



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

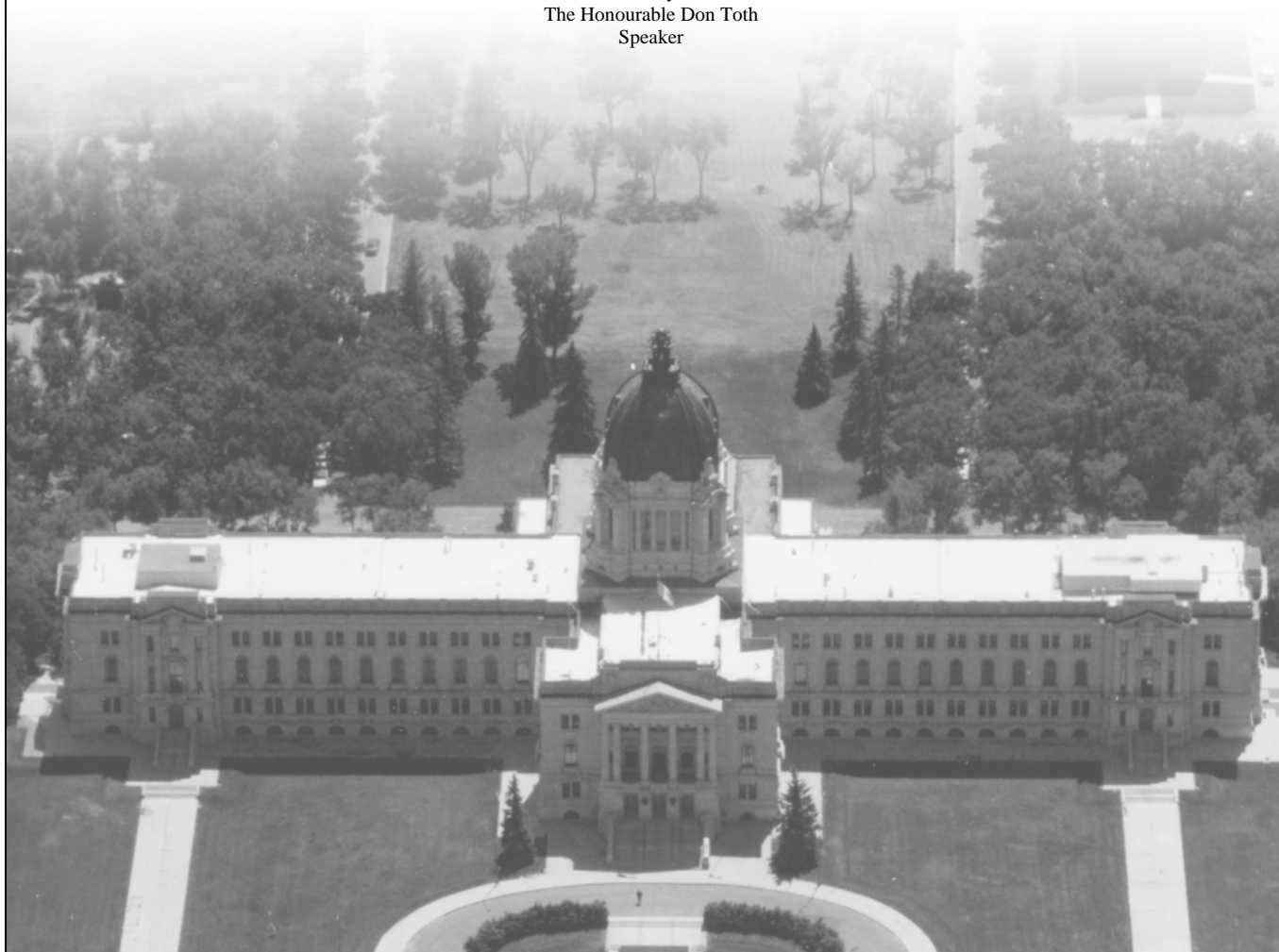
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)  
Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Don Toth  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Speaker — Hon. Don Toth  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — Lorne Calvert

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Beatty, Joan	NDP	Cumberland
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Calvert, Lorne	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
D'Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Furber, Darcy	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
Gantfoer, Hon. Rod	SP	Melfort
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Harrison, Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Hon. Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Higgins, Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, Yogi	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
LeClerc, Serge	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Reiter, Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, Hon. Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Toth, Hon. Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Van Mulligen, Harry	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

**Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seated in the east gallery are two friends of mine from Regina. I'm pleased to see that they're able to join us today, and I would ask you and the members to join me in welcoming Mark Pitzel and Peggy Grace Pitzel. Thank you very much.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

**Ms. Wilson:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to introduce to you and through you my daughter, Brigitt Buckingham, sitting in the Speaker's gallery. Brigitt.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Ms. Wilson:** — Can I say a few more words, please? Thank you. Brigitt worked as a nurse. Brigitt worked in hemodialysis in Alberta for two years, but fortunately when I won she came home.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Ms. Wilson:** — Now she's in her third year of social service. She's working on her social work degree in the program at the University of Regina, and she's also currently working for the Saskatoon Health Region in home care. So I am sure she'll be an asset. So I'd like to say thank you for joining us today and welcome . . .

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, to you and, through you, to the Assembly I would like to introduce some guests in your gallery. We have Marlene Brown from the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses; Larry Hubich, president of Saskatchewan Federation of Labour; Cara Banks, communication officer of Saskatchewan Federation of Labour; and Larry Kowalchuk, counsel with the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union. I would ask all members to welcome these people to our Assembly and, Mr. Speaker, just entering now in the east gallery, Tom Graham, president, Canadian Union of Public Employees; and Ann St. Denis, staff representative for the Canadian Union of Public Employees. Thank you.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members I'd like to introduce Mr. Larry Hubich with the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, in our gallery today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I'd like to introduce a good friend, Jack Mitchell, an adult basic educator, and he's done lots of work in the fields of adult basic education with SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology]. And he's sitting in the north gallery.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Thunder Creek.

**Hon. Mr. Stewart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Hon. Assembly, I'd like to introduce Ms. Marilyn Braun-Pollon and other officials of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. And I hope that all members of this Assembly will grant them a warm welcome.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce Bill Missal who's sitting in the Speaker's gallery. Bill has been a long-time friend — a very long-time friend come to think of it — but also has been instrumental in all three of my campaigns. Bill resides in Lang and is doing some part-time work, I guess, here in Regina. But I would like all members to welcome Bill to his Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Gantefer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask all members of the Assembly to join me in welcoming, from my constituency, Mr. Chris Hudyma who is a good friend and who has long-time lived in the Melfort constituency in the Gronlid area. And he's here today for a visit, and I would like everyone to please give him a warm welcome.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** — Recognize the member from Prince Albert Northcote.

**Mr. Furber:** — I wish to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly on behalf of the citizens of the province of Saskatchewan. And 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 commit to reopening negotiations with Domtar, based on the already negotiated MOU, so as to see a viable pulp and paper mill continue in Prince Albert.

Mr. Speaker, the petitions have been signed by citizens from Prince Albert. I so present.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — According to order a certain petition regarding failed government investments presented on December 18, 2007, has been reviewed and pursuant to rule 16(4) has been found to be irregular and therefore cannot be read and received.

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — Recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

#### New Rink in Caswell Hill

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the heart of most Saskatchewan communities is a hockey rink. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to tell you about an exciting new project in my neighbourhood of Caswell Hill. A few weeks ago, people came together for the construction of a new, modern hockey rink behind Caswell School. Mr. Speaker, this project came about through the co-operation of Caswell Elementary School, the Caswell Hill Community Association, KaBOOM! — a non-profit organization operating in North America — and Home Depot.

Through co-operation and team work in true Saskatchewan fashion, hundreds of volunteers faced the winter elements and constructed the rink in record time. Mr. Speaker, for many decades the Caswell rink has been a place where neighbours have played shinny and children have learned to skate. The successful completion of this project will ensure residents have access to a top-notch rink for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the Assembly to join me in offering congratulations to the many individuals that pitched in to make this new rink a reality.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Weyburn.

#### Good News

**Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the Assembly to share more good news with the people of Saskatchewan. By now I'm sure that word is filtering out all across Saskatchewan that our province has once again, after six long NDP [New Democratic Party] years, crossed back over the 1-million mark in population.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, our population now stands at 1,003,299 people and counting. But, Mr. Speaker, the good news doesn't end there. No, Mr. Speaker, according to Stats Canada, Saskatchewan . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I call the members to order. We'd like to hear the statement by the hon. member from Weyburn. I recognize the hon. member from Weyburn.

**Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, according to Stats Canada, Saskatchewan had the highest third-quarter population growth in all of Canada. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are discarding with the NDP notion that it's statistically impossible to grow at the rate of the national average. Mr. Speaker, we nearly doubled the rate of the national average.

Mr. Speaker, there's other good news. Sales are up. Crown oil and gas rates are up. Property values are up. And jobs are up, Mr. Speaker: 1,400 more people since October and 8,000 more people employed in November than a year ago. Mr. Speaker, jobs are aplenty — 7,500 available on saskjobs.ca today.

And, Mr. Speaker, confidence is up. The CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] is reporting that across Canada there's a sharp decline in business confidence, but in Saskatchewan it's growing. Mr. Speaker, at a time when all of our economic indicators are on the rise, one of the only numbers which is down is the number of NDP members in this Assembly. A coincidence, Mr. Speaker? I think not.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Northcote.

#### Award-winning Prince Albert Musician

**Mr. Furber:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Prince Albert's own Donny Parenteau won two awards at the Canadian Music Awards held in Toronto November 29, '07. He won best single and best producer-engineer for his song "Father Time." In September, Mr. Speaker, he won the Rising Star Award at the Canadian Country Music Awards.

Donny was born and raised in Prince Albert and grew up in the west flat in my constituency. He spent 12 years playing with Neal McCoy and was based out of Nashville. His appearances with McCoy include, to name just a couple, *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* and the Grand Ole Opry.

Donny returned to Prince Albert in '03 to start a solo career. If these awards are any indication, Mr. Speaker, he's about to embark on a very successful career. Mr. Speaker, I've seen him many times and will say that he is indeed both a great recording artist and a great performer.

I ask that all members of the Assembly join me in offering congratulations to Donny Parenteau and his success at the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Recognize the member from Saskatoon

Sutherland.

### Traditional First Nations Feast

**Ms. Schriemer:** — I apologize for rising early. I guess that's what happens when you don't pay attention.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday we made history in the Saskatchewan legislature. For the first time ever, a traditional First Nations feast was held in this building. The guests were invited by the Premier and Chief Lawrence Joseph of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. The feast included a pipe ceremony, and the occasion was steeped in First Nations traditions, spiritual ceremonies, and culture.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations has worked for some time on bettering relations. Her caring personality has served her well. This occasion exemplifies the minister's success. Madam Minister has been made an honorary elder at the Yellow Quill First Nation and last night was ceremoniously wrapped in a blanket by First Nations grandmothers.

It was an interesting occasion listening to the Premier and Chief Joseph. They both have a great sense of humour, but more than that, they both want what is best for their people. Chief Joseph presented the Premier with a painting by Michael Lonechild entitled "The Battle that Lingers" in recognition of the sacrifice made by First Nations war veterans. Chief Joseph suggested that the battle should linger no more.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, hope is winning over fear. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I ask all to thank Chief Lawrence Joseph and his people from all across the province who joined us for this hopeful and historical occasion.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

**The Speaker:** — Recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

### Saskatoon's Columbian Manor

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Back in the 1980s, the Knights of Columbus Saskatoon chapter foundation was established to assist in the development of a seniors' housing project. The idea, Mr. Speaker, was to fill a void that existed in lease accommodation for seniors, those who wish to live independently but who could not afford to purchase a home. It took years, Mr. Speaker. But thanks to the time and effort of many volunteers, financing was secured, land was purchased, building plans drawn up, and Columbian Manor — a complex that offers seniors the opportunity to live in safe, affordable housing — finally became a reality.

Mr. Speaker, the planners of Columbian Manor recognize that the need for affordable housing for low- to moderate-income seniors would be ongoing, and the initial design allowed for future expansion. In 2000, 16 new units were added. And in 2006 through the then NDP government's HomeFirst program, the housing complex was expanded by a further 51 units of

assisted living.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the Knights of Columbus Saskatoon chapter and K.C. Charities Inc. for their initial and ongoing support of this worthwhile housing project, and I particularly want to mention Bob Jeanneau. Because of him, the new expansion is named in recognition of his significant commitment and contribution to the project. Columbian Manor is an excellent example of organizations, community, and governments working together to meet the needs of those who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Wood River.

### Department of Health Pre-election Advertising

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, we now know that the former Health minister and Executive Council ordered the Department of Health to spend \$1.1 million on feel-good advertising to make the NDP government look good in the months leading up to the election.

