ambitious schedule of events and activities in our province.

Mr. Speaker, royal visits are important events that generate excitement in this province and provide an opportunity to showcase Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan, our land, on a national and international stage. We are very pleased that the Princess Royal has accepted an invitation to come to our great province. I know that the people of Saskatchewan will extend a very warm welcome to her during her visit.

Thank you very much, 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 1,303 through 1,306 inclusive. Thank you.

The Speaker: — Responses to questions 1,303 to 1,306 inclusive have been submitted.

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Government's Performance

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It certainly is a privilege to join in or to initiate the debate, the 75-minute debate today on a motion that we put forward. I don't think the motion could be more timely. It talks about a number of things, not just the fraud cover-up by this NDP government but it goes back a number of years and looks at many different issues that this government has been involved in that have been dealt with less than honestly, Mr. Speaker.

It doesn't matter whether it's the scandals of Channel Lake. It doesn't matter whether it's the issue around SPUDCO. It doesn't matter whether it's Carriere or Ann Lord and the latest fraud cover-up that the NDP has found itself in.

There are many different situations or scandals that this government has been involved in. It's been governing for 16 years. And I know we have been saying, and I know I hear it all the time out in the constituencies — I hear people tell me on a regular basis — it's a tired, old, worn out government. And when you become tired, old, and worn out, you start to see scandals like this. They get, they get a little bit reckless, and you'll see a number of scandals that this government hasn't been involved in.

And, Mr. Speaker, we could probably put a motion forward on each and every one of those. We're going to talk about them all as a group. But certainly the Channel Lake was an issue a number of years ago. But what I want to talk about more recently, where I have maybe a better memory of, is the SPUDCO scandal, the Carriere issue, and the whole issue of fraud that this government covered up for two years before it went to the police.

The first one is the whole issue around SPUDCO and some of the problems that this government found itself in with the SPUDCO situation. It was interesting. It was only probably a couple of years in when the minister responsible at that time, the member from P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote, I believe, had to stand in this House and apologize. And why did he have to apologize? You don't see that very often. But a minister standing in the House apologizing for simply misleading the public for six years, Mr. Speaker.

He misled the public for six years by saying that a partnership was struck by . . . with the government and private companies to build the structures — the potato sheds, for example. The ministers had told the public and deceived the public by saying that it was supposedly a 51 to 49 per cent private-public venture for the cost of the storage sheds. But, Mr. Speaker, that was told to the public, for six years, that it was a private-public partnership on a 51 to 49 per cent split.

But the whole issue, after much questioning by the opposition, and finally the minister had to come clean, had to stand in the House and apologize for what he had been telling the people of Saskatchewan. But what is even more interesting is he was out of cabinet, I believe for a little while, but then put right back in the cabinet. So you can deceive the public for six years on a public-private partnership and the punishment is virtually nothing. He's back in cabinet making decisions regarding public money, and there are some huge concerns with that.

The other issue that was really interesting with this NDP government on that whole process of the potato sheds is how they got around their own Crown tendering agreement. And how they could get around the Crown tendering agreement was by deceiving the public that it was a public-private partnership, when we found out after it wasn't a public-private partnership. The government sunk all the money in and as a consequence we lost, I believe, about \$30 million . . . \$35 million on that issue. It was unbelievable that we could lose \$35 million after six years of a government telling us it was a public-private partnership and eventually finding out it wasn't that way at all.

Mr. Speaker, and that is, I guess if you could go . . . And I was looking at a newspaper article, a commentary that was, I believe in Saturday's paper, April 27, '07, "Why 1992 fraud case is now so important" and it was written by Murray Mandryk. And he talks about the three strikes that this government has had. And quite frankly after three strikes they should be out. And he talks about the first issue which I just finished dealing with briefly was the whole SPUDCO issue.

The next issue that he talked about, as well as what I want to talk about, is the Murdoch Carriere case and the scandal that surrounds this government with that issue. It's interesting when . . . It was during question period today and I believe it was the minister from Saskatoon Massey Place that stood up and talked about every question period has had issues around the Murdoch Carriere case or now this fraud cover-up. And he says, I can't believe those are the issues you'd be talking about.

Well I remember running in 1999 and the whole campaign of the government was looking back to fraud that the Conservative government had committed, and they were always trying to tie us to what had gone on 15 and 20 years ago. And then they have the nerve, the hypocrisy, to stand up and say, why isn't the opposition talking about the future?

Well, Mr. Speaker, this government has been in power for 16 years and it has had some major, major scandals and that's why we're talking about it because the public needs to know the record of this government, Mr. Speaker, and the Murdoch Carriere is just another example.

On April 3, 2003 the Justice minister at that time spoke about the Murdoch Carriere case and I think this is just a very telling clip. It was said in the House:

[11:00]

In the event that there is a lawsuit against the Government of Saskatchewan, it will be the position of the Government of Saskatchewan that the termination of . . . [Murdoch] Carriere was justified. We will defend that position vigorously in the courts. And in due course, Mr. Speaker, the courts will make the determination.

But they folded like a cheap tent. They absolutely folded like a cheap tent and paid Murdoch Carriere \$275,000 of severance after he had been convicted of assault and charged with harassment, Mr. Speaker. Folded like a cheap tent.

Mr. Speaker, they had the grounds to go against Murdoch Carriere. The former Justice minister said they had the grounds

to battle this in the court. And you know, if the judge and the courts determined that there was a payment to be made to Mr. Carriere, then we'd live with that. But to never have challenged him is absolutely unacceptable. And that is exactly what the people are saying around the province that I talked to.

It was amazing with the postcards that we got back, you know roughly about 6 to 7,000 postcards that we have seen back. Now they've often . . . The government will say well that's not very many compared to what you sent out. Well if you talk to any marketing company 1 per cent return is great. We were over 2 per cent, double what most of the marketing firms would say, Mr. Speaker. So obviously, obviously it has been a huge concern with people around the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, the government has had the Murdoch Carriere scandal, hasn't dealt with it properly, and as a result it's cost the taxpayers \$275,000. But, Mr. Speaker, the SPUDCO issue is definitely enough — that should overthrow a government. But if that doesn't, there's the Murdoch Carriere issue. And if that is not enough, just the recent issue around the whole Ann Lord case and the fraud that was covered up in this NDP caucus is absolutely amazing.

Now I'm not blaming any employer, which the government is. I'm not blaming an employer if they hire somebody and it turns out that they don't . . . they have some issues and in this case defrauded taxpayers' money when they were adding numbers to the fronts of cheques. She had the ability and the exposure to those cheques. I'm not faulting the government for hiring somebody like that. Yes, we try and do our best to make sure that the credit checks are done properly and the references are followed up and done properly, but there are times when a person like that will slip through the cracks. And this person has slipped through the cracks in many different employer situations.

That's not the problem. The problem is, is after they had found out that she had defrauded the government of what we don't even know is the exact number . . . it could be 6,000. It could be 8,000. It could be 10,000. It could be 20,000. It could be 40,000. We're not exactly sure.

Well they keep saying read the report. They're hollering across the floor, read the report. The report does not cover all of the issues. There are issues around computers. There are other issues that haven't been addressed because what the police, the city police had asked this NDP caucus to do was to do a forensic audit of the situation, a forensic audit of what the situation was. And this government refused to because there . . . I think they really did know. I think they really did know how much it was going to . . . certainly 6,000 pales in comparison to what probably is there that they have covered up.

But, Mr. Speaker, the issue of having a letter come forward admitting to fraud, admitting to fraud, and then not having the government act on it is absolutely unacceptable. But it is certainly understandable. It's understandable by that government in 1991 and '92 because right in the police documents it talks about the political climate of the day, and we need to take that into consideration. Well I think most of us that have any sort of memory remember what was going on in '91, '92, '93. There were many, many issues around fraud, and the

last thing this government wanted to do is have the NDP anywhere in those headlines about fraud. They were quite happy to see what was going on with the former Conservative Party — the Progressive Conservative Party — and the last thing they could stand was to have the NDP name anywhere in those fraud scandals. And it should have been, Mr. Speaker.

That is the exact reason why I believe they didn't go to the police immediately in 1992 and waited until it was investigated a little bit by other employees, and then finally went to the police in 1994. It was simply covered up for two years. There is no other way and no other explanation other than covering it up for two years until then maybe the political climate is a little more conducive to having something like this go through because they sure didn't want to see it or read about it in the early '90s.

Mr. Speaker, they absolutely covered it up because . . . And it's in all the letters. It's in all the letters . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow is always spouting from their seat. That's nothing unusual, and what's unusual is that it doesn't make a whole lot of sense.

But, Mr. Speaker, it would be very interesting to sit down with the members that were there in 1991 and see how many said we should send this to the police right away because I believe there were a number of them. Pat Lorjé already has said, Pat Lorjé has already said there are two camps. There were two camps.

Some people wanted to sweep it under the carpet. Some people just didn't want to talk about it, but she wasn't in that camp. So there must have been the conceal camp and the reveal camp. And I would love to know . . . And you know, quite frankly, I think we have a pretty good idea on this side of the House, just by watching the faces over the last week, on which side they were on. Whether it was conceal and do what the government did and shuffle it under the carpet so that it doesn't come up at an inopportune time — those people are the conceal, along with the member from Moose Jaw North. There's that camp.

But I truly do believe there was another camp in that caucus in 1991, and it was the reveal camp. I am positive that there are members in that NDP caucus that said in 1991 we cannot hide this; it needs to go to the police. But unfortunately, unfortunately the conceal camp won. The conceal camp won.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's been very interesting to see the defence of the government over the last couple days. It's been very interesting to see the defence of the government. They're trying to do everything in their power to look over there, to try and distract, because they know they have been caught red-handed in this situation.

The public sees it as nothing but a cover-up, Mr. Speaker, and that's exactly what it is. And I think it will be very interesting if the Premier screws up his courage to call a general election in the next few months, four or five months, and people will see that this government has had far too many scandals over the last 16 years.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move:

That this Assembly condemn the government for its

unacceptable and improper pattern of behaviour during its term, exemplified by, but not limited to, the scandals of Channel Lake, SPUDCO, Carriere, and Ann Lord.

