



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 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure again today to present petitions on behalf of residents in the province of Saskatchewan. And I know people are becoming more angered with the lack of leadership from this government. And in particular we have the issue of dialysis in the province of Saskatchewan. And I read the prayer regarding a request for a dialysis unit into the community of Broadview:

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the petitions I present this afternoon are signed by folks from the communities of Broadview, Fort Qu'Appelle, Whitewood, Grayson, Virden; Burlington, Ontario; Elkhorn, Grenfell, Cowessess, Kahkewistahaw, and Regina. I so present.

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

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I have yet another petition signed by people who want the government to maintain full service of the SaskPower office at Rosetown. Mr. Speaker, they are concerned that if the office closes, the citizens of Rosetown and surrounding communities will not have a personal contact with SaskPower representatives. Mr. Speaker, the prayer of the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to keep the SaskPower office in Rosetown open to provide full service to the community and surrounding areas.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, the signatures on this petition come from Rosetown, Spiritwood, and Ponteix. And I'm pleased to present it on their behalf.

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

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to present hundreds of signatures on a petition from the citizens of Biggar concerned about possible reductions of the 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 Biggar Hospital, long-term care home, and ambulance services maintain at the very least their current level of services.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

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

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

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present another petition on behalf of the 600 children under six years old and their parents in the Saskatoon Silver Springs constituency regarding a much needed elementary school in the Arbor Creek, Willowgrove area of Saskatoon. The prayer of the petition reads as follows:

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

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

The signatures come today from northeast Saskatoon, from Chotem Crescent, Kucey Crescent, Beckett Crescent, and Peters Cove. I so present, Mr. Speaker.

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 that the withdrawal of lab services at the Lafleche and District Health Centre would cause undue hardships, especially to 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.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is signed in total by the good citizens of Lafleche. 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 today to bring forth a petition signed by citizens of my constituency that are concerned with the potential health problems in the area and the lack of recruitment and retention of our doctors in the area. 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.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will pray.

Mr. Speaker, all signatures on the petition are from the good community of Shellbrook. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise today to present a petition on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan and other places, Mr. Speaker, who are concerned about people who are involved in motor accidents and are not tested for drug or alcohol testing when they have caused a major accident. The prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

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 public is protected from operators of motor vehicles who are involved in an accident causing injury or fatality, and that those operators be required to undergo mandatory drug- and alcohol-level testing.

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

Mr. Speaker, signed by citizens of Calgary, Beiseker, Saskatoon, and other communities in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring forward a petition that is concerned with the current road ban on Highway 225 from Highway 2 to Batoche, and on Highway 320 from Highway 2 to Highway 20 and that it's causing extreme hardship to farmers and business people in the area and has the potential for economic disaster. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon.

Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take action immediately and address serious concerns of the people affected by these road restrictions.

And as duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, it is signed by the good people of Domremy, Yellow Creek, Wakaw, and Bellevue. I so present.

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

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to present yet another series of petitions calling for mandatory drug and alcohol testing following motor vehicle accidents. These petitions are signed by citizens from many places across this province and also out of province. I will read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that the public is protected from operators of motor vehicles who are involved in an accident causing injury or fatality, and that those operators be required to undergo mandatory drug- and alcohol-level testing.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition runs many hundreds of pages long and signatures from throughout the province. I'm pleased to present on behalf of those citizens. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise today whereas a citizen of the province of Saskatchewan was killed in a motor vehicle accident in September 2005 in Saskatoon while stopped at a red light, whereas the citizen was struck from behind by another vehicle and drug- and alcohol-level testing was not administered. 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 the public is protected from operators of motor vehicles who are involved in an accident causing injury or fatality, and that those operators be required to undergo mandatory drug and alcohol testing.

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

From various communities including Humboldt, Saskatoon, and Calgary. I so present. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition calling on the government to fix a very important highway in my constituency. And I'll read the prayer:

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by people from Coronach, Fife Lake, Assiniboia, Moose Jaw, Willow Bunch, and Big Beaver. And I so present.

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.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — The Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts is recognized.

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to present the second report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, which I will now table. Mr. Speaker, the legislature's Committee on Public Accounts has had a busy year. We think we have a rather substantial report to table.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the many people involved in not only the preparation of the report but the work that goes behind it — my colleagues on the committee on both sides of the House. I want to thank the Clerk, Ms. Woods, who did an excellent job of guiding the committee and providing professional advice to us. I also want to thank the Provincial Auditor and his staff, who attended the majority of our meetings and was an integral part of the work of the committee, as well as the comptrollers from the Department of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, most of the recommendations that the committee dealt with were agreed upon unanimously. These were recommendations by the Provincial Auditor. Most of them were concurred in. Mr. Speaker, the odd one, there was some disagreement and refusal to concur, but the majority of the work was done in a very co-operative spirit.

Mr. Speaker, there were some repetitive problems — some departments that seemed that they cannot solve some of the problems that keep reoccurring, and that is a concern to our committee. It's an issue that we've continued to raise after it's been pointed out by the Provincial Auditor. Some of those departments include Community Resources, Employment, Environment, Indian affairs and Métis Relations, Liquor and Gaming, Northern Affairs. And we sensed that there was a real desire amongst everyone involved to solve the problems, but it does concern us that they keep reoccurring.

I want to take this opportunity, which may be my last intervention on the floor of this House, to thank the many people that I've worked with. We don't know when the election is going to be called, but if it's called before this House reconvenes, I want to take this last opportunity to thank my many colleagues in the House that I've had the opportunity to work with. I want to thank my family again publicly for the support they've provided; my constituency assistant, Tammy Danychuk, who has taken care of things back in Rosetown-Elrose.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I want to move, seconded by the member for Regina Rosemont:

That the second report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be now concurred in.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, the member for Rosetown-Elrose, seconded by the member for Regina Rosemont, that the second report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be now concurred in.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The motion is carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier, the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my great pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House a group of very community-minded men and women who are today seated in your gallery. Mr. Speaker, they are here today at the legislature to participate in a very special signing, a ceremony that will occur later this afternoon, which marks, Mr. Speaker, another Saskatchewan first. Today YouthBuild Saskatchewan officially becomes the first Canadian affiliate of YouthBuild International.

Mr. Speaker, YouthBuild is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping young people ages 18 to 30 who face barriers to employment, to help them to continue their education while gaining valuable work experience. YouthBuild is dedicated to building lives and rebuilding communities while building affordable homes for families.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to all members those who are in the gallery now who later will be participating in the signing ceremony. Some are to join us, I believe, a little later. But I will want to welcome and have all members

welcome, first of all, Peter Twichell, senior program director of YouthBuild International — if Peter could give us a wave. Mayor Rod Haugerud of Craik, who is the executive director of YouthBuild Saskatchewan. Doug Morrison, who will not be here, who is from Advantage Employment Co-operative, who is not here yet but will be later. Todd Myhre, Advantage Employment Co-operative; Dave Earl, YouthBuild Saskatchewan; Lori Lovas, YouthBuild Regina; James Kirkland, YouthBuild Saskatoon; and from YouthBuild partner Greenough and Associates, Sandra Greenough, Brian Gordon, Dorothea Schrader, Michele Huszar, and Breanna Kinna.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to welcome these people and wish them well in YouthBuild Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is also my delight to welcome to the Assembly this afternoon, again seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Ken Winton-Grey. Ken Winton-Grey is a health care worker in our province, a technologist in sleep disorders at Royal University Hospital. He's very active in his union, the service employees union. And, Mr. Speaker, he is now a nominated candidate for the New Democratic Party and the next member for Saskatoon Northwest.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Swift Current Business Excellence Awards

Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, last night the Swift Current business community honoured its top businesses of the year at the ninth annual Swift Current Business Excellence Awards. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to attend last night's banquet where there was approximately 250 people at the Legion Hall in Swift Current.

Mr. Speaker, the business people of Swift Current take much pride in their work, and it's evident in the fact that there were 44 nominees in six different categories.

The winners this year are Diamond Energy Services for community involvement. The Shaunavon Credit Union received the Southwest Award. The New Business Award went to TCBY & extraorDONAIR. South West Animal Services won the Customer Service Award. Wide Mouth Media was presented with the Young Entrepreneur Award. And finally, Mr. Speaker, the top award, the Business of the Year, was presented to long-time Swift Current business, T.S. Metals.

Archie Green, a long-time volunteer, was named Citizen of the Year for his involvement in the community. And Golden West Radio was inducted into the Business Hall of Fame, as was

Melhoff Electric.

I'd also like to make special mention of another locally owned and operated Swift Current business, Mr. Speaker. On May 1, Southwest TV News received a 2006 Radio Television News Directors Association award in the Prairie region for the best use of new media. They're an Internet-based news provider.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating the winners and all those who were nominated as well as the Swift Current Chamber of Commerce who, year after year, put on a great event and do an excellent job of representing the Swift Current business community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Saskatoon Achievement in Business Excellence Awards

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I, along with the Minister of Industry and Resources and a capacity crowd, had the pleasure of attending the Greater Saskatoon and District Chamber of Commerce 12th annual Celebrate Success Awards Gala. It was a great event, Mr. Speaker, reflecting the city's excitement at the opportunities of the present and possibilities of the future.