Mr. Speaker, the frightening thing is that the \$1.1 million was unbudgeted, and the department was ordered to absorb the cost. One of the headlines in today's *Star-Phoenix* says, and I quote, "NDP admits . . . ads prior to the election were political." The member from Saskatoon Nutana said that the ads were justified as they were needed to counter political ads.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if the former NDP government had wanted to run political ads and counter-political attacks, the Saskatchewan New Democratic Party should have paid for the ads, not the taxpayers of the province. Mr. Speaker, that money could have been much better spent addressing some of the real issues facing our health care system. I understand that our Minister of Health is sending a letter to the Leader of the Opposition asking his party to reimburse the people of this province for ads that were purely political. We look forward to his reply.

Mr. Speaker, the new Saskatchewan Party government is already taking action to ensure that this NDP practice of running feel-good ads at taxpayers' expense on the eve of an election is outlawed for good. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

### Regina Police Service Awards Ceremony

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday I had the pleasure of being in attendance to witness the 2007 Regina Police Service Award ceremony. Twenty-three civilians and 31 officers received awards in a number of categories. These honours were all well deserved and involved individuals putting their lives on the line, saving lives, and sometimes both, Mr. Speaker. In short there were a lot of heroes being recognized for tremendous service in the cause of making . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I would suggest members to have some respect for the member on his feet, and I would invite the member from Regina Elphinstone to present his statement.

**Mr. McCall:** — Why thank you, Mr. Speaker. In short there were a lot of heroes being recognized for tremendous service in the cause of making our communities better and safer. While each of the individual award recipients warrant recognition in this Assembly on their own, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to publicly thank and praise the work of one of the winners of the teamwork award and that is the Housing Standards Enforcement Team.

The team is made up of representatives from the city of Regina bylaw enforcement division, North Central Community Association, Core Community Association, Regina Fire Department, Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, the Department of Community Resources, Welfare Rights Centre, the Regina Housing Authority, the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Investigation Unit, and the Regina Police Service — quite a team, Mr. Speaker. In the citation for their award, these entities were recognized for their sharing knowledge, skills, and authorities to improve housing in Regina's inner city neighbourhoods.

The team has been in operation since September of 2004 and was developed out of the work of the inner city community partnership. Since that time, the team has inspected 1,000 houses, put work orders on the vast majority of these units, moved 73 families into better dwellings, closed 53 dwellings with 15 of those being demolished. It has empowered people in the inner city and neighbourhoods, like core and my home neighbourhood of north central, by letting them know that something can be done about slum housing and indeed — as you can tell by the stats — has been and is being done about improving inner city housing.

I'd like to again thank the Housing Standards Enforcement Team and congratulate them on their award. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### QUESTION PERIOD

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

#### Equalization Negotiations with Federal Government

**Mr. Calvert:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier, and I have a number of questions about equalization. Mr. Speaker, as everyone in Saskatchewan is well aware, the current Conservative government in Ottawa promised that 100 per cent of our non-renewable and natural resource revenue would be excluded in the calculation of equalization.

So my question today is to the Premier. Does he believe today that 100 per cent of Saskatchewan's revenues from non-renewable natural resources should ought to be excluded from the calculation of equalization?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Opposition Leader for the question and say that the new Saskatchewan Party government believes that there is an imperative here for the federal government to provide some significant investment in key areas of our province — in key areas of not just the economy but in social areas — so that we can ensure the current boom that has us now over 1 million people in the province of Saskatchewan . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — That that current boom could have a lasting prosperity. There is an imperative here, I believe, in investment, in new investment for infrastructure in our province, around issues impacting on First Nations people, Mr. Speaker. And I look forward to the Opposition Leader's support in the case that Saskatchewan intends to make for value-added opportunities in uranium. All of that will be very much part of our plan to press for aggressive federal involvement and investment in the province of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Calvert:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, we may not have been entirely successful in getting a fair equalization deal from Ottawa, but we were successful in pushing the population of Saskatchewan to 1 million people well before the provincial election, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Calvert:** — Now the Premier's answer this afternoon gives me, and I believe the Saskatchewan people, cause for concern. Since the election I have heard the Premier reflecting on equalization. I heard him say, or saw him quoted as saying, that he would, quote, "press the feds in another way to get a better deal for Saskatchewan." And I heard his minister in charge of energy say, quote, that "all options will be explored."