I so move, seconded by the member from Cypress Hills.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Indian Head-Milestone, seconded by the member for Cypress Hills:

That this Assembly condemn the government . . .

Order please. Order please, members. The motion is:

That this Assembly condemn the government for its unacceptable and improper pattern of behaviour during its term, exemplified by, but not limited to, the scandals of Channel Lake, SPUDCO, Carriere, and Ann Lord.

The Chair recognizes the member for Cypress Hills. Why is the member on his feet? Would the member state his point of order.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Mr. Speaker, the 75-minute debate rules are very clear that a member has a certain amount of time to move the motion. The member did not in fact have the motion moved within the time allocated to him, and I would appreciate it if you would rule as to whether the motion was in order or whether an additional amount of time would be provided to the government members to speak.

The Speaker: — I thank the member for the point of order. The member did initiate his motion before time was completed. He did use up an extra 10 seconds. That time will be charged against the opposition side.

The Chair recognizes the member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an opportunity today to talk about a pattern of deceit that has developed within the ranks of the provincial government. This is an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to look at the nature of the deception that has occurred, the issues that have been hidden from public view by this government over its 16 years in office, and the impact that this has had not just on the governing party but on the attitude of the people of this province toward the NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, this government took power in the early 1990s. And it was interesting that they came to power on the heels of having dealt with what they deemed corruption in a previous administration. And yet so soon after they came to power, this particular government launched on its own history of obfuscation and hiding.

It decided that it could not afford to risk public exposure of certain decisions and certain issues. It had to maintain public credibility. So instead of dealing with issues that came to the forefront, that came to the attention of the government, in a forthright and deliberate and conscientious way, they decided to sweep it under the carpet.

And, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the four issues that the official opposition has identified in its motion today, we start with

Channel Lake. We move to SPUDCO, later to Murdoch Carriere, and finally to the Ann Lord NDP caucus funds fraud. And, Mr. Speaker, what's interesting about that is even though each one of those issues has come out at varying times within the 16-year history of this government, they all originated about the same time.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that with some certainty, the public certainly and the official opposition could say that there was a pattern of deliberate deception as a result of issues like this that the government was aware of, that it was conscious and deliberate within the governing party that the members of caucus and members of cabinet decided that they just could not afford to allow their image or their reputation to be tarnished by these kinds of events. And the decision was very deliberate and conscious to hide these issues from the public.

If you look at Channel Lake, Mr. Speaker . . . I wasn't involved politically at the time. I'm not sure the genesis of this particular issue. But I do know that there was a report on Channel Lake that arose as a result of a committee of this legislature that was revealed in a 1997 or 1998 — I guess August 13, 1998 — when a report was prematurely leaked to the public. It was a version of a set of hearings that had been undertaken by a Crowns committee to look into the Channel Lake debacle. And as it stands, Mr. Speaker, that report was leaked to the public before the opposition members even had a chance to look at the report and evaluate it and comment on it.

When a committee of the legislature undertakes an investigation of an issue as important as Channel Lake was, there is an obligation on the part of the committee to give all players and all participants in the committee an opportunity to look at the report and to sign off on it. And if there is not agreement, then there is an opportunity for a minority report. But nevertheless the report that was written was released to the public prior to the official opposition members having access to the report. And it became clear when that transpired that there was one reason for that happening, Mr. Speaker, and that was to give spin to the idea that the NDP were not responsible for the affairs around Channel Lake.

And, Mr. Speaker, if there had been a genuine interest in clearing the air, in seeing the truth come out, I'm sure that the governing members who hold the majority on that committee would have been happy to hear from the opposition members and to entertain much more rigorous recommendations. But that did not happen. And in fact the opposition had to release a whole series of recommendations of their own in order to address the failings of the committee process and the report put out by the majority of NDP members on that particular committee.

And I don't know if I want to take the time to go through all these recommendations. People who knew more about that affair than I do will probably spend time discussing it. But what I found interesting, Mr. Speaker, is that as I looked through the recommendations of the members of the official opposition who've sat on that committee, the names of certain individuals keep showing up.

[11:15]

And it's really quite interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that the names of individuals who are related to the Channel Lake fiasco and the SPUDCO fiasco and some of the later issues are the same people. And I think that that speaks, Mr. Speaker, to the integrity of this government and some of the players in this government. I think it speaks very clearly to the will of the governing party to put certain people in situations where they can sweep issues under the carpet and who are willing to do so to do the bidding of the government, to protect the reputation of the government, and to keep the issues of the day from public scrutiny.

So I will move from the SPUDCO affair . . . I'm sorry, from the Channel Lake affair to the SPUDCO affair. And once again we see some of the same players involved in the SPUDCO fraud that was perpetrated on the people of the province. It wasn't just a simple potato scandal. As it stands, Mr. Speaker, the SPUDCO scandal turned out to be the largest, largest fraud perpetrated on the people of Saskatchewan in the history of this province — \$35 million at last count, and I'm not sure all the bills are in yet.

Mr. Speaker, \$35 million associated with that issue and we found the government hiding from that, hiding the true nature of the agreements. The public-private partnerships weren't what they were proposed or announced to be. There was disagreement on fact. There was disagreement on reality. And when the truth came out — six years after this whole thing became public — a minister had to stand in this House and accept responsibility for misleading the legislature. Mr. Speaker, that record in itself would suggest to me a culture of corruption in the government.

Mr. Speaker, we move on to the Murdoch Carriere scandal, which also was first brought to the attention of the government as early as 1993. And there were complaints by female employees in the public service that they were being harassed as early as 1993. Although those complaints were legitimate and were made in accordance with the procedure at the time, there was nothing done. And it wasn't until almost 10 years later that the issue became so ugly and so debilitating to members of the public service who worked with this individual, this Murdoch Carriere, that something had to be done.

But instead of coming clean on that issue, instead of standing up in his place and saying we have a problem within our public service, without identifying the individuals by name, if the Premier had shown leadership, we could have had this issue resolved. But instead it was hidden. And the only time the government took, the only time the government took any opportunity to speak about it was when the report that delved into those allegations and those misdeeds became public — when it showed up on the front page of *The StarPhoenix*.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, here again we have an example of where the government could have moved more quickly, could have gone public, could have made the public aware of this. And do you know, Mr. Speaker, I would, I would assure you that the public would be a lot more forgiving of wrongdoing if there was admission of guilt. But when it's hidden under the carpet, when it's swept out of view and deliberately hid from the scrutiny of the public, that's when the public begin to mistrust a government. And we've got more recently the caucus

funds and the Ann Lord issue that has dominated this House for the last week.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that we're all, we're all mindful of the impact of the Watergate scandal on American politics. What started out as a two-bit, small-time robbery in a third-rate hotel ultimately brought down the president of the world's strongest, wealthiest, most mighty nation.

And, Mr. Speaker, there are similarities here. There are comparisons to be drawn. You can't hide in the dark what you don't want exposed in the light. And what's happened here today and what's happened over the last number of weeks in this session is the light of exposure has been shone on this government. And what the people of this province have seen is not very appealing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And before I speak to the resolution I just want to mention that I'm honoured to wear this red rose today in honour of the work of the MS [multiple sclerosis] Society.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution from the Sask Party today clearly indicates that instead of debating the future of this great province they wish to have a discussion on scandal. At the end of my remarks, I will be moving an amendment.

The Sask Party has decided that what happened 15 years ago is important. So I guess today will be a debate about the record. And, Mr. Speaker, today I am more than happy, in fact I'm delighted, to compare the record of our four-term NDP government with a record of increasing growth and prosperity and environmental stewardship against their record. And I'm going to talk about three topics: the topic of scandal, the topic of the Sask Party's deviation from their ethical code of conduct, and our record versus their record.

Mr. Speaker, I think the opposition has amnesia. Let me help you recall your two-term government. GigaText, High R Doors, Supercart, free booze, ministers convicted of fraud — this was only eight years. Just think what you could have done if you'd had more time.

The Speaker: — Order. Order please. I would remind the member to address all of her comments through the Chair.

Ms. Crofford: — I will make every effort, Mr. Speaker, to make all my remarks through the Chair. I want to review a bit of their code of ethics. Here's some key words from the document: integrity, honesty, respect, responsibility, fairness, and compassion. And I don't think I need to go any further. But, Mr. Speaker, it seems to be we support these things when we decide it's worth doing it, not as a matter of principle.

I want to particularly mention two of these here. Disseminating false information — well this is a daily occurrence in this House, Mr. Speaker. The member from Cypress Hills did it in his remarks again today, and I'm confident that one of my

colleagues will straighten out the factual information during their remarks. In terms of fundraising, ethical fundraising, well isn't it interesting that they accepted \$10,000 from Imperial Tobacco in 2003 after we had already had a legislative committee of the House sitting since 1999 on the issue of reduction of tobacco use in our communities. And I would have to say that I've looked carefully at this code of ethics, and I find no mention of harassment anywhere in their policies.

I want to refer to an article that was in *The StarPhoenix*, January 17, 1992, and the headline is "Cause for jailing," and it speaks to free liquor in ministers' offices. It speaks to false payment for staff and for advertising. And the commentary said:

These cases are despicable, not just for their scale but for their intent [Mr. Speaker]. They were concocted, at great effort, to deceive the people of Saskatchewan. That makes them fraud and that's why the perpetrators [and this is very germane to my next point, Mr. Speaker] as well as those who watched and did nothing, deserve to be behind bars.

So, Mr. Speaker, who watched and did nothing? Specialists in human behaviour say that the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. And, Mr. Speaker, \$19,000 is a lot of fraudulently attained liquor. So who could have reported it? Who could have reported it? Well the member for Swift Current, seven years working for various cabinet ministers, that's a long time; the Saskatoon Silver Springs member, assistant to Sid Dutchak, Grant Devine, and Ray Meiklejohn; Melville-Saltcoats, assistant to Tory MLA Walter Johnson; Cannington, elected as PC [Progressive Conservative] member in '91; Moosomin, elected under Devine PCs in '86; Estevan, Grant Devine's CA [constituency assistant]; Wood River, ran as PC in 1995; Saskatoon Southeast, PC executive organizer in the 1980s; Thunder Creek, ran for PC nominations in 1985 and 1986.