The winners of the 2007 SABEX [Saskatoon Achievement in Business Excellence] awards include: for new business venture, FIS Structural & Finishing Co.; in the growth and expansion category, Associated Engineering (Saskatchewan). The award for new product went to TinyEYE Technologies; for marketing, 1-800-GOT-JUNK; for customer service, Cardwell Murphy. MD Ambulance Care won the award for community involvement. The Award of Innovation went to John Gordon and Fang Li of Western College of Veterinary Medicine. Myrna Bentley, CEO [chief executive officer] of Concentra Financial, received the ATHENA international award and the Business of the Year is Lafond Insurance & Financial Services.

As well, Mr. Speaker, earlier this year the Yanke Group of Companies' CEO, Russel Marcoux, was nominated for the SABEX Hall of Fame.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating the 2007 SABEX winners and nominees on their achievements, and in thanking them for their significant and ongoing contributions to the strength of the economies of both Saskatoon and Saskatchewan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in the congratulations that he extended towards the SABEX awards winners in Saskatoon. I and my colleagues had the privilege of attending a capacity crowd at TCU Place. The size of the crowd, Mr. Speaker, was so large that I actually thought I was at a Sask Party event.

The significant inductees, Mr. Speaker, was Russ Marcoux, CEO of Yanke Group of Companies, was inducted into the SABEX Hall of Fame. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Marcoux is well known in this province and has been a great community leader. He thanked specifically his individual family members. He is one of 11 children and he had a number of his siblings there as well as his own children and many of his long-term employees, some of them that have been with his company for as long as 20 years. He's been enormously well respected in the business community, and during his brief remarks he paid a great deal of tribute to his family and his employees. And he's one of the individuals that makes Saskatchewan a truly great place to do business.

The Business of the Year was Lafond Insurance, which is owned by Lester Lafond. That business carries on in Saskatoon on the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation and Lester Lafond did a magnificent job of starting a new business and participating with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal businesses. I wish to ask all members to join me in congratulating all winners.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

2007 Award of Excellence in Nursing

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the outstanding contributions of a Saskatchewan resident who recently received the prestigious 2007 Award of Excellence in Nursing — an award given to only three Canadian nurses a year.

Paula Stefankiw of Balgonie is a home care nurse for the Kawacatoose Health Centre. In winning the award, Mr. Speaker, Ms. Stefankiw said, "I'm no different than all the other nurses doing great work out there." A humble statement from someone who has dedicated her career to helping people in need.

Ms. Stefankiw was nominated by her peers for her care and treatment of people with diabetes — a health issue that has a profound effect on her community.

To improve overall health in Kawacatoose, Ms. Stefankiw has started health and diabetes workshops, wellness clinics, and general information sessions. Her exemplary work makes a difference to many individuals each and every day.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Paula Stefankiw and offering best wishes in her continued commitment to the people of Saskatchewan and to excellence in health care.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

St. Angela's Academy Closes

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, it is with regret that I rise to speak of the closure of a long-standing educational

establishment in the constituency of Cypress Hills.

After 88 years of educating young women, St. Angela's Academy in Prelate will be closing its doors on June 30. Founded in 1919 by three Sisters of the Ursuline order and a priest, the residential academy has seen more than 6,000 students pass through its doors and the Sisters of the Ursuline order have been dedicated to providing instruction, guidance, and leadership, as well as financial assistance, to the school.

St. Angela's is a well-known academy in Saskatchewan and it's known beyond the province as a centre for Christian education, with an emphasis on fine arts.

For over 20 years the possibility of closure has loomed, but the executive director, Sister Rosetta Reiniger, has persistently persuaded the board to continue with the service. Unfortunately, as the age of the sisters who operate the school increases and the enrolment of the school drops, the decision to close the school doors was recently made.

The announcement of the closure was difficult to take for the sisters, teachers, students, and community. The closure will also have a direct economic impact on the community of Prelate and area, as many teaching and support jobs will be lost.

I wish to extend my thanks to the Sisters of the Ursuline order who have dedicated their lives to the goal of St. Angela's Academy which is "Educating for Life," teaching academics, study habits, Christian ethics, and homemaker skills. Their contributions have touched a great many people in our country and around the world, and for that we should all be grateful.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Health Career Role Models for Northern Youth

Hon. Ms. Beatty: — Mr. Speaker, five outstanding individuals from the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation were recently honoured as health career role models for northern youth.

Betsy Ballantyne is from Pelican Narrows. As a mother of three children, she worked diligently to complete her certification in Saskatoon before accepting a position as a lab and X-ray technician at the Big River Health Centre. Bonita Beatty is from Deschambault Lake. She holds a B.A. [Bachelor of Arts], M.A. [Master of Arts], and Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] in political science. She specializes in First Nations governance and health policy development for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. She also teaches at the University of Saskatchewan.

Shavonne Custer is a registered nurse from Pelican Narrows. She completed a northern health sciences access program and then attended the nursing education program in Saskatoon. Theresa Highway attended university in Alberta but chose to come home to Saskatchewan to take a posting at the Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon. Theresa works at the neonatal intensive care unit. Tom McDermott was raised at Denare Beach near Creighton. He played junior hockey for six years for the Flin Flon Bombers. He's also a pilot. He's now a primary

care paramedic for La Ronge Emergency Medical Services.

Mr. Speaker, posters will be distributed to northern schools to inspire our young people that they too can reach their dreams if they work hard.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating these outstanding individuals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Rights of Children and Youth

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his annual report yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the Children's Advocate, Marvin Bernstein, outlined his office's children's- and youth-first principles, and I'd like to put them on the record.

The principles this NDP [New Democratic Party] government must adopt are that all children and youth in Saskatchewan are entitled to the following:

- 1) . . . those rights defined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child.
- 2) . . . participate and be heard before any decision affecting them is made.
- 3) . . . have their 'best interests' given paramount consideration in any action or decision involving them.
- 4) . . . an equal standard of care, protection and services.
- 5) . . . the highest standard of health and education possible in order to reach their fullest potential.
- 6) . . . safety and protection from all forms of physical, emotional and sexual harm, while in the care of parents, governments, legal guardians or any [other] person.
- 7) . . . be treated as a primary client, and at the centre, of all child serving systems.
- 8) . . . have consideration given to the importance of the unique life history and spiritual traditions and practices in accordance with their stated views and preferences.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

Investigation into Caucus Response to Misappropriation of Funds

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago I wrote to the Regina Police Service and the commercial crimes section of the RCMP [Royal Canadian

Mounted Police] asking for an investigation into the NDP fraud scandal. Today the Regina police issued a news release announcing that the Regina police have asked the RCMP to investigate their files on this case from 1992 and 1994.

My question is to the Premier: will the Premier commit that every member of his caucus and staff will fully co-operate with this investigation?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, yes, without question.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for three weeks the Premier refused to accept the former Government House Leader's resignation from cabinet. Today the Premier has accepted that resignation. Why did the Premier change his mind?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say first of all we welcome the review that will be conducted by the RCMP. We are all anxious to bring clarity to this matter, and this mechanism can accomplish that, we believe. I received from the member from Moose Jaw North his offer to step down from his cabinet responsibilities, to continuing service as the member from Moose Jaw North, during the period of this review.

Mr. Speaker, it is fair to say that no member in this House holds the integrity of this institution more dearly or in higher regard than the member from Moose Jaw North. Equally he believes in his personal integrity and places high value . . . as does his community. Mr. Speaker, he recommended to me that during this interim period as the RCMP conduct this review, he felt it best that he step aside from his cabinet responsibilities — not his member responsibilities, but his cabinet responsibilities — and I have accepted his resignation and recommendation.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in 1994 former NDP Pat Lorjé told police it was the intention of the NDP caucus to conceal fraud. That statement suggests more people knew about this than just Jim Fodey and the former Government House Leader.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: who else knew? And will the Premier be asking for their resignations?

The Speaker: — Order please. I wish to advise the Assembly that this question is out of order because it is not the responsibility of any cabinet minister. I will allow a voluntary response. The Chair recognizes the Premier.

[14:00]

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, I have asked our own Conflict of Interest Commissioner to review these matters and provide for this legislature an opinion.

Today the Regina City Police have requested that the RCMP do a review of the events of 1992 and 1994 and the files thereof. I am very confident, Mr. Speaker, that the work that will be conducted by the RCMP and the work that will be conducted by our own Conflict of Interest Commissioner will answer all of the pertinent questions. I put my faith and my trust in the work of the police and in our own Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

But while the member's on his feet perhaps he'd like to respond or perhaps the Leader of the Opposition would like to respond when it is that that member who's now asking the questions is going to apologize to the public, to this House — and when his colleague from Saskatoon is going to apologize to this House and the public — for misleading the public on a matter of documentation that they had in their possession for over a year. When will they be doing that, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for . . . Order please. Order. Once again the Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Judge's Suspension

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, on Monday the official opposition asked questions about Terry Bekolay, the Prince Albert judge who was suspended December 2005 and has been receiving his judge's salary of \$200,000 per year ever since.

The Justice minister's response was that it was inappropriate the matter was even brought up. The next day apparently the Justice minister thought that it was appropriate to phone one reporter and give him many more details about Bekolay.

Mr. Speaker, why did the minister not answer questions in this Assembly and to a group of reporters on Monday yet saw fit to hold a personal interview with just one reporter later on?

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

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I answered all the questions put to me in the legislature, and I answered all the questions put to me by the press on that date.

Mr. Speaker, what the member called for on Monday in the legislature is that, that I personally interfere and direct how the hearing committee conduct itself. He then went outside the legislature and denied that he did that. That was in the newspaper story on Tuesday, Mr. Speaker.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, if he wants to follow this line of question again today, he take a script with him when he goes out, so he can remember what he said in here.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the minister is quoted in today's paper as saying, "he believes judges should be held to a higher standard . . ." Well so do the people of this province, but unfortunately that's not what's happening.