Now that concerns myself, this caucus, and the people of Saskatchewan because it sounds as if the Premier is about ready to sign a deal or has already crafted a deal with Ottawa around Saskatchewan's natural resources. So again I put a very clear question to him which he did not answer when he was on his feet a moment ago. Does the Premier still hold the view that 100 per cent, 100 per cent of Saskatchewan's natural resource revenues should ought to be excluded from the calculation of equalization, the position he took before the election?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the preamble of the Leader of the Opposition, I want to say that a lot of things, a lot of people were anticipating a change in government just prior to the last election. They were moving to the province. The Riders managed to win the western final because they too were anticipating a change in government and a chance to win the Grey Cup. And they did.

The opposition leader quotes me as saying that our government intends to press the feds in another way with respect to this issue. That's exactly what we intend to do. And the other way that we intend to use is one that will actually work, that will get federal dollars to the province of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to quote from the now Premier when he was leader of the opposition. Right from the bench I now occupy in this House, he said, quote:

First, I want to state in the strongest terms the Saskatchewan Party, Saskatchewan's Official Opposition, stands in full support and agreement with the Premier and the Government of Saskatchewan on the solution:

The federal government should immediately agree to a Saskatchewan Energy Accord that allows Saskatchewan to retain [retain, note the words] 100% of our non-renewable resource revenues beginning in the 2005-06 fiscal year and continuing through 2012.

Mr. Speaker, that has been valued by the national government as meaning a benefit to the Saskatchewan population of \$800 million every year. Now why, Mr. Speaker, does the Premier say one thing before an election and today in this House is saying something quite different?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, we have been very consistent on this issue, and during the election campaign this party committed to a new accord, a new agreement with the federal government — one that would actually produce results — because when that member sat over here he got precisely nothing from Ottawa.

And it's hard to fathom why his tactics wouldn't work. After all, he took out a lot of ads in Saskatchewan in the daily paper so that he could convince the people of the province of Saskatchewan that the federal government should provide more money. They did the raise the flag for awareness campaign. They did a lot of website activity. I believe when he was here, when he was the premier of the province, he tried temper tantrums with the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, that party failed to get a better deal, to get a fair deal for this province, to get any deal, to get any money. We

intend to work very hard to succeed, to get that new agreement for strategic investments that will ensure that this province's current boom, now of over 1 million people, translates into long-term prosperity. And I invite his support as we move towards that goal.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Calvert:** — Mr. Speaker, it's clearly say one thing before an election to get yourself elected, and then say and do something quite different after the election. I have here, Mr. Speaker, a letter that was sent to me by the now Premier, in which — a letter he sent to me on February 4, 2005 — he said, "What we have at this current time is a patchwork of uneven and poorly designed compromises that do not serve the welfare of the people of Saskatchewan."

Mr. Speaker, my question is very direct to the Premier. Is he now setting us up for a patchwork quilt of poorly designed compromises that will not serve the welfare of the people of Saskatchewan? You know, Mr. Speaker, it's a pattern. They say one thing about essential services legislation before an election; they do something quite different after. As my colleague just said, actions speak louder than words. I ask the Premier: is he cooking up some kind of a poorly designed compromise to satisfy his political masters in Ottawa? That's my question, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Well this is pretty amazing. I don't know if I've ever seen a opposition member actually flip-flop in the same set of questions, Mr. Speaker. But I think what I just heard there is that that member opposite will not support the Government of Saskatchewan in getting a fair deal, in getting a better deal from Ottawa that recognizes some of the very unique opportunities and challenges we have as a province. That is in fact what we talked about before and during the campaign. It's what we intend to deliver on.

And while he's talking about federal parties, while he's on his feet next — I assume there's another question — maybe he ought to explain what he has done with respect to his federal leader who has been attacking, Mr. Speaker, attacking the potential development of oil sands in Canada. Which would of course, if it ever happened . . . Likely it won't — he'll never form the federal government — but if it did happen it would happen to the great detriment of the province of Saskatchewan and of First Nations people in that area who believe in the opportunities that can come from oil sands development in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

### Revenue Sharing with Municipalities

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party platform clearly stated that they were going to negotiate a new revenue-sharing deal with municipalities and provide immediate assistance to the municipalities while they were in negotiations.

Now the Minister of Municipal Affairs seems to be wandering on this a wee bit, because he said, “Seven per cent is not enough to solve the problem but we look at it as a useful first step, and we’re hoping that we might be able to do better in the future.”