Now again, Mr. Speaker, \$19,000 is a heck of a lot of fraudulently obtained booze. I can only assume from this list that either everybody went to work with their eyes closed and their ears closed or they could have reported this corruption. And because no one reported it, I'd like to know why.

I have here a stack of bills. They have the name of the Leader of the Opposition on them. They are all fraudulently obtained liquor. There's also excessive expenditures on Big Valley Jamboree and private dinners. That was all ... well nine members of the current sitting opposition were there, and they could have told someone. But they never did, Mr. Speaker.

And so what does the leader have to say about that, of the conservative Sask Party? Well frankly "... I think it's an asset that I was involved in a government that lost its way ..." And what caused him to find his way? Not seven years of employment in the midst of fraud and corruption. What caused him to find his way is the desire to gain power as the leader of this province.

And I have to just do a little bit of quotes from the media here because I think they're very illuminating. Here's Murray Mandryk: "How long of an occurrence was this?" Like, you know, this is a lot to forget.

Stephani Langenegger says, "2-26 pound bags of ice and 3-5 lb. bags of ice, so I guess the Minister said in the House that ..."

The member from Swift Current: "I think ... 60 pounds. I don't know about the ice — I don't remember the ice." He doesn't remember 60 pounds of ice. Mr. Speaker, that's enough ice to go skating on.

Murray Mandryk: "Do you have a personnel policy ... [do you have a party] policy on disclosure?"

The Leader of the Opposition: "On the what?"

Murray Mandryk: "On disclosure because I'm a little foggy what you guys are saying ..." Well so are we.

And here we have James Wood; I'm talking "... about the Liquor Board again — in connection to them raising a connection to yourself to the Progressive Conservatives or Mr. Gerich, did you think it undercuts ... [your party's message]?"

Stephani Langenegger: "Would you have said it was wrong to drink in the Minister's office if the government hadn't forced you out here [to say it] today?"

Wall ... oh sorry, excuse me, the Leader of the Opposition: "I have said it. I have said it. I absolutely said that, you know, I've said that that was wrong."

And last words of Mr. Murray Mandryk: "Really?" So I add that into the record, Mr. Speaker. It's not very believable — not very believable.

And, Mr. Speaker, now to move to my third topic: our record, their record. The NDP government, 16 years of achievement with the support of Saskatchewan citizens who believe in fiscal accountability. The conservative Sask Party opposition, eight years of mismanagement ending in sustained debt which will still be with us long into the future.

Our leader, their leader. Our leader has shown what we can do. We can do the impossible with huge and growing research parks, leading edge environmental research and technology, the largest wind generation per capita in Canada, legislative ethanol standards, and the Rolling Stones. Their leader? Well I'll get to that. Our Premier is committed to a life affordable for ordinary families ...

The Speaker: — Order. For what purpose does the member seek recognition? The member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefer: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to raise a point of order.

The Speaker: — Would the member state his point of order.

Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member who currently has the floor is referring to a great number of documents that she is using as part of her debate. I believe it's an absolutely parliamentary privilege that these documents be tabled with the legislature. And I would make that point.

The Speaker: — Is the member wishing to speak to the point of order? No. I'm prepared to rule on that. The Chair . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I am prepared to rule on that. It has been the customary practice of the Assembly that ministers quoting directly from documents should have the obligation to table them. However in the private members' debate, no private member on either side of the House is obligated to table documents. The member may continue.

Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Our Premier is committed to make life affordable for ordinary families.

I will just interrupt to say that if they would like a copy of all the illegally obtained liquor bills, I certainly will hand those over to them. I will do that after my remarks.

Our Premier's made a commitment to a green and prosperous economy. And he is committed to universal health care and a universal drug plan for seniors and enhanced support for people with low incomes. Their leader has a record as the handmaiden of corrupt, unethical, and fraud-ridden government — chief amongst the spin doctors of history. Well I'm not sure a spin doctor ever cured anything.

Our Premier says that social progress depends on economic progress. Their leader says, please instruct your officials to send over 19,000 worth of free booze. Our leader says, we support a green and prosperous economy. Their leader says, no policy debate because we don't want to be embarrassed with our policies.

Look at the record. We have seen what's happened, and in Saskatchewan we've been criticized for promoting the province. Well the Think Regina campaign has shown that they support the Premier's actions to promote our province. And I have to say that the future is here, Mr. Speaker. We have done the work that the ministers purport to do. We have a successful and growing economy.

[11:30]

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I wish to move an amendment:

That all the words after "That this Assembly condemn" be struck out and replaced with:

opposition members for their unacceptable and improper pattern of behaviour exemplified by, but not limited to, their many documented breaches of their own code of ethics.

Mr. Speaker, I'll be voting against the motion and for the amendment. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Regina Rosemont, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Greystone:

That all the words after "That this Assembly condemn" be struck out and replaced with:

opposition members for their unacceptable and improper pattern of behaviour exemplified by, but not limited to, their many documented breaches of their own code of ethics.

Debate on the amendment and the main motion will occur concurrently. The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Greystone.

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — I'm pleased to enter into this debate, pleased to compare the record of our government with the record of the PC government when it was in office, Mr. Speaker.

Let me just speak first to the question of debt. And let me put this in the context of the fact that the PC Party was forced to change its name to the Saskatchewan Party after 12 of its MLAs were convicted in the courts for fraud. Let's put that in context. That happened during the second term of this government, Mr. Speaker, when members of the opposition could no longer hold up their heads with any dignity under the name of Progressive Conservative and had to change their names. And every one of them knows that's the fact, Mr. Speaker.

But let's compare the record, a record of debt by the Devine government — \$12 billion of additional debt. Well what's the record of our government, Mr. Speaker? We've paid down \$3 billion of that debt, 1 billion in the last four years. It's a long, hard, tough process, and we're going to work at it for many years to come, but we're making headway.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — What's the record of members opposite with respect to the Crowns, Mr. Speaker? They sold off Crown corporation after Crown corporation, and the ones that they didn't sell off, they drove into massive debt.

It took us years to repair the damage, Mr. Speaker, but we have. And what's the record today, Mr. Speaker? A profitable set of Crown corporations all operating in the public interest and, Mr. Speaker, the lowest-cost utility bundle anywhere in Canada as a result of the fact that our Crown corporations are publicly owned. That's the record.

Mr. Speaker, what was the record with respect to social programs? Well it was a record by members opposite of tearing up social program after social program. I recall sitting here in 1987 on the opposition side while I watched members of the PC government dismantle the children's dental plan. Four hundred dental nurses stood in the galleries protesting that decision by the Devine government, Mr. Speaker.

Well I'm proud to say that now we are rebuilding the children's dental program in this province and, Mr. Speaker, we are re-establishing a seniors' drug plan in this province, Mr. Speaker. And we are on record as implementing many, many new progressive social initiatives like a KidsFirst program in this province, Mr. Speaker.

It's a great record, our record with respect to community schools and the establishment of community schools. Our initiatives in terms of new training spaces in this province — more than 6,000, Mr. Speaker, in the last term alone. Mr. Speaker, our record with respect to improving youth employment in this province — 11,000 new jobs for young people between 15 and 24 years of age in the last year alone, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — And, Mr. Speaker, a new family holiday for all people in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, our record with respect to tax cuts, personal tax cuts — one-third of the personal income tax load for the people of Saskatchewan has been eliminated under this government over the last eight years alone, Mr. Speaker. Our cuts to the PST [provincial sales tax] until now finally we have the PST down to 5 per cent again. Of all provinces that have a PST, the lowest rate in all of Canada — not as low as Alberta, of course, but in Alberta they have health care premiums which we don't have in Saskatchewan.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a record that I'm proud of. When I look at the position of members opposite on the critical question of greenhouse gas emissions today, and I recall how in 2002 the only thing that their party wanted to debate at their convention was opposition to the Kyoto Protocol.

And, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be associated with a group of men and women that recognize that climate change has to be addressed and are committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in this province and have done it, to begin with, with a major residential conservation program — the best in Canada — and, Mr. Speaker, on a per capita basis, the best wind power program in all of Canada. I'm proud of that record, Mr. Speaker, and I'll put it up against the record of their government any time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's turn to the other element of this motion because of course what they don't want to talk about, Mr. Speaker, is their record. And what they want to do, Mr. Speaker, is divert public attention from our record by talking about shortcomings during the government years, 16 years, Mr. Speaker, and they've got four items that they've picked. Four items. Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about those four items, and I want to talk about their record.

Their most recent issue that they have raised is the so-called scandal — and I'm putting that in hypothesis — that is associated with a member of staff of our caucus, Mr. Speaker, having stolen \$6,000 worth of funds. That's the issue. And the issue is, Mr. Speaker, that we weren't prompt enough about reporting it to police although it's very clear, Mr. Speaker, that we fully reported it to police by 1994.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's compare that record with their record, with their record, Mr. Speaker. Twelve MLAs, not staff members — 12 MLAs convicted of fraud, Mr. Speaker, and, Mr. Speaker, in some cases, for a large, large sums of money. Let's just review the public record.

Their caucus Chair, Mr. Speaker, the PC caucus Chair, convicted, Mr. Speaker, of a fraud charge for \$837,000 of

public money; for breach of trust of \$125,000; charge of stealing of 114,200, Mr. Speaker. Let's recall what their PC caucus communications director was convicted of — charge of defrauding the government of \$837,000. That was the record. And, Mr. Speaker, in addition to their caucus Chair, 11 other PC members, most of whom were cabinet ministers, convicted of defrauding taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, there's not a shred of evidence; they don't have a shred of evidence that any member of this caucus stole money, Mr. Speaker, not a shred of evidence, and they know it. They won't admit it, but they know it. And if they have evidence, let them bring it forward. What we're talking about here is one staff member who stole \$6,000 and the matter was reported to police in 1994. And you put that up against their record, Mr. Speaker, 12 members of the PC Party convicted of fraud and in many cases, large, large amounts of money involved, Mr. Speaker. That's the comparison. And, Mr. Speaker, I tell you I am proud of our record compared to theirs.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the member for Cypress Hills accuse our government of fraud with respect to SPUDCO. I would ask him to withdraw those remarks because they have no foundation. Was SPUDCO mismanaged? You bet it was mismanaged, Mr. Speaker. Did the government lose money on it? Yes they did, Mr. Speaker. Did we have a legal bill associated with it? Yes there was, Mr. Speaker. Did that cost \$35 million? Yes it did, Mr. Speaker. It was not well handled. It was a mistake by our government. You have to put it in the context, Mr. Speaker, of us having rebuilt our Crowns, and having made hundreds of millions of dollars for the people of Saskatchewan off of the investments that we made, but that was not a good investment.