Right now a police officer is facing a public hearing for phoning in sick when he wasn't sick. According to the minister, Terry Bekolay was somehow linked to a criminal investigation. The judge's conduct in a role raised some questions. And the Justice department laid the conflict of interest complaint against Bekolay, but the public has almost no information about the judge.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: what are those allegations? Will the minister stand in the House today and provide all of the facts about Terry Bekolay and remove the cloud of political suspicion and cover-up that is once again covering this NDP government?

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

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is again calling on the government and particularly the Minister of Justice to interfere with the work of the judicial council and to interfere with the independence of the judiciary thereby, Mr. Speaker.

Not only do I believe that judges should be held to a higher standard; I believe that MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] and officers of the court of which the member from Saskatoon Southeast is both should be held to a standard. I wish that he held the same belief, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear that I do not believe this minister or that government had anything to do with a cover-up, but unfortunately the appearance that is taking place in the media right now is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. We have a case of the first judge to be suspended in this province in 11 years. And as of December 2005 that judge was suspended, and we have heard nothing from this minister. What we want from this minister is to tell us the information that he has received. Under the statute, he is obliged to receive information.

Terry Bekolay was investigated by the Prince Albert police, and we have heard nothing from this minister. The Justice department laid formal complaints about this judge a year ago. Will the minister tell us today why the judge is being held to a higher standard and what he knows and what information he has received, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I am of course going to treat this matter with the same respect I would treat any trial or any hearing. I'm not going to comment on matters that are going to be decided by others, and that is in this case by a hearing committee, Mr. Speaker. And what the member wants to do by innuendo and implication is asked these questions to which he knows he cannot receive answers.

Everybody in Saskatchewan now knows that this was dealt with in entirely appropriate way. The Department of Justice referred the matter to an outside prosecution office, the Alberta prosecution office, and let them make the decision as to how it should proceed. When they received a report that the matter should not proceed to a court, my department referred it to the judicial council, where it properly belongs, Mr. Speaker.

The member opposite knows nothing was done wrong here. He just is seeking a better headline than he's been able to get so far, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the only reason that the public heard anything about this story in the first place was because CFQC phoned the Justice department last November 29 because they had heard so many rumours about Terry Bekolay. If that telephone call hadn't been made, I suspect that none of the details about Terry Bekolay would be known to this day. Once again, this NDP government waits until the details have leaked out through the media before addressing this issue.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister come forward today and tell us all of the facts and all of the background that he has received? Now that the minister has told part of the story, why does he not come clean and tell the Assembly and the people of the province the rest of this story and everything else that's there? What are the allegations about this judge, and what's taking place in this matter? Thank you.

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

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the facts in this matter are going to be determined by a hearing committee, Mr. Speaker. The facts are going to be determined by a hearing committee, and they will make a recommendation. And this government will comply with the legislation, and this government will provide the reports that are required to be provided to the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Plans to Combat Climate Change

Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier. Other provinces in the country, significantly the province of Alberta, are moving on the issue of climate change. They have introduced and passed a Bill to deal

with greenhouse gasses, to reduce those in their province, and also to ensure that any attendant penalties and carbon credits stay in the province of Alberta and are not redistributed across the country. We know that the government has committed to tabling such a plan in this Assembly this session.

The minister has said, on April 23, "... in a couple of weeks. And Mr. Speaker, we will be setting out some very, very challenging goals for ... us" within the next two weeks on this issue. On April 17, he said, "we'll be setting out our targets around climate change and ... sustainable energy policy very shortly." There's another quote similar to that on April 12 when the green plan was announced and a plan for greenhouse gasses was committed to later last month, the month of April. The question to the Premier is, where is the plan, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, as we had this discussion, this very discussion in the legislature yesterday, I again will inform the Leader of the Opposition that in about a week's time, we are sending a team of our people to the nation's capital to sit down with the federal government to spend three days, three days working through the implications of what the federal government has announced, Mr. Speaker.

We want to present a plan to the people of Saskatchewan that is whole — a plan that significantly has this province pulling above its weight in terms of the reduction of greenhouse gases, a plan that is going to be real and tangible and that will build a better future for our families and a better future for our children.

Now the Leader of the Opposition, he seems to think that the Alberta plan should simply be implemented here in Saskatchewan. All he's talked about yesterday and all he talks about today is the Alberta plan. Well, Mr. Speaker, we're not satisfied with the Alberta plan. We're not satisfied with plans of other provinces. We are going to build a plan for the future of Saskatchewan that's going to — I again say — pull above our weight on a national and international context.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Well it's true, Mr. Speaker, that the Alberta plan may not be right for the province of Saskatchewan. And the Saskatchewan Party would like to see then indeed what the Premier, what the government has in mind for our province. We'd like to be involved in that debate in a constructive way.

However others in the country, namely the Leader of the Green Party, Ms. Elizabeth May, said this about the Alberta plan, though it might not be right for us. She said:

"My initial reaction was that I was encouraged that Premier Stelmach is talking about regulations."

"When you recognize that the language coming out of someone's mouth appears to be what you had always

wanted to hear, you encourage them . . .

That's the Leader of the Green Party for Canada.

Mr. Speaker, it wasn't the opposition; it was this Premier and this government that at the beginning of this session, spring sitting of this legislature, said that the environment will be their number one issue, that they'll be coming with a plan for climate change, for greenhouse gases. On three different occasions the minister has said it's coming. The date they gave was at the end of last month.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: what's taking so long? What's happened with this? Where is the plan, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Well I hear a member opposite — I'm not sure which one — saying it's day 63. Well it is interesting. On day 63, the Leader of the Opposition — I must say he did it yesterday — finally gets up and asks a question about the environment.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, for four years we've been talking about building a green and a prosperous economy . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. Members will come to order. The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. For four years we've been building a green and a prosperous economy in this province. We have been taking leadership, not just nationally but internationally, on issues like clean coal technology, on carbon sequestration, on wind-generated electricity, Mr. Speaker. We're now the per capita leader in Canada in wind-generated electricity. We're leading Canada in some of the programming to help citizens build energy-friendly homes.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's a little johnny-come-lately on the last or almost virtually the last day of the session for the Leader of the Opposition to now get interested in the environment, Mr. Speaker. Now I just wonder why. Is he so embarrassed of his performance and his caucus's performance during this session he's trying to redeem it on the last couple of days?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to hear environmentalists across the country. They'll talk also about what this NDP government has led in. They've led in emissions, Mr. Speaker — 62 per cent over 1990 levels; 62 per cent over Kyoto targets in greenhouse gas emissions. That's what they have led in.

And I know the Premier believes in the near mystical and mythical powers of Al Gore, but even his presence in the province of Saskatchewan doesn't change this government's record with respect to greenhouse gasses.

The Premier quite rightly pointed out yesterday, Mr. Speaker, quite rightly pointed out that provinces need to move on their own plan to ensure that carbon tax credits or penalties that we may want to levy against heavy emitters in our province aren't lost to a national plan, that they'll stay in the province for R&D [research and development], for our own green initiatives. But we have waited and waited for that plan. It's not here. By the Premier's own admission, this is what is at risk. What's taking so long? He promised it at the start of session. Where is it, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the inconvenient truth for the Leader of the Opposition is that he's now realized the session has passed by. He has not dealt with substantive issues of public policy during this session, and he's now trying to redeem himself by becoming the environmentalist at the last minute, Mr. Speaker.

Let me repeat. This government, this New Democratic Party government has been showing leadership, Mr. Speaker, in the nation and beyond the nation.

The Speaker: — The Chair once again recognizes the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Again I say, Mr. Speaker, this NDP government has been leading this province and participating with the citizens of Saskatchewan — not just leading in Canada, but leading in North America and in the world, Mr. Speaker.

Right here south of Regina, the world's largest carbon dioxide sequestration project — the largest in the world. We're building in terms of agroforestry. We pioneered in this province, Mr. Speaker, the use of a bio-friendly fuel — ethanol — in our gasoline. We're pioneering it in Canada. We're building that industry, Mr. Speaker.

This has been the building of a green and a prosperous economy. Why, Mr. Speaker, the building of a green and prosperous economy? Because we know that that's what will make life better for Saskatchewan families.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

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

Farming Issues

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today we learned from Statistics Canada that Saskatchewan lost the most farms in Canada. In fact I quote from Statistics Canada: "The number of farms fell in every province, and the rate of decline was fastest in Newfoundland and Labrador and Saskatchewan." Here we go again, Mr. Speaker. We tied with Newfoundland. We're either behind Newfoundland or if we're ahead, we're just ahead.

In every area that Statistics Canada does a study, we're always tied for last place in this province. Mr. Speaker, can the Ag minister explain to us today . . . remembering of course under NDP ag policy for the past 15 years they haven't really made agriculture a priority, and I think that's starting to bear fruit, Mr. Speaker. We're losing the largest number of farmers of anywhere in this country. Can maybe the Ag minister enlighten us on why this is happening?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first of all I think it's important to recognize the deep commitment that this province has had to agriculture and continues to have under this NDP government — 5.2 times the provincial per capita average expenditures by the people of Saskatchewan on agriculture; significant investments, Mr. Speaker, and new investments this past year in research and technology; some of the leading research done in plant science in this province, Mr. Speaker; some of the leading work done in building, developing, and development of short-line farm equipment which leads the world in terms of minimum and zero tillage.