But the member for Cypress Hills does not have a shred of evidence that fraud was involved with SPUDCO, and if he has that evidence let him put it forward now.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — And if he doesn't, let him withdraw it, Mr. Speaker. Because it's an example, if he does not withdraw it, is it another example of the PC — or sorry the Sask Party — violating their own code of ethics? One element of that code is not disseminating false information, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am proud of this government's record and I will put it up against the record of the PC Party, now renamed the Saskatchewan Party, any time, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Prebble: — . . . supporting the amendment. Thank you.

The Speaker: — Why is the member for Cannington on his feet? Order. The Chair recognizes the member for Cannington on a point of order.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker. You have clearly outlined in the past that members are to refer to the political parties as their proper name. Clearly the member opposite a number of times has called the members of the opposition by the wrong political name, and I would ask that

you ask him to withdraw those remarks and correct his statements.

The Speaker: — The member's point of order is . . . On a point of order the Chair recognizes the member for Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On the point of order, clearly the issue before the House and the statement by the member is a point of debate. The point of debate is we're debating issues in this House, Mr. Speaker, and that is part of the debate.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order please. I am prepared to rule on this matter. The member's from Cannington point is well taken, that we have established a protocol with respect to reference to political parties by their correct name. I did hear one reference by the member for Regina Greystone, which he corrected. If there were other references that the member for Greystone used with respect to the party, Saskatchewan Party, then I would ask him to withdraw it. If he . . . wasn't any, I'd just offer him this opportunity.

The Chair recognizes the member for Greystone.

Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, I intended to correct the mistake I made and, if I didn't, I want to withdraw it. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today and take part in the 75-minute debate, one that deals with a succession of NDP scandals that the people of the province of Saskatchewan have been forced to pay for.

And, Mr. Speaker, the member from . . . As I begin, I just want to note that the member from Regina Rosemont wants to put things on the record, and so I will put things on the record, Mr. Speaker.

August 26, 1992, Ann Lord suddenly left the NDP caucus office, leaving behind a note indicating that her brother had been in a serious accident in Seattle. This was later to be found untrue. She never returned. August 31, 1992, NDP caucus chief of staff Jim Fodey found a two-page letter from Ann Lord addressed to himself and to the member from Moose Jaw North. She confessed to defrauding the caucus office in this letter. She promised to make restitution. She never did.

September 5, 1992, Ann Lord's vehicle, while still parked in front of the legislature, catches fire. Police begin an arson investigation. September 8, 1992, police question Jim Fodey in their attempt to locate Ann Lord. Fodey says nothing about the fraud confession letter. September 9, '92, Lord is arrested in Winnipeg for extradition to the United States on 85 counts of embezzlement. Police advise Fodey of this, but Fodey does not say anything about the confession letter. He indicates that he will have his auditors go over the books.

September 14, 1992, Fodey is again questioned by police. So by my count that's about three times, Mr. Speaker. He still does not say anything about the confession letter, but indicates that an audit was under way and he would share results with the police. September 22, 1992, Fodey received the audit report from Mintz & Wallace. They identified unauthorized cheques totalling \$6,000.

September 22, 1992, on the same day that he received the audit report, Jim Fodey tells the police he has spoken to the auditor and says, quote, "everything is in order." He promised to contact them again after speaking with the administration committee, but he never does. October 25, '92, police close the file.

September 14, 1994, police open a new file with new information received from Pat Lorjé and Wil Olive. Allegations were put forward by NDP caucus director of administration, Carla Douglas, saying that Lord had defrauded caucus and Fodey had concealed relevant information about her activities.

[11:45]

September 20, 1994, police questioned Pat Lorjé. She advises them, and I quote, "that it was the intention of Caucus to conceal the fact that LORD had committed fraud," Mr. Speaker. So I think it's important that the chronology, the record of events is put on the record.

Mr. Speaker, and I won't speak very much about Channel Lake or SPUDCO because I wasn't in the building at those times. Or towards the end of the SPUDCO debacle I came to this building but I won't speak on those. But, Mr. Speaker, the two latest scandals that we're talking about in this House, the one regarding the Ann Lord — the NDP caucus fraud cover-up — and the Carriere scandal, they're fairly different events. But there are two, in my mind, two disturbing commonalities between these events which go to the heart of a cancer within this government.

Mr. Speaker, in the first, in the Carriere scandal, what was the end result? The person who was in the wrong, Murdoch Carriere, was rewarded to the tune of \$275,000 while his victims, those who spent years fighting for justice, were given each \$15,000. All they wanted to do was work in a harassment-free workplace. They wanted justice and it took several years, too many years, for them to receive justice and they were given nowhere anywhere near what Mr. Carriere was given.

Mr. Speaker, in the NDP caucus fraud cover-up, those at the heart of this scandal, most assuredly it's Mr. Fodey and the member for Moose Jaw North, but there is now some debate as to who knew what, who knew it when, back in 1992 to 1994. There seems to be two camps within that caucus, those members that wanted to come clean and those that wanted to cover it up, Mr. Speaker. But the two individuals that we know about that the letter from Ann Lord was addressed to, those two individuals, one was able to keep his position as chief of staff for 15 years.

Even in 1994 when caucus became aware of what was going on, that they became aware that what they were told — and this

is what they're leading us to believe — that what they were told was not congruent, not congruent with what they had been told by Mr. Fodey . . . And that's a point that we'll continue to debate in this House but, Mr. Speaker, the member from Moose Jaw North, what happened to him? He went into cabinet.

And what about the person that tried to do the right thing, the person that tried to blow the whistle? It's my understanding that Carla Douglas was eventually suspended and then fired by the NDP caucus. The person in the right was penalized, both in the Carriere case and in this case. The person in the wrong was ultimately rewarded.

Mr. Deputy Speaker — deputy deputy deputy speaker — the other point I want to talk about is the similarity between these two cases, is the NDP they have a pattern of not coming clean until they are caught. Carriere would still have been working in the Government of Saskatchewan had the Gillies report not been leaked. The NDP only became outraged over the handling of his suspension and he was transferred and then red circled and demoted and . . . I have trouble following it all. They were only outraged when that became public. In the NDP fraud cover-up, again only after the information comes out do they try to come clean. But, Mr. Speaker, over the last week or so they keep digging a hole and keep digging that hole deeper.

Mr. Speaker, things don't add up. In my mind things are not congruent with this story of this government. It's not congruent. Mr. Speaker, the member from Moose Jaw North, he tries to tell the people of this province that it wasn't until the Regina city police chief, Cal Johnston, commented last Friday in a late-called news conference that the story that Mr. Fodey had been telling, that this was the first time that he was hearing about the fact that it didn't go to police. But we know that there were several caucus meetings in 1994 where this matter came up again.

Didn't he ask any questions? Did he not ask Mr. Fodey, didn't this go to the police in 1992? Why didn't it go to the police? When he realized and when that caucus realized that if their story is correct that Mr. Fodey didn't take it to the police in 1992, why was he still the chief of staff in 1994 and '95 and '96 and all the way up until this weekend? It just doesn't add up, Mr. Speaker. In my mind the story is not congruent.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the height of hypocrisy from this NDP government can be found watching the *CTV News* last night. In what must have been the eighth consecutive night that the NDP fraud cover-up scandal was covered on the *CTV News*, the member from Saskatoon Nutana had the audacity to lecture members of the opposition for not immediately turning documents over to the police. The same member that sat in the caucus, that sat on relevant information to a fraud investigation for two years, and did she say we should turn this over to the police in 1992? I don't think so. What camp was she in? Was she a concealer or was she a revealer, Mr. Speaker?

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm running out of time. But I want to say that the member for Regina Rosemont, in her questions she wanted to talk about who knew what, who watched and did nothing. Those were her comments.

Mr. Speaker, we talk a lot about tabled documents in this

House, and yesterday a document was tabled. It was the CPA annual report. She said — and I'm interested in this because I'm going to the Bowhay Institute retreat this summer; she was there last year — the highlights for her were legislative ethics. She says, and I quote:

I will finish with the three tests for the question “is this ethical?”

1. The Gut Check: Does this action feel like the right thing or does it feel “funny?”
2. The “Mom” Check: Could I reveal my conduct to my mother or father without shame? [and]
3. *The Washington Post* Check: Would I be willing to have my conduct reported on the front page of *The Washington Post*?

Mr. Speaker, these are very good questions. And it's unfortunate for the people of Saskatchewan that members on that side didn't ask those questions 15 years ago of themselves and their conduct because their story is not congruent, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't add up. Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate — and I'll be supporting the motion, Mr. Speaker, put forward by the member for Indian Head-Milestone — but it's unfortunate for the people of Saskatchewan.

And I would suggest for members opposite, those who will be retiring this year and who have had honourable careers, and now they're going out, Mr. Speaker, under a cloud, Mr. Speaker, with this sorry scandal hanging over their heads. It's unfortunate. And it's unfortunate that those members didn't ask these questions of themselves, and they preferred instead to take the political expedient road.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you know I've got 10 short minutes in which to make some points today and . . . Aw, five minutes; aw, it's even worse. That makes it even tougher, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I could have talked about the member from Swift Current in his comments that he made after the invoices for the free alcohol when he was in charge of that and ordering it for the minister's office. His kind of contrite interview and scrum that he did where he made the comment, quite clearly:

You look back . . . on that time . . . [and] . . . think that it's an asset that I was involved in a government that lost its way on these issues.

It's an asset. Mr. Speaker, it calls into mind many questions about early learning, the portfolio I'm in now, and how our early patterns really set our patterns for life. So it calls to mind many things — the \$19,000 that has gone missing from the Liquor Board and the accounting that was done after in Public Accounts.

Then we kind of scoot up to the time where the Sask Party made a big hurrah about their code of ethics and how they were following this code of ethics. And, Mr. Speaker, if the opposition hasn't read it, I would gladly table it because I would question whether many have read it.

And, Mr. Speaker, when we make our minds up about what we're going to speak about, mine was really changed today with the article that was in the paper, and it was brought up about the theft that happened in the Sask Party office. Over these last number of months we have seen over and over where the Sask Party has said to be accountable you need to report this to the police. It should be reported right away. Now they're saying, oh well, it was private money.

Well how do they know? Have they done, have they done a forensic audit of their caucus office? No, I don't think they have. Have they reported it to the police? No, they haven't. Mr. Speaker, absolutely nothing was said about this until it was reported in the paper. So you know, we ask why? Well what was the timing? 2002.

Mr. Speaker, we all know 2002 this Saskatchewan Party said, we're winning the next election. So there was no way they wanted a theft in their caucus office reported to the police. They buried it. They buried it, Mr. Speaker, until it was reported in the paper today. They never would have said a thing. So they're a clear example of do as I say and not as I do, coming from that Saskatchewan Party caucus.

This theft was not . . . or the police were not notified of this theft. There was no forensic audit done. And, Mr. Speaker, we don't know if it went beyond what's reported in the paper or not.

And, Mr. Speaker, why? Because this opposition couldn't risk public scrutiny, especially with their close connection with the former Conservative government of the '80s. That was the worst thing they could have happen to them at that point in time — pre-election 2003. There was a conscious and a deliberate decision to hide this from the public.

Did they report it to police? No. Did they do a forensic audit? No. And if the truth were known this Sask Party caucus, they were afraid that right before the 2003 election, they feared that that connection of the former Progressive Conservative and the current Sask Party opposition, people in this province would have connected the dots and said, oh no, here we go. It's the same old cast of characters starting to do the same old thing, Mr. Speaker. And people would not have voted for them.

So here they were, 2003, ready for the election. They had buried this behind, hadn't reported it to the police, hadn't done a forensic audit as they expect everyone else to do, Mr. Speaker. Anyway the balloons are all blown up, the party halls all rented, the bands all ready to play. They even had a transition team in from outside of the province to help with their transition into government.

You know what? They buried it all. They did all that. And all that proved to the people of Saskatchewan, there is a connection with the former Conservative government. And they are one in the same. They act the same. They try and hide things the same.

And do you know what? They had to let those balloons just fade away because they didn't win the last election, Mr. Speaker, because the people of Saskatchewan know that connection. And they've proved by this incident in the paper today that they are the same. They're absolutely the same. And for the sake of political expediency to save their behinds during the last election and to avoid that connection to the former Conservative government, they buried this whole incident in their caucus office.

Mr. Speaker, the light of exposure has been shone on this opposition, and clearly it's do as I say and not as I do. And the people of Saskatchewan expect better.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The 65-minute portion of the debate is over, and we will now start the oral question period. The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the member from Cypress Hills. I would like to know if the member thinks it's appropriate for a member of the legislature to have in their possession and to use documents they know were obtained illegally, in the process of question period to table those documents, and to put them on a website. These documents clearly were taken from the city police. They are documents that are not public documents and they're not allowed to be made public.

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

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to be able to respond to the question. I can do so quite honestly. I have no idea where the documents came from. They were delivered to our office, as far as I know, in a brown paper envelope — anonymously. It's not illegal to be in possession of those documents. When we were notified by the police that they wanted to have those documents removed from our website and returned, we promptly did so, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

[12:00]

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, in my time in the House since 1991, the first sitting MLA to be charged and convicted was NDP MLA and former cabinet minister Murray Koskie of taking kickbacks and fraud, Mr. Speaker. The member of Regina Rosemont was a member of the NDP caucus in 1992. Was she also a part of the NDP caucus administration committee and did she support concealing the caucus fraud in 1992?

Did she also support concealing the fraud in 1994 when it was discussed at caucus meetings? Was the member for Regina Rosemont a member of the NDP caucus administration committee in 1992 and/or 1994? What did she know of the fraud, when did she know it, and what did she do about it?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina

Rosemont.

Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, I can firmly convey that I've never been a member of the administration committee. And I can also convey that I am aware of at least nine currently sitting members of the opposition who have had information that should have been turned over to the police 17 years ago, 18 years ago, 19 years ago, and they've never done it. So, Mr. Speaker, I think I've discharged my duties appropriately.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Jim Fodey was the chief of staff for the NDP caucus office for a number of years. He served in the public service of Saskatchewan for a great many years. And my question is to the member for Regina Rosemont, who would have worked with Mr. Fodey for a number of years, I believe starting back in 1991.

Mr. Speaker, the *Leader-Post* from earlier this week says that a source, a source, unnamed source says that Fodey is, quote, "a very good guy" and efforts will be made to exonerate him. Mr. Speaker, my question for the member for Regina Rosemont — and considering that he may hear the debate today; in fact he may be watching right now — does she think that Jim Fodey was treated properly by this caucus in asking for his resignation?

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

Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that Mr. Fodey was not asked for his resignation. He did that out of a personal sense of honour. And I think that reflects on the kind of person that Jim Fodey is and I believe that's all I have to say about that.

But I do wonder why the members opposite, particularly the member from Weyburn, would not insist that an audit be done when there's a theft in their office. And do they recommend that employees who have committed theft go then into another workplace? Did you warn that other workplace that they might be taking on an employee that may steal from them?

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ann Lord wrote a letter confessing to defrauding taxpayer money from NDP caucus funds, a total of at least \$6,000. Mr. Speaker, the NDP administrative committee, according to Pat Lorjé, concealed, concealed the theft of that money for at least two years, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to ask the member from Saskatoon Greystone, who I believe is an honourable man, can he stand in his place today and still say that he supports the NDP Government House Leader, or does he believe that he should resign because of this scandal?

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

Mr. Prebble: — I do support the NDP Government House Leader, and I don't think there's any scandal involved here. The word is completely inappropriate and, of course, manufactured by members of the Saskatchewan Party.

Let's be clear about what happened, Mr. Speaker. It's clear in 1992, within a month of the alleged incident having taken place, that Regina city police knew about it. Now, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjections] . . . Well it's clear from the police report. Members opposite say, how? And it's clear from the police reports that they illegally obtained and then filed with this legislature, it's clear in those reports that the Regina city police knew about this in 1992. And it's also clear in those reports that in 1994 full and complete information — everything — was filed with the Regina city police. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy. And I would ask that when the theft within their caucus office was discovered on the eve of the 2003 election, was there a report to the police notifying them of the theft? Was there a forensic audit done to make sure that the extent of the theft was as limited as what they are now stating? Was there further investigation and a forensic audit done and was there a report to the police?

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

Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I think this is the first time in the history of the province that the government is demanding a forensic audit of somebody's purse. It's unbelievable. I really, I really can't answer this question because I didn't work in the building. So, you know, they want to talk about forensic audits, obviously that wasn't done by that government.

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

Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. member for Weyburn-Big Muddy. Mr. Speaker, I'd like the hon. member for Weyburn-Big Muddy to explain to the Assembly how it is that his leader, the hon. member for Swift Current, on June 17, 1991, asked to have delivered to his minister a list of liquor that was not paid for by his minister's office, in a memo dated June 17, 1991.

And, Mr. Speaker, to put that in context, the Provincial Auditor reported that during the PC years, \$19,285 of liquor to supplied to ministers' offices without any invoices being provided. Can the member explain how his leader was part of this process and why — how that can be justified?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for

Weyburn-Big Muddy.

Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know where the member's coming from on that. I didn't have the pleasure of knowing the Leader of the Opposition when I was 12 years old. We didn't meet till several years later.

I can tell you though, Mr. Speaker, in 1991, you know, in 1991, I was getting pretty good grades and I liked to play a little hockey and a little baseball. And, but you know, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that the members opposite don't want to talk about the fraud that they concealed in 1992. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the past number of years we have witnessed on numerous occasions this NDP government's intentions to try and cover up its inability to appropriately run the province of Saskatchewan. You know the SPUDCO scandal. And now over the past number of days, we see how this government has worked so deliberately to try and cover up a fraudulent action that took place within their caucus in regards to public funds.

And, Mr. Speaker, one would have to ask, how long would members have allowed this to continue? And my question and more specifically is to the member of Saskatoon Greystone: does the member of Saskatoon agree that the actions taken by this NDP government to cover up an issue of fraud in their caucus was appropriate? Does the member agree with that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Time for the 75-minute debate has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 4 — Equalization and an Energy Accord

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

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Massey Place.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I'm very pleased to rise today to continue debate on the motion of the government members which, Mr. Speaker, is on the subject of equalization.

And specifically what the motion calls for is for the 12 Conservative members of parliament from Saskatchewan to apologize to the people of the province for the fact that the Conservative Party has failed to live up to a very clear promise that was made to the people of this province during the last federal election and in fact the one before, that they would fix

the equalization situation that has unfairly treated Saskatchewan.

And I'm going to read the motion once again. It is:

That Saskatchewan's 12 Conservative members of parliament provide an apology to the people of this province for breaking their election promise on the issue of equalization; and further, that this Legislative Assembly call upon the federal government to immediately negotiate a Saskatchewan energy accord.

And I want to report to the House, Mr. Speaker, through you and also to the people of the province who may be watching this or reading this, just to set the record straight. In the 2006 federal election, the Conservative Party of Canada made a promise. And the promise was this, it said:

Work to achieve with the provinces permanent changes to the equalization formula which would ensure that non-renewable natural resource revenue is removed from the equalization formula to encourage economic growth. We will ensure that no province is adversely affected from changes to the equalization formula.