Mr. Speaker, those are vitally important, but they are also pieces that impact the size of farms in Saskatchewan. We have seen more amalgamation of farms over these past years, and technology is a huge part of that amalgamation. As the technology gets better, farmers are expanding their operations, and they are reaching for higher efficiencies.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the minister's right. It's happening all across this country. The problem being is it's happening faster in Saskatchewan than anywhere else in this country.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Speaker, we've had the AIDA [agricultural income disaster assistance] program, the CFIP [Canadian farm income program] program. We've got a CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization] program that that minister or minister of that government should have been at the table and putting forth that help farmers in Saskatchewan.

Then this year we brought to light the comparisons of Manitoba and Saskatchewan when it comes to crop insurance. How are farmers in this province responding to those programs that that government seems to have brought forward, Mr. Speaker? They're getting fed up. They're quitting farming, and they're leaving the farming industry.

And what we see is farms are getting bigger at a faster rate than anywhere else in this country. Mr. Speaker, the little time that NDP government has left, will they finally come to the table

and help farmers in this province with things like crop insurance and the CAIS program?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, of course the member opposite ignores the fact that this province struggled very hard with the federal government and the other provinces to get a better program than CAIS. Mr. Speaker, the federal government insisted on that particular program and the way that it was being developed. The current government is working to try and change that to some extent, but they still have a very distorted policy on how the costs are divided up. This province is in for 5.2 times the provincial per capita average to fund the programs that are in place, Mr. Speaker.

The federal government does not come to the table in any substantial way to help this province which has 43 per cent of Canada's arable farm land, Mr. Speaker — 43 per cent. And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that those Conservative members of parliament need to do more to work with us, with this NDP government, so that there will be success for our farmers.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to give you another example today of this government and that minister not walking the walk. He come out here a little while ago and said when the flooding was going on in north central and the drought was being brought to the forefront in the Southwest, he said that they were going to bring forward a pasture lease program where farmers didn't have pasture for their cattle because it was too wet in one area, too dry in another. Farmers out there took him at his word and need that pasture right now, Mr. Speaker. But we've had a call from a farmer that called the 1-800 number, and to his dismay, the program's not set up.

Mr. Speaker, I know and I understand that this NDP government is been so busy turning MLAs out to pasture, they forgot to create the program, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain that to us today? Who do these farmers contact? Should they contact Manitoba? Alberta? Because nothing's happening here in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Clearly, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of pieces that are working for farmers in terms of providing forage and in terms of providing pasture. There are private entrepreneurs who are offering their pasture land that is available. There is the program that is available through our community pastures, Mr. Speaker. And farmers can apply, and

they can move their cattle into the community pastures today, Mr. Speaker. And I can tell you very clearly that all one has to do is get into *The Western Producer* and you see a large page of available pasture for cow-calf pairs.

And, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that through that combination of private and public offerings that the farmers who need to have pasture land have that land available for them, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you as well, Mr. Speaker, that this government has shown leadership and is committed to finding ways of making sure that those farmers have what they need to have success.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I guess what the minister's saying is really in Saskatchewan we don't need a Department of Agriculture; we need a subscription to *The Western Producer*. That'll solve all our problems, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Speaker, I've been in this Assembly for 12 years — that government's been here for 16 — and before that I farmed, before I come here, Mr. Speaker. That government has not helped agriculture in this province to one degree. In fact many of the program cuts they made hurt agriculture, and many of the programs they brought in have not helped one little bit. We saw where crop insurance in this province is inferior to the other provinces. We know CAIS is not working. And what does the minister say over and over again? It's the federal government's fault; it's their responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, after 15 years I would ask the minister, when will he take responsibility for our farmers and help out farmers all over Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, the other day the member opposite was referring to his mother and his hope that he wouldn't cross the line. Today he's crossed the line, Mr. Speaker. I'm really sorry; Mrs. Bjornerud's going to have to speak to her son.

But I can tell you very clearly, Mr. Speaker, that this government and this minister have been working with farmers to build programs that will work. Mr. Speaker, they're not perfect, and they generally are provincial-federal programs. And we are working with our other provincial counterparts and with the federal government to try and make sure that we have programs that will work.

The comments about crop insurance, Mr. Speaker, have been explained to the member opposite. If he doesn't get it, that's his problem, not ours, Mr. Speaker. The fact is that crop insurance

across the country is similar, Mr. Speaker, and it depends on what the fiscal situation is, the impacts on any particular province's program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — On behalf of the government I'll be tabling response to written question 1,485. Thank you.

The Speaker: — Question 1,485 has been submitted. The Chair recognizes the Government Deputy House Leader.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. By leave to move to motions for returns (debatable).

The Speaker: — The Government Deputy House Leader has requested leave to proceed directly to motions for returns (debatable). Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted.

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

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

Return No. 2

Mr. Morgan: — I will be moving for an order of the Assembly, that the Assembly do issue for return no. 2 showing:

To the Government of Saskatchewan: a copy of the settlement agreement between the Government of Saskatchewan and Mr. Murdoch Carriere for the settlement that was announced on February 27, 2007 by the Minister of the Environment.

That motion will be seconded by the member from Martensville.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak very briefly to this motion. And frankly, Mr. Speaker, it's my first opportunity to speak to this matter and I'm distressed and troubled by the position that the government is taking with regard to release of this information.

This settlement agreement that is being sought by this motion is something that deals with some of the very fundamental rights of the public. The public, Mr. Speaker, have a right to know where their tax dollars are going and where their tax dollars are being spent. They also have a right, Mr. Speaker, to know what kind of deals are being made by the government, what kind of settlements are made, what kind of compromises are being made.

And that public should, except in the most rare exceptions, have full and complete and unfettered access to all of those documents. In this case the government chose to try and hide and to try and conceal this information.

We understand from the various comments that the ministers have made is that this document does not contain a provision in it that requires it not to be disclosed. We understand that Mr. Carriere did not ask for or request such a term and there is not such a term in that agreement.

The document itself doesn't have any of the usual things that would be in the agreement that would require it to be withheld from public consultation, Mr. Speaker. That type of thing would be where it dealt with something in dealing with the competitive issues that the government has to deal with, something dealing with children, or dealing with something where there is ongoing competitive issues with the government.

Mr. Speaker, what this agreement does and what this agreement contains in it and what most of the public find offensive is that from what we understand — the government has chosen to release — is that there is a payment to Murdoch Carriere that is sanctioned by this agreement in the amount of some \$275,000. Mr. Speaker, in addition to that is a substantial top-up to Mr. Carriere's pension.

And what we're asking the government is what they're afraid of, why they won't disclose it. What is in that document that causes them to be afraid to do it? In this last session they have had a battering like I have never seen a government in this country before. The scandals and the frauds and the various things that have faced this government are absolutely unacceptable. And the one thing that they're doing is in the face of all that, Mr. Speaker, is they are refusing to give this document, when that government is facing some of the most horrific allegations that a government . . .

The Speaker: — Order please. Order. Order please. Order. Order. Order. Order. Order please. Order please. Order please. The member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, given the scandals and the fraud allegations that have been made by the police and by other people against this government during this last session, cover-ups, concealment, everything else that could have gone on, you would think that this government would have said, this is terrible; we're going to put everything out. So there must be something terribly damning in this particular document that they're afraid of that they don't want it to come out.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to see what's in that document, and frankly so would the citizens of this province. The citizens would like to know what's in that settlement document and what the members opposite have got to hide. Given what they've already hid during the last session, why wouldn't they want to come forward and put this here? Because there's probably something pretty damaging in there and something that's going to destroy what little political credibility this government thinks that they have left.

And you know, if I was giving them advice, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not, but if I was I would suggest to them that they come

clean and put the document on the Table — table it today, table it as soon as possible, so that they can remove the speculation and the cloud that's of them. In all likelihood the truth won't be as bad as what's happening in the public's imagination as to what could be in there, but clearly it has to be incredibly bad.

If they are legitimately concerned about privacy issues with the complainants that are affected by this agreement, did the government make any effort, Mr. Speaker, to try and mask their names, to obtain their consents, or try and deal with it in any way so that the document and the provisions that are in that document could be put forward? No. Nothing. They are choosing to sit over there and stonewall this entire application.

[14:30]

Today we will end up voting on it. They will use the weight of their majority to try and overcome the public's right to know one of the most fundamental things — where public dollars are going, how public dollars are being spent, and what kind of deals this government is making on behalf of the citizens of this province. Mr. Speaker, what is taking place by those members on the government side is absolutely unacceptable and is an abomination.

And that we have to be sitting here on the second-last day of session, debating this, is something that the public will remember when they go into the ballot box sometime in the next few months. Mr. Speaker, there's not very many of them over there left that are going to be running, but the few that are running will have to confront that issue when their electors and when their constituents go into the ballot box. Because those people know full well that this government has chosen to stonewall them and chosen to refuse information that they have every right as citizens to have. And that information should be made public and should be put forward and should be tabled in this Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, one of the problems that this government has with this issue is the issue of fundamental and basic competence in administration and in routine dealings . . . [inaudible] . . . They should have, as they were going through the late '90s and early 2000s, when they were dealing with issues of sexual harassment in the workplace, they should have had a plan that was in place. They should have had a policy. They should have had a protocol so that when there was complaints brought forward that the complaints could be dealt with in a timely manner.

Those complaints should have had appropriate follow-up. Proper records should have been kept. Those records should have been kept on Mr. Carriere's file. They won't produce any of those other records. We don't know how many of them are there or not. But that was something this government should have had. If the government would have had a good, proper plan that they would have chosen to enforce, those women that were victimized by Murdoch Carriere — and effectively by the members opposite — if there would have been a good system in place, we wouldn't be in a position today of having had to pay out 275,000 taxpayers' dollars in a document they will not produce.

Mr. Speaker, that government should have good internal discipline. They've been in government since the early 1990s.

They should have had plans and contingencies in place so that they could deal with them. If it took place in that office in Prince Albert, how many other places did it take place? How many other unsettled allegations are out there that are dealing with these complaints? It's not acceptable for this to happen in a province in the year 2007 that we're even having this. They need to go back and do some serious soul-searching as to why they abysmally and totally failed these women that are there. They need to go back and rethink and review the protocols and everything else that has led up to this and try to come up with a process that's going to avoid this from ever happening again in this province.

At the time this matter first surfaced, the then minister of Justice, who is one of the people that is leaving the sinking ship, he said they would fight this all the way. He made clear and abundant statements that this was something that they would fight all the way. They would resist any payment. They would fire this individual. The Premier got up and the Premier said, we're going to fire this individual. The Justice minister said, we're not going to settle; we're not going to pay out any money on this thing.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not what happened. What did the government do? The government decided to make a substantial payment, well in excess of a quarter of a million dollars, to an individual with close ties to that NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, that individual received almost \$300,000 of taxpayer dollars and this government rolled over, would not even go to the point where they would go to trial on this thing, wouldn't deal with it, wouldn't fight it. They just decided, we're going to pay it. Was it because he was an NDP supporter? Or was it because they had so abysmally and incompetently handled the entire file right from the outset?

Mr. Speaker, there was a number of issues that came up about this particular firing as the matter went through the courts and through the various media things that we went through during the last session.

Mr. Speaker, we had questions about whether this individual was even fired or not. We had questions whether they had done the firing properly or not. The Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission got up in the House and said, we bungled the firing. Well I'll tell you, she bungled the firing and bungled the firing incredibly badly. If she would have looked at, if she would have looked . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And the minister is speaking over there. And she stood up and talked about the bungling that took place.

If she wants to pass it to one of her colleagues that may have been more directly involved with it, that's fine. There's lots of blame to go around to each and every MLA on that side of the House on this thing. They all knew about it. They all sat there. Not one of them stood up. Not one of them stood up and said that what was going on was wrong, inadequate, or should never have happened.

Mr. Speaker, when you can't handle a firing without cause, they should be hiring some outside counsel. They could go back to Olive Waller or whoever they want to go to. Any law firm in this province would have given them some competent advice as

to how to fire somebody without cause and to see whether you do have cause or not. But they can't even fire somebody without cause. You know it's just an incredible situation. They can't look at the legislation and say, this is the person that's entitled to fire this person; it has to be the permanent head. No, they chose to make the firing and put the blood on that, on the hands of either the minister or the Premier or somebody that wanted to take political credit for having done the firing, rather than the proper individual that's designated under the legislation.

So then the issue arises, was the individual fired at all? Was his paycheque entitled to be continued on an ongoing basis, because they don't even know even now whether the individual was fired or not? What an embarrassment for them to even be in that kind of a position, to determine whether the individual was or was not fired. Who had the capacity to fire him? Why don't they get out the Act, have a look at it? Why don't they hire a law firm? Get on with the thing and make some decisions on the thing.

Was there an issue on there as to whether there was the other discipline that took place? We understand that Terry Scott, who was another casualty in this disaster, attempted to discipline Mr. Carriere by giving him a short suspension. So then the issue is, is it double jeopardy? Was he fired twice for the same issue? How incredibly inappropriate for that to happen. So they have to terminate that employee as well. Yet another set of severance, another issue that's there.

Then they lay criminal charges. They lay nine criminal charges, Mr. Speaker, and they get two convictions. Mr. Speaker, there is a fundamental difference between the standard that's necessary for a criminal conviction and the standard in law that's necessary for a civil matter. What we're talking about is the settlement on the civil matter. And the civil matter that we settled, that we don't have the documents to, that we're looking for today, would have been, if it would have went to trial, settled and determined by the Court of Queen's Bench on the balance of probabilities rather than on proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt — a fundamental and significant distinction that is absolutely lost on the NDP government across.

They have no sense that they had a much lesser standard to prove had they chosen to resist payment on this and run the trial on this one. And it's quite likely, had they run the trial, they may very well have been successful if they wouldn't have been so terribly bad in bungling the actual firing and the actual termination, Mr. Speaker. So they've gone from one mistake as to how they do the termination to another mistake whether they should make a settlement as to how everything else, how the criminal matter comes into play.

They really should get some proper advice, listen to whomever they want that could give them some assistance so that they're not in the position now that they've got this incredibly embarrassing document — the incredibly embarrassing document that they cannot, will not, and are afraid to release because the document clearly discloses the absolute, incredible amount of incompetence and embarrassment that's there. And who knows whatever else might be in there, Mr. Speaker?

Another issue that this document deals with is the amount of

payment — the sum of \$275,000. What this individual received, Mr. Speaker, was approximately three years of severance pay — three years.

We have a province that's got well-settled jurisprudence on what people are paid for wrongful dismissal in this province. If you terminate somebody and you don't have just cause, the general rule in this province is 12 to 14 months. Somebody, an individual like this, towards the end of his career might be 14 to 18 months. But that would be the outer end of what would be ordered by the courts if this matter went through.

But because that government isn't even capable of doing a termination, they chose to just open their wallet. And it's not their wallet; it's the wallet of the taxpayers, the people in this province. And what did they do? Hemorrhage cash — \$275,000, not to mention a pension top-up. Outrageous. Unacceptable.

And the citizens of this province will not forgive that government when they go into the next election because they will be reminded of it. They will be reminded of it by the Saskatchewan Party MLAs, by the Saskatchewan Party candidates who will point it out to each and every voter in this province. And when those voters go to the ballot box, they will remember, and they will not reward those members there with another term. Clearly, never again will they want those people back in government and back in control of the purse strings.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is an even worse message that comes out of this settlement agreement, and that is the settlement and the treatment to the nine women that are involved in this thing. What is the message that we are sending to women in this province, women in the workplace? What do we do? We give them a settlement of \$15,000 apiece — \$15,000 apiece — which is a terribly long ways away from the \$275,000 plus pension top-up that Mr. Carriere got, a long ways away.

And then the minister has the nerve to stand in this House and say, we consulted with the women first. What's the nature of that consultation? What did that minister do? She had one of her officials phone and leave a message on their voice mail: by the way, we gave Murdoch 300 K today. Well there's something fundamentally wrong with that kind of a voice mail — just shouldn't happen, shouldn't happen in this province, shouldn't happen in this country.

Mr. Speaker, those people should be ashamed. They should be embarrassed. If they want to have real consultation, Mr. Speaker, they should have invited the people into their office, had a meaningful, reasoned discussion with them, told them they were obliged to settlement, told them what the legal considerations were.

Those people by and large, Mr. Speaker, are still employees of this government. And, Mr. Speaker, the treatment — the abysmal, embarrassing treatment — that those women received continued on because they were afraid to come forward because of Murdoch Carriere's ties to that government.

The settlement that Murdoch Carriere received, the settlement that they won't disclose to us, that settlement outrages those women. The outrageous conduct just goes right to the very heart

of what those people are like across the street, that they chose to coward out on the thing — not to go to court, not to stand up for those women. What do they do? Those women are in the workplace. They're afraid to come forward for years afterwards. And when they do come forward, do they get any support? Do they get any help? No. They get unkindly visits from ministers, ministerial assistants, deputies going up there saying, don't worry about it, forget about it, sweep it under the street, with a veiled threat that their jobs, their careers would be at risk if they came forward or talked to us.

The Minister for Public Service Commission stood in this House and smugly said one day: do you have permission from those women, knowing that she had gone to them or had somebody go to try and dissuade them from talking.

Well the reality, Mr. Speaker, is those women were courageous. Those women came forward. Those women stood their ground. Those women went to the police. Those women came out, and they put their positions forward. Those women should be commended. Mr. Speaker, the outrageous . . . [inaudible] . . . first they were victimized by Mr. Carriere. Then they were victimized again by that NDP government. And it is not acceptable today to have that happen in this House.

Mr. Speaker, we have got an absolutely unacceptable government across the street, across the way, and that government should resign. We should have an election, and we should have that government put their conduct on the table. And right now what that government should do, if they had any courage or any shred of decency, would be to put that document on the table today so that we knew where we were at, so that we could go back to the electorate and the electorate could stand up and they could say, we want nothing more to do with these people. We want to turn them out.

Mr. Speaker, we've had nothing but a cover-up from this government. They waited until the last of this was trotted out by the media. It was trotted out by these women. They wouldn't disclose anything on this thing until it was absolutely necessary. And now, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, the actual settlement agreement is being hidden and being concealed.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it stinks for the members of this province. It's a clear indication of a government, Mr. Speaker, that has lost its way. It is a government with no moral compass. They are truly adrift, and the people of this province are tired. They are fed up. They want an election. They have a right to know.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to urge all of the members in this House to vote in favour of this motion so that they have the right to have and to get a full understanding of what this government has chosen to do with their money.

Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to move an order of the Assembly that the Assembly do issue for return number two showing:

To the Government of Saskatchewan: a copy of the settlement agreement between the province of Saskatchewan and Mr. Murdoch Carriere for the settlement that was announced on February 27, 2007, by the minister.