Now I want to repeat part of that, Mr. Speaker. The promise was very specific, made by Stephen Harper who then was the Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, now is the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister of Canada and he promised that non-renewable natural resource revenue would be removed from the equalization formula to encourage economic growth. And then at the same time the Conservative candidates in Saskatchewan — who I might add were supported by the members of the opposition, the Saskatchewan Party here — promised that if elected they would remove natural resource revenue from the equalization formula.

Mr. Speaker, they made that promise and 12 of the seats in Saskatchewan, 12 of the 14 seats went to the Conservative Party. And I think, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan who elected 12 Conservatives voted for them on the basis that they would keep their promises. In fact, Mr. Speaker, do you know what the Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, said in the election about keeping promises? He said — I don't have the exact words in front of me although I have them here — but he said words to the effect that the worst thing that anyone could do was to break an election promise.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador had the exact words in an advertisement they took out in the newspapers demonstrating that the Prime Minister made a promise that he did not keep. That, that isn't an allegation I'm making, Mr. Speaker. This is just a simple fact. It's a fact. The Prime Minister made a promise. The Prime Minister broke his promise. The Conservative members of parliament made a promise to the people of the province that they would make a change, to treat the province of Saskatchewan fairly. They broke that promise.

Now interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, not only did they break the promise but one of the local Regina members of parliament for the Conservative Party admitted that they broke the promise. That was Mr. Lukiwski and he said this quoted in the

Leader-Post of April 3. He said, quote, "If you want to say we didn't fulfil the commitment or keep the promise, fair enough," he said. Well but the people of the province, Mr. Speaker, do not think it is fair enough to make a promise that's important as a promise on equalization and then not keep the promise. That's wrong. That's not fair.

And, you know, the Conservative Party and their supporters over there in the Saskatchewan Party were very big when the former government, the Liberal government, was in power, pointing out all of the things that they thought that the Liberal government had done wrong. And they said that one of the things that should be done was to change equalization. And they went in — they got a lot of support, they elected members of parliament from Saskatchewan; they take the support of the people of Saskatchewan for granted — but when they got into parliament, Mr. Speaker, the 12 Conservative members of parliament turned their backs on the people of this province.

[12:15]

And I know that our Premier and our government has made a point about the fact that the Conservatives have broken their promise to the people of Saskatchewan, and sometimes the opposition says, well you know, who cares how they treat the Government of Saskatchewan? Well that's not what I'm talking about, Mr. Speaker. I'm talking about the fact that the Conservative members of parliament have turned their backs on the people of this province. Because that promise that was made by the Prime Minister and the 12 Conservative MPs [Member of Parliament] to the people of this province was a promise, Mr. Speaker, that amounts to \$842 million per year approximately to the coffers of the Saskatchewan government. Now some will say, well who cares about the Saskatchewan government? Well again, it's not the Saskatchewan government; it's the people of this province.

Because, Mr. Speaker, if you had that \$842 million you could do many things with it. For example, many people, even though the business taxes and the personal taxes and the sales taxes are lower in Saskatchewan than they used to be, many people have a complaint that they feel that property taxes are too high in Saskatchewan — property taxes to support education mainly. Well the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, if the Conservatives kept to their promise — and it's still not too late — you could fix that problem because you could get rid of education property taxes on farm land and on people's houses in towns and cities.

So that's why it's important that the Conservatives should keep their promise. But Mr. Lukiwski says, well if you want to say we didn't keep our promise, well I guess we didn't, he says, and that's fair enough. Well it is, somebody says well it's a shame and it is a shame, Mr. Speaker. Because what it indicates is that the Conservative government, Prime Minister Harper, supported by the opposition over there, hasn't kept the promise and, Mr. Speaker, they may as well have said they're never going to keep the promise. They're never going to keep the promise and the people that are going to pay for that are the people of Saskatchewan.

You know at election time when the Conservatives come around looking for votes, they are going to do all these

wonderful things for everybody including Saskatchewan. In fact, I've got some quotes here, Mr. Speaker, on what they said. They said this. Dave Batters who's now a Conservative Member of Parliament for Regina and Moose Jaw — I think it's Regina-Palliser or Moose Jaw-Palliser — said this. He said:

Saskatchewan cannot afford to wait, [he said] yet the finance minister [referring to the Liberal government] has delayed any deal until next year. This will cost the people of Saskatchewan over \$750 million in lost revenue.

That's what he said.

Carol Skelton who is now the Conservative cabinet minister from Saskatchewan said this on March 22, 2005. In opposition she said:

Saskatchewan doesn't want a free ride. We want a fair ride. We don't want a special deal, we want a fair deal. We don't want extra money, we just want our money — our fair share [she said].

She now is at the federal cabinet table, from Saskatchewan. Now it's interesting to look at what she said then in opposition and what she says now in the Conservative government. In opposition she said, quote: "Saskatchewan is simply not getting its fair share out of equalization." Now once she was elected, she said this or it's quoted in *The StarPhoenix*: "Carol Skelton says that she rarely hears about it . . . in her conversations with her constituents." That was September 9, 2006. And then on September 13 she was quoted this way. It says:

Skelton doesn't see equalization as a politically critical issue for her Saskatchewan caucus colleagues. In fact, she doesn't even see it as an issue of much import to Saskatchewan people because [and these are Carol Skelton's words] "the average person on the street doesn't understand it," she said.

And I think that what the Conservatives are kind of banking on, Mr. Speaker, is that they think that equalization is a complex problem that the average person can't understand. But they can understand this, Mr. Speaker. We all can understand this, that when you make a promise in an election that is as important as delivering another 750 million or \$800 million per year to the people of the province, you should keep your promise. That's not a difficult concept to understand.

Now our federal minister says that people don't understand that, but I think they do. I think they do understand that. Now before the election, she also said this:

We need our NDP government in Saskatchewan to be supportive of our efforts to get a better deal for Saskatchewan . . . At the very least we need a provincial government that will hold the federal government to its constitutional obligations.

That's what she said before the election. Now after the election she said, quote, and this is from *The StarPhoenix* of September 9, 2006. She says, quote:

I don't know. I guess I haven't thought about it that much.

I haven't heard anything about equalization.

Maybe I should send her a copy of my speech. She says, "I get piles of e-mail and it's just not a big issue."

So before the election she says it's a big issue and the Government of Saskatchewan should support the Conservatives who supposedly are going to fix this problem. After the election she says, oh people don't understand this, and nobody cares about it anyway. Well I think they do.

Now Brian Fitzpatrick, who's now the Conservative MP for Prince Albert, said this before the election. He said:

Saskatchewan will continue to lose approximately \$800-million per year in equalization clawbacks on its non-renewable resource revenues. An additional \$800-million per year could have been allocated towards Saskatchewan's ailing health care system [he said].

Now he's a Conservative Member of Parliament, Mr. Speaker. And what does he do? He votes for a budget put forward by the government of Prime Minister Harper, the Conservative government supported by the members opposite, that not only denies the people of Saskatchewan what they were promised in the election, but that budget at the same time delivered another \$700 million to the province of Quebec so that the Premier of Quebec could reduce taxes during the election campaign in Quebec.

So in other words, it's not much of a stretch, and I'm not the first one to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that really what the federal government did was make a decision because they want to get more votes and more seats in Quebec. And let's be honest about it. And they take for granted the 12 Conservative seats they have in Saskatchewan. They think people will just continue to trot out and support the Conservatives here. And they take \$700 million out of the pockets of people in Saskatchewan, and they give it to the government of Quebec.

That's kind of a familiar story to a lot of people. And I think, Mr. Speaker, the problem that the Conservatives are going to have . . . and they don't quite realize it yet because they're still basking in the glory of being ahead in the polls federally and provincially I guess, so they think everything's a free ride. But they should remember that we had another government under Brian Mulroney that had tendencies that were very, very similar to this government of Stephen Harper insofar as turning their backs on Saskatchewan and the West and catering to Quebec went, Mr. Speaker. And you know what happened to that government? The right wing vote split, and the Reform Party came up, and Brian Mulroney ended up with only three seats. He rode high for a while too. But when he turned his back on the people of the province, eventually that came back to haunt him, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to talk about how we are being treated compared to the other provinces of Canada because I think one way to judge whether you're getting fair treatment is to ask, what are the rules for the other provinces, and then what are the rules that the Conservatives apply to Saskatchewan?

Now, Mr. Speaker, when Alberta became a have province as a

result of their oil and gas and they were not eligible for equalization anymore, the federal government made an arrangement with the province of Alberta whereby they could keep their non-renewable resource revenues — which the Conservatives promised to the people of Saskatchewan also — but they let Alberta keep those for a period of eight years so that they could use that money to build up their infrastructure and grow their economy.

Now the simple question is, if that was a fair arrangement for the people of Alberta, why does the Conservative government not think that the people of Saskatchewan should have the same arrangement? Why does the Conservative government, supported by the Saskatchewan Party, treat the people of Saskatchewan differently than the people of Alberta in that regard?

And, Mr. Speaker, it's not just Alberta. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Government of Nova Scotia made a special deal with the former prime minister, Paul Martin, which deal has been continued with the present government of Prime Minister Harper. And that deal says that Newfoundland and Labrador, and Nova Scotia can keep 100 per cent of the non-renewable resource revenue that they take in.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the same revenue for Saskatchewan is confiscated by the federal government. It's taken away by deducting it as an offset against our transfer payments from Ottawa. That is not done in Newfoundland and Labrador, and it not done in Nova Scotia. And any fair-minded person . . . and I don't care if you're Conservative, if you're Liberal, if you're New Democrat, or if you're Green. I don't care if you're man or woman; old or young; live in rural Saskatchewan or urban Saskatchewan; whether you're black, white, yellow or red. I don't care who you are. How can anybody think that it's fair that there's one rule for Newfoundland and Labrador and another rule for the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cline: — It's not fair and it's not right. Mr. Speaker, there was an arrangement made with Alberta that was not extended to Saskatchewan. There was an arrangement made with Newfoundland and Labrador that is not extended to Saskatchewan. There was an arrangement made with Nova Scotia that was not extended to Saskatchewan. How can anyone explain that? It can't be explained.