That motion, Mr. Speaker, will be seconded by the member from Martensville.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:45]

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member for Saskatoon Southeast to move an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 2. The Chair recognizes the member for Martensville.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank my colleague for his passionate speech on this topic. It makes me proud to be part of a party that actually takes the concerns of its citizens to heart, as opposed to the NDP who chooses to ignore them.

I found it interesting, Mr. Speaker, that last night during the Premier's estimates the Minister for the Public Service Commission was sitting on the opposite benches and was giving us a hard time, saying that we hadn't been talking about the priorities of the people of this province.

And I found it quite shocking, Mr. Speaker, that having talked to one of the victims of Murdoch Carriere, I would say that the safety of women in the workplace and how they are being treated should be a priority of the people of this province. And it was quite shocking that the NDP didn't consider that a priority for any political party to be discussing this.

And I found it interesting as well, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier said again today, in response to questions, that we have not dealt with any substantive issues during this spring session. Mr. Speaker, I find that absolutely shocking. And yes, we have spent a lot of time discussing the Murdoch Carriere situation, the scandal that's erupted because of the NDP incompetence. And for the Premier of this province to say that that is not a substantive issue is an absolute insult to the nine victims of Murdoch Carriere.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP have said over the last few weeks that they are done talking about Murdoch Carriere. And Mr. Speaker, we'd probably be farther down the road to finding a resolution to this situation if the NDP would stop hiding information and start answering the legitimate, detailed questions that we have been asking them for the last number of weeks.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, too that I find it interesting that on the very same day that we find out there is an investigation into the NDP fraud cover-up, that we are debating yet again another incident of the NDP covering up information and not bringing it to light. You would think that they would have learned from their past behaviour.

I think this is systemic of this government to conceal and to cover up. They tried to cover up the SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] debacle. They have tried

to cover up their own caucus fraud. And they are now continuing to try to cover up their dealings with the Murdoch Carriere situation.

The NDP have consistently said that they did the right thing in settling with Murdoch Carriere. This is in direct contradiction to the former NDP Justice minister who said that they had made the right decision and that they would defend that vigorously in the courts — something that they later backed down from.

Mr. Speaker, I would point out too that the Premier said that had they been given the chance to do this again, he would do it again. If the NDP truly believe that they did the right thing, then why are they hiding the settlement agreement from not only us but from the victims of Murdoch Carriere? Mr. Speaker, if the NDP truly believe that they did the right thing, then why won't they release their secret legal opinions, opinions that they say forced them to make this decision to settle with Murdoch Carriere? And, Mr. Speaker, if the NDP truly believe that they did the right thing and have nothing to hide, then why have they continued to refuse to send the Murdoch Carriere scandal to a legislative committee so that we can get to the bottom of this to find out what went wrong and why Murdoch Carriere's nine victims were failed so miserably?

Mr. Speaker, on February 27 of this year, the NDP government announced that it had reached a legal settlement to pay \$275,000 to a former senior civil servant who had been accused of sexual harassment by nine of his female employees, and was later found guilty of assault. What we don't know, Mr. Speaker, is how they came up with this dollar figure — \$275,000. I know that for the hard-working, honest, law-abiding people in my riding \$275,000 is a lot of money.

And for the government to hand this over to Murdoch Carriere without any justification as to where they came up with this dollar amount is pretty outrageous. Not only did Murdoch Carriere get \$275,000; he got a bump up in his pension so that he could retire well. These nine women have to carry the burden of Murdoch Carriere's harassment with them, and I don't think there's a lot of retiring well in their future, Mr. Speaker. But the NDP certainly made sure that Murdoch Carriere was going to retire well.

And I think that not only Murdoch Carriere's victims but the taxpayers of this province deserve to know how that money, that dollar figure was arrived at. And I find it disturbing that the NDP — although they continue to say that they did the right thing — that they've refused to let us know how that dollar figure was arrived at.

When the NDP government first learned of the accusations against Murdoch Carriere — a senior official in the Department of the Environment — a consultant was called in to review the situation, but this was only after years of these women being harassed. And it was determined that harassment had taken place both in terms of abuse of authority and in terms of inappropriate sexual behaviour. The government's response to all these allegations was to praise Murdoch Carriere while at the same time telling Murdoch Carriere's victims to be quiet.

And I quote from a memo from Terry Scott dated February 12, 2003, and he says, "I want to thank Murdoch for his valuable

contributions to the Fire Program.” And, Mr. Speaker, on the very same day that the government was praising Murdoch Carriere, they were telling the nine victims this, and this is also from Terry Scott dated February 12, 2003, and I quote, “I want to specifically caution you to treat this decision and any information related to this matter with strict and absolute confidentiality.” He goes on to say, “You have a very significant personal responsibility to ensure that this requirement is satisfied.”

Mr. Speaker, I find that outrageous, that Murdoch Carriere is praised and his victims are told to stay quiet. And, Mr. Speaker, the NDP’s response to the allegations against Mr. Carriere was not to fire him, but to move him to a different department, to provide him with a positive letter of recommendation, and to tell these women to not talk about the investigation. Luckily for these nine women and for the people of this province, a copy of that consultant’s report was leaked, not only to the Saskatchewan Party, but to a reporter as well.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP did not act in this situation and fire Carriere until after the story became public, after they were grilled in this House and after outrage from the public. They didn’t do this voluntarily; they did it because it was politically expedient, and they were being embarrassed politically by their lack of action in this situation. Considering the NDP’s track record of concealing and hiding from their responsibilities, we have little doubt that no action would have been taken had this report not been leaked in the first place. In true fashion, they acted only after getting caught.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP government opted to settle this case out of courts. And as I stated before, the former NDP Justice minister said that they would fight this vigorously in court, and they did not do that. They settled out of court and paid the nine women \$135,000. Mr. Speaker, we don’t know where that dollar figure came from. We don’t know if they pulled it out of a hat or if they, you know, had a pool on the other side to figure out where this money would come from and what dollar values they would arrive at.

But \$135,000 equals about \$15,000 for each of Murdoch Carriere’s victims. This is at the same time that Murdoch Carriere was getting \$275,000 plus a bump-up in his pension, and we have no idea where any of these dollar figures were coming from, Mr. Speaker. And I think the people of this province have a right to know how this government is spending their money and why because, as my colleague mentioned before, this money didn’t come out of the NDP pockets. It came out of the pockets of the taxpayers in this province.

The NDP have sent a very negative message to women in the workplace, especially women working under an NDP government that claims that it stands up for working people. Mr. Speaker, the actions that this government has taken is nothing more than a slap in the face to the many women working in our public service.

Mr. Speaker, Murdoch Carriere worked in the public service for 32 years. And we have to wonder, considering the fight that these nine women had to be heard, if there aren’t other women who have been harassed in the workplace — and seeing how the NDP refused to deal with these serious harassment

complaints, if there’s other women who are afraid to come forward now.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP government’s decision to pay Murdoch Carriere \$275,000 in this settlement will no doubt send a chill over the workplace. After witnessing this NDP’s government lack of will to enforce anti-harassment rules in the workplace, we do worry that women are too scared to come forward.

Mr. Speaker, although we’re absolutely very concerned as to why the government refuses to not release the settlement agreement that they have with Murdoch Carriere, there are other things that they won’t answer. And I alluded to the fact before that they refused to send this to a legislative committee. And they also refused to release their secret legal opinions, opinions that they said forced them to settle.

But, Mr. Speaker, we have long lists of questions and, as I stated before, the government doesn’t want to talk about this issue. They say that this isn’t of any substance, that it shouldn’t be a priority for us or for the people of this province. But, Mr. Speaker, these questions deserve to have answers. Murdoch Carriere’s nine victims deserve to have answers.

And one of the very important questions that they have is, why weren’t earlier harassment complaints taken seriously? I find it shocking that the earliest complaint that we’re aware of was in 1994 and nothing was done for these women for almost a decade. That’s the track record of this government, Mr. Speaker, is leaving these women ignored for almost a decade. And why, Mr. Speaker, did the NDP, despite their own anti-harassment legislation stating otherwise, refuse to take action against the numerous individuals who ignored the harassment complaints? Mr. Speaker, this case is more questions than answers and that’s disturbing for us.

We also would like to know why, after one of the nine women wrote to the Premier of this province, why they continued to ignore the situation. They wrote to the Premier on March 10, 2003 and warned him that Mr. Carriere would continue to harass people, other women, and they were concerned about women in the workplace in Regina where Mr. Carriere was being transferred. Mr. Speaker, they took the time — they put their name on this letter — they took the time to write to the Premier of this province to warn him in order to protect other women and other workplaces against what Murdoch Carriere could possibly do to them.

And what was the Premier’s response? To ignore this complaint, Mr. Speaker. He did nothing to back up what these women were saying or to investigate it or to find out if there was anything that could be done to protect women in the Regina office where Murdoch Carriere was being sent.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated before, we would also like to have this sent to a legislative committee so that we can find out if there’s other women who need our help, other women that may have been ignored by this government over the years, women who are too scared to come forward, and after seeing the NDP’s track record doubt that their complaints will be taken seriously.

Mr. Speaker, the women in this case, Murdoch Carriere’s nine victims, deserve to have answers. We have spoken with them

many times over the last few months over this, and they're hurt that their government hadn't taken them seriously. And I wouldn't be surprised at all, Mr. Speaker, that if they listened to what was going on in this Chamber over the last two days that they would be hurt once again, to know that their government doesn't believe that us questioning the government on this situation is a priority, that it's of any substance at all.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read a letter that one of the victims wrote to us. It was dated March 25, 2007. And she says:

I am one of the nine women in the Murdoch Carriere harassment case. Some of us were harassed by Murdoch Carriere as early as 1994. We discussed our harassment with supervisors many times prior to any investigation taking place in late 2002. Most of our supervisors brought our complaints forward to higher ups in the department. Nothing was done to stop the harassment [or to] . . . make our workplace safe. [Nothing was done, Mr. Speaker.]

After repeated attempts to address the harassment, a meeting took place in July of 2002 . . .

And, Mr. Speaker, after this meeting took place with the assistant deputy minister, officials from the Department of Environment, their answer to all of this, to almost a decade of abuse at the hands of Murdoch Carriere was, and I quote, "That's just Murdoch." That was the government's response to these women.

Mr. Speaker, these women were ignored for almost a decade, and the least that this government could do now was to provide them with the answers to the questions that they have been asking. And one of those questions is, how on earth did Murdoch Carriere get \$275,000 and a bump up in his pension so that he could retire well and while at the same time these women got a mere \$15,000 each?

I think it's a legitimate question. It's a question that the victims of Murdoch Carriere have, and I think it's a question that deserves an answer, Mr. Speaker. And all we get from the NDP is the runaround. And they've been hiding the answers from us, and I don't understand what they're hiding. They keep saying that they've done the right thing. If they've done the right thing, why don't they just come clean with the answers to the questions that we have?

Mr. Speaker, our party is not the only one who's concerned about this. We had thousands of cards returned to our office in response to a postcard campaign, and they're still coming in. Mr. Speaker, people are outraged by the behaviour of this NDP government. I'd like to quote from *StarPhoenix* columnist Bob Hughes. This was from earlier this year. And he says, and I quote:

The public has every right to know exactly what is going on here. It is, after all, the public's money that the NDP used to grease Murdoch Carriere's palm.

. . . [We] are dealing with taxpayers' money here. You are protecting the rights of women to work in a harassment-free atmosphere. There has to be some sense of responsibility there.

There are . . . too many unresolved issues and unanswered questions about this whole procedure.

The only winner has been Murdoch Carriere. The nine women who complained about him certainly won very little.

And, Mr. Speaker, I couldn't agree with him more.

[15:00]

And as I said in my opening remarks, Mr. Speaker, on a day when we have an investigation into a cover-up of possible fraud in the NDP caucus, I would hope, I would hope that this NDP government would learn from their mistakes and, considering these recent events, that the NDP would realize the importance of openness and accountability and release the information that we have requested, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, there has been a long-standing precedent in this House to respect privacy and personal information. And honouring this precedent, Mr. Speaker, the government considers it inappropriate to provide the settlement agreement between the Government of Saskatchewan and Mr. Murdoch Carriere. Therefore this government will be voting against this motion.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member for Saskatoon Southeast, seconded by the member for Martensville, to move an order of the Assembly to issue for return no. 2 showing:

To the Government of Saskatchewan: a copy of the settlement agreement between the Government of Saskatchewan and Mr. Murdoch Carriere for the settlement that was announced on February 27, 2007 by the Minister of the Environment.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Those who favour the motion, say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion, say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — I do believe . . . Would the members . . . Call in the members for a standing vote.

[The division bells rang from 15:02 until 15:04.]

The Speaker: — Order. The question before the Assembly is

the motion moved by the member for Saskatoon Southeast, seconded by the member for Martensville, to move an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 2. Would those who favour the motion please rise.

[Yeas — 26]

Wall	Toth	Elhard
McMorris	D'Autremont	Krawetz
Draude	Hermanson	Bjornerud
Stewart	Wakefield	Chisholm
Hart	Harpauer	Gantefoer
Eagles	Weekes	Cheveldayoff
Huyghebaert	Allchurch	Kerpan
Kirsch	Brkich	Morgan
Heppner	Duncan	

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion, please rise.

[Nays — 28]

Calvert	Hamilton	Van Mulligen
Lautermilch	Hagel	Atkinson
Cline	Sonntag	Wartman
Forbes	Prebble	Crofford
Belanger	Higgins	Thomson
Nilson	Beatty	Taylor
Junor	Harper	Iwanchuk
McCall	Quennell	Trew
Yates	Addley	Morin
Borgerson		

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Mr. Speaker, those opposed, 28; those for, 26.

The Speaker: — I declare the motion defeated.

Return No. 21

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to join in to move a motion regarding return no. 21 asking the Minister of Health to provide a copy of the most recent update provided to Sun Country Health Region by Deloitte Inc. as part of an occupational and service delivery review undertaken by the health authority in January 2001.

It's interesting that this motion would come up for debate today. Having been through Premier's estimates last night and sitting in this House I guess, yesterday afternoon, listening to the debate between our leader, the member from Swift Current, the Leader of the Official Opposition, and the Premier, the member from Riversdale, and the first questions that our leader asked the Premier was really all around health care. And it was really quite interesting.

And I've looked into *Hansard*, and I do want to quote from *Hansard* in a couple of cases the irony of the Premier and the fact they're not releasing this report from the Sun Country Health Authority. So I do have a number of statements that I'm going to be making. So . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Why is the Premier on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Madam Deputy Speaker, to ask leave to introduce guests.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Premier has asked leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Premier of the province of Saskatchewan.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker. I am very pleased to introduce to the members of the legislature this afternoon 33 students from St. Mark's School in Saskatoon in the constituency of Riversdale, Madam Deputy Speaker.

St. Mark's School is a very exciting school. I have had many occasions to be at St. Mark's School, and I believe the last one was when the school very graciously hosted a wonderful citizenship court. And I'm so pleased to see these students from grade 6 from St. Mark's here this afternoon. They are joined by two of their teachers, Mr. James Strasky and Mr. Syd Figora and a number of folks who have come along as chaperones. So I'd ask all members to welcome the students of grade 6 from St. Mark's.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS (Debatable)

Return No. 21 (continued)

The Deputy Speaker: — The member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I was saying that it's interesting that this motion wouldn't have been answered by the government, that we'd have to have the debate today on this very thing. Having heard the Premier speak last night and the debate that went on last night in the Premier's estimates, I was saying that the Leader of the Opposition asked some very good questions on health care.

The first question he asked was really centred around human resources because that is the issue in health care right now. By far the most important issue is the lack of nurses and the lack of doctors and the impact that is having on the health care system. It's a huge impact. It's an impact that we see the symptoms on a regular basis.

The symptoms are closing of emergency rooms — whether it's in Kamsack or Canora, Preeceville, Spiritwood, Shellbrook, all the different hospitals. I think I've added them up. There's 14 or 15 facilities that have had temporary closures of service just because we don't have the proper complement of health care professionals, whether it's nurses or whether it's doctors.

So that was a premise of the question put forward by our leader to the Premier last night or yesterday afternoon in estimates. And he talked about it wasn't a new issue. This issue has been going on for a number of years. And he read, as I had read, some of those same clips back in the mid-'90s, clips from the College of Physicians and Surgeons about a looming doctor shortage. This was back in the mid-'90s. And now we're seeing it come to fruition.

We also heard concerns from SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses]. And they've said over and over again that this government simply didn't listen to their concerns, and if you don't listen to our concerns, we're going to be facing huge nursing shortages, which we are now. And because of those shortages, we're facing facility closures, temporary closures.

So that was the premise of the question put forward by the Leader of the Opposition.

And I read through *Hansard* . . . well I listened to the Premier yesterday afternoon answer that question, and he tried to deal with the issue of shortages. And he tried to talk about how they've increased the number of seats by 55 per cent, I think, in about the last 10 years, which is really kind of interesting that they would use the percentages; they wouldn't use the numbers because if they used the numbers, you would soon find out how low they cut the number of training seats in our universities. They cut them so low that when they add, you know, 100 or 150, it looks like a lot if you use a percentage. We increased it by 55 per cent instead of using the actual numbers.

So he talked about that. The Premier talked about that for a little while. But then he got on to certainly what we know is going to be what they think is a huge attack point for them in the next general election. And I just want to read from *Hansard* what the Premier had to say. I won't say it quite as well as he did, but I'm going to read word for word what the Premier had to say in *Hansard*.

And he goes on to say, well all that we're hearing from that Leader of the Opposition . . . because what he was questioning is, does the Leader of the Opposition have any solutions? And of course we have lots of those solutions. But what he wanted to key in on is one thing that we have been talking about, that the leader has talked about in brief, so he goes on. I better just read this from top to bottom:

Well all that we've . . . [been hearing] from that Leader of the Opposition and that opposition is a plan to audit health care expenditures in this province — not to add nurses, not to add doctors, but to add auditors to the system to audit the system. And, Madam Chair, I say to the health care workers of Saskatchewan, you ought to beware of the auditors that that party would put in place if they're . . . in government, Madam Chair. They're not auditors who are worried about the health care of Saskatchewan people or Saskatchewan families or Saskatchewan children. They're auditors worried about the bottom line.

So that's what the Premier had to say about the patient-first evaluation of the system that we're talking about. He's very, very worried about putting auditors into the system. He says if we put auditors into the system, we're not putting money into

doctors and nurses.

Well the Leader of the Opposition then went on to explain to the Premier that, under his watch, there are auditors in the system. And that's exactly what this return talks about. This return talks about Deloitte Inc. auditing the Sun Country Health Region on occupational and service delivery review. That's what it's called.

[15:15]

Well it was interesting to listen, to watch the Premier after the member from Swift Current pointed out that under his government the health authorities are being audited right now. And it was really quite interesting. So I go on after the Leader of the Opposition questioned the Premier and said yes, but you're doing it. This government under your watch have auditors, are putting auditors in place.