And that's why, before the election, all of these Conservative politicians who then didn't have responsibility . . . And by the way, watch out for Conservative politicians who get into government because what they do in government is completely the opposite of what they say in opposition. That may be a good thing for the people of Saskatchewan to bear in mind when they make a choice in the next election, Mr. Speaker.

And so the question is, Mr. Speaker, again, why do the Conservatives have one rule for Alberta, for Newfoundland and Labrador, for Nova Scotia, and a different rule for the people of the province who elected 12 of them? It doesn't make any sense.

And, Mr. Speaker, we can move on to Manitoba and Quebec,

where what do they do there? The federal government looks at the revenue that Manitoba and Quebec have from hydroelectricity, which is a fully renewable resource, and they don't take that revenue into account in the calculation of equalization for Manitoba and Quebec, even though it's a renewable resource. And yet when Saskatchewan sells a barrel of oil or a cubic metre of natural gas or a pound of uranium, which is non-renewable so when you sell it it's gone, whatever we get is confiscated by Ottawa. But what Manitoba and Quebec get is not. Why do the Conservatives have one rule for Manitoba and Quebec and a different rule for Saskatchewan? How can that be right?

And, Mr. Speaker, what illustrates this more than anything else I think is that next year the province of Manitoba which has a similar economy and a similar population to the province of Saskatchewan . . . And bear in mind these are fairly similar Prairie provinces which are side by side. Manitoba will receive \$2 billion — billion with a “b,” Mr. Speaker — in equalization transfer payments from Ottawa. Manitoba will receive \$2 billion next year. Saskatchewan will receive zero. I'm going to repeat that. Manitoba will get \$2 billion. Saskatchewan will receive zero under the Conservative budget.

[12:30]

Now, Mr. Speaker, is there anyone — I don't care if they're Liberal, Conservative, NDP, Green, old, young, whatever — is there anyone that can say that's fair? Well of course not because it's not fair. So the Conservatives have one rule for Alberta, a different rule for Saskatchewan. One rule for Manitoba, a different rule for Saskatchewan. One rule for Quebec, a different rule for Saskatchewan. One rule for Newfoundland and Labrador, a different rule for Saskatchewan. One rule for Nova Scotia, a different rule for Saskatchewan.

And you might ask, well where's Ontario in all this? Well you know what? They're not an equalization-recipient province, but do you know what the federal Conservative Finance minister said when he introduced his budget and was talking about this issue? He said, we don't want to give any more money to Saskatchewan in the same way that the other provinces would get it because if you did that, Saskatchewan on a per capita basis would have more revenue than the people in Ontario.

So in other words — again catering to central Canada, Ontario and Quebec, and trying to get a majority government — they're actually saying to the people of this province we never want to see a situation in Canada where Saskatchewan could become more wealthy per capita than Ontario. And what I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, is that as we go out in Saskatchewan and elect Conservative members of parliament and as we believe that they have the interests of the West and Saskatchewan at heart, they don't. They don't. They have the interests of themselves getting power and catering to central Canada to do so at heart, Mr. Speaker.

And we are going to have to recognize that fact and start speaking honestly about who the Conservative Party of Canada represents. And it is not the ordinary families of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That is clearly illustrated by the response — or non-response if you will — of the Conservative Party, supported by those members over there, on this equalization

question, Mr. Speaker. And I've demonstrated how the Conservatives treat Saskatchewan differently than the other provinces. And you know sometimes, Mr. Speaker, it does take on a slightly humorous aspect to it because as they try to run away from their promise that they would fix this and bring fairness to the equalization formula, the problem is of course when you're in government and you have to answer for issues, the media want to talk to you.

And I have to say, Mr. Speaker, you know, I've been a minister for 12 years and I've had to deal with difficult scrum situations with the media. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? I have never run away from the media. If it's difficult, Mr. Speaker, you stand there and you take the heat and you answer the questions, Mr. Speaker, because that's your responsibility.

And when they asked Mr. Batters, one of the Conservative MPs, why didn't you keep your promise on equalization, Mr. Speaker, do you know what his answer was? His answer was, I have to go and get a doughnut now, he said. I'm not making this up. His answer was, I have to go and get a doughnut, when they asked him why the Conservatives hadn't kept their promise on equalization.

And you know what? In a humorous aside, that even wasn't true because he didn't then get a doughnut. He really got a muffin, Mr. Speaker, but that's a minor point. But I think the doughnut was more appropriate. The doughnut was more appropriate, Mr. Speaker, and I'll tell you why, because doughnuts are shaped like this. And if we want to really look at the political situation, ask ourselves what are we going to get out of the Conservative Party of Canada and our 12 MPs, that's what we're going to get. And I think maybe, maybe that's why Mr. Batters had doughnuts on his mind when he was thinking about the equalization issue. I don't know. I'm just asking, Mr. Speaker.

But you know, the other thing that was going on as Mr. Batters was eating his muffin instead of answering questions about equalization, is he and the other two Conservative members from Regina were running ads on the radio. And what I found — if it wasn't so galling I'd find it amusing, Mr. Speaker — but what they were doing is on the same day that Mr. Lukiwski was saying in the *Leader-Post*, we didn't keep our promise, he and Mr. Batters and Mr. Scheer, the other Conservative MP from Regina, were paying for ads on the radio that said, we have kept our promise to Saskatchewan.

Well how can that be, that you have somebody as a Member of Parliament who's saying, we didn't keep our promise and they're saying, we did keep our promise and they're using taxpayers' money to run that kind of advertising on the radio? And I think what it shows, Mr. Speaker, is that you have to be a little bit wary about what certain politicians say in opposition, and think about what they might do in government.

And you know, I'm just asking, Mr. Speaker. It does seem to me that the members of the Saskatchewan Party who want to be the government here were very supportive of Prime Minister Harper and the Conservatives in the federal election and helped elect them.

And I think in fact one of the things that they did . . . This is

kind of an interesting aside. I have a lot of quotes here on equalization and these are from Saskatchewan Party news releases, Mr. Speaker. And I think the member from Thunder Creek wants to get into the debate. And I'm looking forward to his comments and I'm sure he'll have a lot to say because he always does. You know, I've travelled with the member. And, you know, well I'm not going to go into the situation where we . . . The member was telling me one day that he thought the NDP government over here was old and tired. He was saying that in the legislature.

And I have to relate this story, which I'm only relating because I think it's humorous. But the member and I were visiting Capitol Hill. And this is relevant to equalization, Mr. Speaker, because there recently was a seminar in Washington about equalization. But we were visiting the Co-Chair of the Canada-US [United States] friendly relations committee, who was Congressman Brown.

And as we were sitting there visiting Congressman Brown, this member who says that we're old and tired . . . I said to Congressman Brown, you know, Congressman Brown, you have had a very distinguished career. You've been in the Georgia state legislature for 16 years and now you've been in congress for seven years. That's a very impressive political career. And for reasons I can't quite explain, Congressman Brown then turned to my good friend, the member from Thunder Creek, and said, you must be getting just about ready to retire, he said. But I assured Congressman Brown that that wasn't the case, that even though I would wish the member well in retirement, I don't think he wants to retire quite yet.

But I know that when the member gets up he will have plenty to say about the equalization issue, but what I wanted to say before the member for Thunder Creek interjected, Mr. Speaker, is before the federal election the Sask Party worked with the federal Conservatives by putting out a series of press releases, and I have them here.

For example, on March 16, 2004, they put out a press release that says, "Saskatchewan Party Supports Provincial Lobby to address Equalization Shortfall." And they say, "It is . . . unfair for the federal government to continue an equalization formula that punishes Saskatchewan for collecting increasing oil and gas revenues."

Now they put out a release in March '04, in June '04, where they said they needed a new federal government that would, quote, "pay a lot closer attention to the needs of Saskatchewan and Western Canada," and I agree with that. And then again on October 22, '04, then February 4, '05, they said the new government, the Conservatives would, they thought if they got in would keep this promise.

February 17, '05, "Sask Party Offers Short and Long Term Solutions to Equalization Mess." February 25, '05, "Equalization Reform Must Be First Order of Business in Spring Session: Sask Party." And then they said the Saskatchewan Party wants an emergency debate on equalization on opening day, they said.

Now my point is this. When the Liberals were in, for some reason the Sask Party was all over the Liberals saying, we need

a fair deal for Saskatchewan here, we need a change of government to get the Conservatives in so that we get the equalization matter fixed. And they worked with the Conservative Party to make that promise and supported them and gave them money and all kinds of other support.

And yet when they got the Conservatives in, they stopped sending out all these press releases saying that the federal government had to be fair to the people of the province, Mr. Speaker. And why is that? Why was there all this activity against the Liberals when they didn't keep the equalization promise, but silence about the Conservatives not keeping the equalization promise, Mr. Speaker?

And I guess what is really disturbing to me is that this party over there, they want to get power. And they're not saying very much, but they're suggesting that they would do all kinds of things for the ordinary people in the province. And yet we know that they have supported people in the federal government that broke their promises to the people of Saskatchewan. And they have been silent about that, Mr. Speaker, relative to what they did before the election, and so we have to be very concerned. And I'm trying to speak in a non-partisan way here, Mr. Speaker, about this, but just as a citizen. We have to be concerned and ask the question: what would they do if they were in power, Mr. Speaker? Would they keep their promises?

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that this relates to the equalization question, because getting back specifically to equalization, when the promise was made by the Conservative candidates — 12 of whom were elected from Saskatchewan — to keep the equalization promise, those candidates were supported, Mr. Speaker, by and large by the members of the Saskatchewan Party. That's a well-known fact.

And yet that promise has not been kept. So what has happened is you get articles in places like the *Toronto Star* newspaper which have, I think, headlines that we don't like to see as Canadians. And this headline in the *Toronto Star* of January 18 of this year says, "A year later, PM's promises not worth much." And, Mr. Speaker, that's a headline that we should never have to see in any of our newspapers, that the promises of our leaders don't mean much. But it goes on to point out that . . . well I'll quote it. It says, quote:

A year into this government's life, Harper can't credibly claim take-it-to-the-bank honesty as a Conservative virtue.

Instead of "promise kept," it would be more candid to laugh off the record as "Just kidding."