Well the next response, it was . . . You know, there's a commercial running on, I think, one of the radio stations right now. It's through Murray Wood. And when you have somebody kind of caught and he doesn't know what to say, Murray Wood goes back to the Jackie Gleason Show and it's a hummena moment — when he goes “hummena, hummena, hummena” because he doesn't know quite what to say. Well I would honestly say watching the Premier last night or yesterday afternoon, he had a hummena moment because he wasn't quite sure what he was going to say.

But I do have it, and the nice part is we have *Hansard*. The great part is we have *Hansard*. And we are going to . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well the member from Regina Victoria or Dewdney, who we're not sure if he's going to come back, he certainly still has a voice. I don't know if he has the energy.

It's interesting that the Minister of Finance at 39 years old would say he doesn't have the energy to continue on. But this member does have the energy. I think that's a real telling story of how much energy is left in that government when they talk about the former Minister of Finance as the energy source for that government. That's a pretty scary thing.

But let's go back to the motion that we're debating, Mr. Speaker, because I think that's what you rather me talk about. And so anyway, so the Premier has difficulty with our leader's response. So what the Premier goes on to say:

[Well] Madam Chair, this of course is the normal course of business within the regions. Of course this is the normal course of business. This is quite a different approach, quite a different approach, Madam Chair, than what has been recommended by the party opposite. Now we first interestingly had this idea . . . it's not a new idea. It's not a new idea [at all].

Isn't that interesting? He's saying that we're looking at auditing and that he's going to really lash out at us doing an evaluation, a patient-first evaluation in the health care system. And he's really kind of lambasting us. And in his second answer, he's going on to say that, well this is not a new idea. It's not a new idea at all because they're doing it. It was really interesting.

So they have an auditor in more than just one health authority. We're talking about the Sun Country Health Authority, but there are many other health authorities that are doing the same process. So if a provincial government was to look at the whole system, would that be wrong as opposed to individual health authorities looking at their own operations? It was really quite interesting. It definitely was a hummena moment because the Premier just really kind of got caught in his tracks, and you know for the rest of the estimates he never brought up that audit because they're doing it; the government is doing it themselves.

And so, Mr. Speaker, all we were asking for ... Because it's taxpayers' money that goes in to performing one of these audits, it's taxpayers' money that has hired Deloitte Inc. to do an audit of the Sun Country Health Region. All we are doing in this Assembly is asking us to, asking us to ... asking the government to release that audit, to release that audit. And for some reason they seem not to. Well I certainly know why they don't want to, I mean, because I'm thinking it's going to probably be telling us that they are far short of the number of proper complements of doctors and nurses that this province needs, Mr. Speaker.

So I think I've made my point. I think I've made my point that the Premier sure likes to talk about how terrible having auditors in the health care system are until it's under his watch when they do have health care auditors, and well that's not the same. It's different, but really, Mr. Speaker, it's not different at all.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy:

That a copy of the most recent update provided to the Sun Country Health Region by Deloitte Inc., as part of the occupational and service delivery review undertaken by the health authority in January 2007.

I so move.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Indian Head-Milestone, seconded by the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy, to move an order of the Assembly to issue for Return No. 21 showing:

To the Minister of Health: A copy of the most recent update provided to the Sun Country Health Region by Deloitte Inc., as part of the operational and service delivery review undertaken by the health authority in January 2007.

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

Mr. Duncan: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to second the motion put forward by the member for Indian Head-Milestone, and I appreciate my colleague leaving me a smidgen of time this afternoon to talk about this important subject.

Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons why I think these are important questions that are being asked is throughout this entire session ... and it goes back before this session. But what got me thinking about this was a lot of times, whether it's question

period or whether it's in debate, we have members from the government side calling over to our side talking how we want to do an audit of the system, of the health care system. And particularly the Minister of Finance and the Health minister, they like to use this line.

But somebody probably should have told them that their own health regions are doing audits in the province of Saskatchewan. And we know that Deloitte is currently completing an audit of the Sun Country Health Region and so that's ... When I learned of this I thought it would be interesting to get the government members' perspective on this, knowing, them knowing now that their own health regions are doing audits.

Mr. Speaker, a part of this motion for return (debatable) asking for a recent update, it actually goes hand in hand with a couple of written questions that were put in by my colleague, the Health critic. And the three questions that he asked were which health regions had engaged Deloitte for an operation and service delivery review.

And the second question, the second question's interesting. It was, what are the timelines for completion? And the answer that we got back from the Minister of Health is that the department is not aware of the timeline for this review; Sun Country Health would make this determination. And, Mr. Speaker, I question whether or not the minister actually phoned Sun Country and asked what the timelines were because I know the timelines are that this review would be completed by May 2007. Yet his department is not aware of that. So do they not discuss this? Would he not, when he gets these written questions, would he not phone down to Sun Country and find out when the review would be completed by Deloitte?

These are particularly serious questions considering what's happening in Weyburn right now at our hospital. Mr. Speaker, we know that we learned just in the last couple of weeks that maternity services are being temporarily — in the words of the minister — temporarily suspended over the summer. But then there's some confusion to that because in committee I asked the minister about that and he was confident that maternity services would be operational by the fall, by the end of the summer. And now the officials, the vice-president of Sun Country Health, isn't sure if maternity services will be offered by this fall.

So the people of Weyburn and area, the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy, particularly the people around Weyburn who use the Weyburn General Hospital, they are very concerned about what is the state of the hospital, what is the state of the health region, the entire health region.

And so if the government would table the most recent update provided by Deloitte, this would help to clarify some of the questions that I'm hearing in my constituency office, questions that I'm hearing at events that I'm at on the weekends, when I'm raking my lawn and I have people on my street coming up to me and asking what's happening at the hospital, at the health region. And as we know, as we know and as I said, maternity services are being suspended over summer.

Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure of representing the people of Weyburn and at one time they were represented by former

Premier Tommy Douglas. And Premier Douglas talked about providing health care services from cradle to grave to the people of this province. Well in Weyburn right now it's not so much of the cradle side of it, Mr. Speaker. And people are very concerned that maternity services will not be offered over the summer.

And the minister, he's saying that it's not only due to a shortage of nurses. But everybody that you talk to in Sun Country Health Region, anybody that you talk to says that it's because of a shortage of nurses. That's the reason.

And if we could see this review being done by Deloitte, if they would get this review, the update of the audit that we could see, then that would alleviate, I would think it would alleviate some of the concerns. Because right now there's a lot of rumour and there's a lot of speculation.

We know it's maternity services right now but officials from Sun Country have said that in the past it was ICU [intensive care unit]. In the recent past, just in the last couple of months ICU services had to be temporarily suspended because they didn't have enough health professionals to run those departments.

And so I find it very interesting that members from the government would accuse the members of this side, our party, of hiring audits — when what we're talking about is a patient care review — at the same time when they're hiring audits in the health care system, in the regions like Sun Country. And as the written questions would show, we asked which health regions had hired Deloitte. They answered one, the Sun Country.

But I question that also. I believe there are others. I believe there're possibly three others that have been hired by Deloitte. So to me, Mr. Speaker, the answers that we were given don't exactly tell the whole story. And I think perhaps the Minister of Health should make a phone call to Sun Country and clarify his answers so that we can get the proper information on this situation.

Mr. Speaker, I think if we had the updated information and recent update provided to Sun Country . . . Perhaps Deloitte hasn't finished the entire audit. I believe that they're now out of the health region. They've wrapped up their work by May, by this month, but they're probably putting together what information they did come up with after auditing the Sun Country Health Region. But I'm sure they did update the health region and the department as to what their findings were. I'm convinced that Deloitte, in their audit of the Sun Country Health Region, that they would have provided an update. So what we're asking for, what this motion is asking for is for this government, for this Minister of Health to provide a copy of the most recent update of the audit that is taking place in Sun Country Health Region.

Perhaps there are other regions. I believe there are three other regions that have hired Deloitte in the recent past to do an audit of the health care system under this NDP government. And I think that this minister should provide the update of that audit that was given to the management, to the steering committee of the Sun Country Health Region, and I think that that would

alleviate, that would at least give information. People of Weyburn have concerns of what's happening in their health care system, not only at Weyburn General but at other facilities, and I believe that perhaps some light could be shed on what Deloitte is finding through the audit that they are doing of the health care system under this NDP government.

And so I am very pleased to second this motion put forward by the member for Indian Head-Milestone to return no. 21 showing:

To the Minister of Health: [provide] a copy of the most recent update provided to the Sun Country Health Region by Deloitte Inc., as part of the operational and service delivery review undertaken by the health region in January 2007.

I think the people of Weyburn and area, the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy, need to know what the audit of the Sun Country Health Region under this NDP government, what that audit is going to show, what the interim report, if there's an interim report of an audit that is taking place under the NDP government of the health region. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

[15:30]

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, the review referenced in the motion is one that was prepared for the health region in question and consequently is the property of that health region. It does not belong to the government. As such, the Government of Saskatchewan is unable to release the review in question and will be voting against this motion.

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order. Is there a member that would like to take the floor at this time? The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member for Indian Head-Milestone, seconded by the member for Weyburn, that an order of the Assembly do issue for return no. 21. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? Those who favour the motion say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — I do believe the nos have it.

Some Hon. Members: — On division.

The Speaker: — Nos have it, on division.

The Chair recognizes the Deputy Government House Leader.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the good work of the Standing Committee on Human Services, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:32.]

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