Perversely, it's in the national interest to take this Prime Minister with a lump of salt.

This is in a newspaper, Mr. Speaker. And it's unfortunate when that kind of thing is said, but I have to say this statement that the attitude toward keeping the promise is, well maybe we were just kidding, is kind of like our federal Conservative minister saying, well I don't think people care about the issue, or I don't think they understand the issue. Or Mr. Lukiwski brushes it off by saying, oh well, if you want to say we broke our promise, go ahead, in that way. Or Mr. Batters saying, I can't talk to you about equalization right now because I have to go and get a

doughnut.

And, Mr. Speaker, it is a serious matter when a matter as important as equalization is to the people of this province is laughed off by our federal ministers and MPs and that a doughnut becomes more important than seriously addressing the issue.

[12:45]

And I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, but I do have to say that when you enter a public life and you are responsible to your electors or the people, and the media want to ask you questions so that they can report to the people of the province, Mr. Speaker, you cannot duck those questions. You must stand there and answer the questions because in a democracy the media helps keep governments accountable. And on this issue there's general agreement, I think, in the media that there's a need to keep the government accountable.

And I want to quote from the *Leader-Post* of March 29, 2007 where the headline is "Province tries to negotiate equalization deal." And I referred to a quote of the Prime Minister earlier in my remarks, and this quote from our Prime Minister is repeated in this article by Angela Hall. And, Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister said in the federal election was this, and I'm quoting, "There's no greater fraud than a promise not kept."

So not only did he promise to the people of the province — along with his Conservative candidates here and their supporters in the Saskatchewan Party supporting them — not only did they promise that they would keep the equalization promise, but their leader, Stephen Harper, said to the people, and you can count on me because "There's no greater fraud than a promise not kept." He said, this is my promise and I would never break my promise. That's what we heard before the election, Mr. Speaker. After the election, what do we hear? They say nobody cares. Nobody understands it and we don't have to keep that promise. And I have to say I don't think that's acceptable.

Another journalist quoted on the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] had this to say. He said:

... the fundamental dishonesty, the fundamental justification, the complete untruths that we are hearing from the federal Conservatives right now ... my goodness, like, I mean, this is just absolutely horrendous ...

And, Mr. Speaker, it is horrendous and it has direct implications for the people of the province. I think I mentioned earlier but I want to repeat it. It has implications, Mr. Speaker, of revenue to the people of Saskatchewan of approximately \$800 million per year.

And I think we should think about that number for a minute, Mr. Speaker, because \$800 million per year is, to state the obvious, about \$800 per person in Saskatchewan — now each and every year \$800 million per person.

But think about a family, Mr. Speaker, a family of four in Saskatchewan. That's \$3,200 per year that the federal

Conservatives promised to deliver to the people of Saskatchewan — \$3,200 per year per family, each and every year — before the election. But after the election they said in effect, no, we were only kidding, and it's time to eat a doughnut.

And think about that, Mr. Speaker, for a minute — \$3,200 per family. As I said earlier, it's a lot of money. You could fix the problem of the higher-than-wanted education property taxes with that. You could ... yes I think you could eliminate education property taxes. Gone. Mr. Speaker, you could abolish the provincial sales tax altogether. We could have no PST like Alberta has no PST, although they have a health care premium. You could abolish the PST and pay no sales tax if the Conservatives kept their promise.

Mr. Speaker, imagine what you could do for transportation, to fix all the highways in Saskatchewan more quickly.

Imagine what you could do to increase educational opportunities for young people in Saskatchewan. And I want to say that it is a well-known fact that we have in this province a very young population coming up that needs education and training, and this government has been putting a lot more resources into that, in fact I think in the last two budgets a total of about 6,000 more training spaces. But imagine what you could do if you had another \$3,200 per family.

And I want to say this, Mr. Speaker, the opposition likes to say, you know, oh well, you know, they don't want the Premier to have the money. They don't want the government to have the money. It's not the government's money. It's not the Premier's money, Mr. Speaker. It's the money of the citizens of the province of Saskatchewan. That's whose money it is, Mr. Speaker.

And a promise was made to the people of Saskatchewan by the Conservatives in the last federal election and the previous one that that equalization problem would be fixed — that we would have the same type of treatment that Alberta received, that Nova Scotia has, that Newfoundland and Labrador has; that we would have the same type of treatment Quebec and Manitoba have with respect to their hydroelectricity renewable resource.

That's the promise that was made. And if that promise was kept, Mr. Speaker, that would have profound implications for the people of the province. And I ... you know, one of my colleagues says, Mr. Speaker, it might help develop more industry in Saskatchewan. And industry has been developing at a rapid rate in Saskatchewan, but we could do even more.

We could have strategic tax plans in addition to the ones we have for manufacturing and processing and that we brought in to encourage oil and gas and encourage mining even in addition to that and build even more to create jobs and opportunities for Saskatchewan people because, bear in mind, that in the federal election and leading up to that the Conservatives, supported by the Saskatchewan Party, promised that they would fix equalization in order to encourage economic development in Saskatchewan.

So they knew that we could build an even stronger economy if that promise was kept. They knew that it would mean about

\$3,200 per family if that promise was kept. They promised that they would do that. And, Mr. Speaker, they said that they would never break a promise, that that's the last thing they would do. And yet they did break the promise so . . .

Getting back to the words of the motion, when we say . . .

An Hon. Member: — Do you have any new material . . .

Hon. Mr. Cline: — You know, and one of the members says, do I have any new material? I think, Mr. Speaker, this subject is so important that many of the things that have happened bear repeating. And it does bother me a bit, Mr. Speaker. It does bother me a bit — and I wasn't going to say it, but I will say it because I've said it on other occasions — but it bothers me, Mr. Speaker, that every time I get up to point out that the Conservative Party of Canada, with the support of the Saskatchewan Party here, got into office on a promise that they're not keeping, the members opposite seem to be disturbed and annoyed that I'm pointing that out. And I find that interesting, Mr. Speaker, because . . .

An Hon. Member: — The inconvenient truth.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Yes, the inconvenient truth that they don't want to hear. They do not want to hear. And it's a simple fact, and everybody knows what's happening here, Mr. Speaker. It's a simple fact that they have encouraged people to be duped. They have encouraged people to elect Conservative members of Parliament on the bogus promise that they're going to fix equalization for Saskatchewan. And they themselves may have been duped; I don't know.

And they're uncomfortable, and they don't want to hear about it because they know that their Prime Minister Harper in Ottawa, their Conservative friends are catering, are catering to Quebec, and they're catering to Ontario, and that interferes with their basic world view, Mr. Speaker. It interferes with their basic world view because their view of the world is that the Conservative Party of Canada — getting rid of the Liberals — is going to stand up for the West and support Saskatchewan, and they know that's not the case.

But for them to go . . . It must be interesting at meetings of Saskatchewan Party supporters. I mean do they sit around and look each other in the eye and say gee I don't, I didn't think that the Conservative government was going to do this to Saskatchewan. What did you think? Or do they sort of treat it like the elephant in the room and not really talk about what's going on? And I think that is it, Mr. Speaker.

I think when they get together, they know in their heart of hearts that we have a Conservative government in Ottawa that has turned its back on Saskatchewan. But they will not admit it because, to admit it, they'd have to admit how fooled they were, along with the people of Saskatchewan, about believing that you could believe this promise on equalization. And I think it's difficult for them, Mr. Speaker. It's difficult for them to make that admission. So that's why we've made this motion, and I want to see how they're going to vote on this motion, Mr. Speaker.

And the motion is . . . I'll read it again. I think it's a good

motion. It says:

That Saskatchewan's 12 Conservative members of Parliament provide an apology to the people of this province for breaking their election promise on the issue of equalization; and further, that this Legislative Assembly call upon the federal government to immediately negotiate a Saskatchewan energy accord.

And that's what we need to do, Mr. Speaker. We need to hold the Conservatives' feet to the fire. And I'm interested to see whether the members of the opposition will support us on this motion because — as I've said when their arch enemies, the Liberals, were in office — they went after the Liberals, repeatedly saying we had to get rid of them because they hadn't done anything on equalization. Will they do the same thing with respect to the Conservative government that made this promise but hasn't kept the promise to the people of Saskatchewan?

And I don't like to say it, Mr. Speaker, but I'm beginning to think that the silence of the Saskatchewan Party means that they're not going to support this.

And you know what I find interesting? Perhaps there's some explanation, but you know I look at the website of the member for Saskatoon Northwest, and this is interesting. At one point until recently, Mr. Speaker, he had on his website, "Saskatchewan Party proposal for equalization reform," and he referred to the equalization issue. Last time I looked at his website, Mr. Speaker, he had removed that from the website — removed it, removed reference to equalization. And the question is why. Why? Was it swept under the carpet, Mr. Speaker? Because I think we've seen in the media these days that if something's embarrassing to the Saskatchewan Party — even though they complain about other people supposedly delaying reporting matters to the police — they sweep it under the carpet.

Then there was one of their candidates, Brad Farquhar, who used to be the assistant to the former leader of the Sask Party. He had on his website: "How about an equalization deal for Saskatchewan, Mr. Martin?" I'm told that's now gone from the website . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The member says, do you want to conceal? They do want to conceal. They're removing this issue from the website, Mr. Speaker. They're trying to sweep the equalization issue under the carpet just like some other issues have been swept under the carpet going on in the Sask Party office, including, Mr. Speaker, a theft that occurred.

But I'm talking about equalization. I'm not talking about a theft in their office. But I do want to say, Mr. Speaker, it's important to have truth in advertising. And when we see messages about equalization appearing on the website one day and disappearing the next day, when we see the Saskatchewan . . .

The Speaker: — Order please.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It now being 1 p.m., I just want to take a minute before adjourning the Assembly to make note that the members have been working very hard, and I would like to

wish everyone a weekend of sweetness and good humour, especially now because the first Sunday in May is World Laughter Day.

House stands adjourned until Monday 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 13:00.]

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GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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Premier

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Minister Responsible for Literacy
Minister Responsible for Liquor and
Gaming Authority
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Telecommunications

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