Well, Mr. Speaker, here we go. The Premier’s own minister, the Premier’s own minister doesn’t support the Sask Party plan. He has doubts about it, and he’s got good experience in municipal government. So once again there’s a huge disconnect between the Saskatchewan Party during the election campaign and what they’re saying now.

Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs: with billions of dollars sitting in government coffers, where’s the immediate assistance and what exactly kind of vision for municipalities is “. . . we’re hoping that we might be able to do better . . .”?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the minister responsible for municipal government.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Mr. Speaker, I don’t understand the long faces on the other side of this House. Rather than being pessimistic, we on this side of the House are being optimistic. We fully recognize that an increase to the revenue-sharing pool of 7 per cent this year is not enough to actually fill the infrastructure gap. The mayors of the city of Regina and across the country have been very clear about all of that.

We have to ask why we got to this sad situation. We need only turn back the clock to the 1990s to remember that the former government reduced the revenue-sharing grants to the city of Regina alone by \$100 million. The city of Saskatoon’s revenue sharing was cut back by \$100 million as well, and the smaller communities endured cutbacks of another \$100 million.

Mr. Speaker, we’re doing the best we can with the dollars that are available within the structure of balanced budget legislation. We hope to do better, and we fully intend to do better as circumstances permit.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, too bad the minister didn’t read his current briefing books. He’s still living back in the early 1990s. But in this budget year, in this budget year, Mr. Speaker, the increase in revenue sharing was \$30 million. And

this Saskatchewan Party, with billions in the bank, is offering 7 per cent, Mr. Speaker, which works out to about eight and a half million dollars.

Mr. Speaker, the minister said in an article that he did not like the idea of variable revenue-sharing formula, saying that you just can’t plan with that kind of formula. He says the benefit of the new Sask Party plan is that it’s finally predictable. But the Sask Party plan is tied, revenue sharing is tied to a percentage of own-source revenues, and that leads us to a new problem, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Finance tells us the whole reason that they need a Fiscal Stabilization Fund is . . .

**The Speaker:** — The member will place her question.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, to tie municipal revenue sharing to the wildly gyrating provincial finances, how does that guarantee for municipalities consistent and predictable funding?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the minister responsible for municipal government.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I heard mention of wildly gyrating and I’m not sure if this is a dance floor or a Legislative Assembly.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — But perhaps I can clarify what I think I understand the member’s question to be. Her concern is the variability of funding through the revenue sharing from the province to Saskatchewan’s municipalities. The big problem that I as a former city councillor — and everybody that was on city council throughout Saskatchewan — faced in previous years was we had no idea what kind of revenue sharing was going to be provided by the province. When you’re planning for road improvements, when you’re planning for sewage and water treatment plant expansions and upgrading, how are you supposed to plan properly if you have no idea what kind of revenue sharing is coming?

One of the fundamental principles that we need to obey here is to make sure that it’s predictable, and that’s our intention.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party has said they’re going to negotiate a new deal but the mayors have said, why do we need to reinvent the wheel? Start where our negotiations are now.

They’re going to increase the funding by 7 per cent, which is a decrease from last year, Mr. Speaker, plus they’re going to tie revenue sharing to a percentage of own-source revenues, which are wildly gyrating, is how the Minister of Finance put it.

Mr. Speaker, it’s not predictable. The minister hasn’t been consistent. Could he please explain what his plan is?



**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the minister responsible for municipal government.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite would stop wildly gyrating for a moment, perhaps I could say the following few words.

We fully intend to pick up where the discussions left off. The municipalities of Saskatchewan invested a tremendous amount of time and effort and their expertise in developing the arguments and furthering the discussions to the point where we find them today. We have absolutely no intention of dropping the ball. We're going to pick it up and in this particular case we have the pleasure and the opportunity of carrying it across the goal line.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

#### Attracting People to Saskatchewan

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, people are becoming more and more concerned that this government's actions don't match their words. My constituency office was contacted a few days ago by Karen Morrow, a young woman from Alberta who recently moved to Saskatchewan. Ms. Morrow graduated from Brandon University's Applied Disaster and Emergency Studies program, the only program of its kind in Canada. She graduated with an honours degree, with great distinction and a president's medal for academic excellence, in May 2007. She is one of perhaps a dozen Canadian students with a university degree specifically in emergency management.

She was offered jobs in four different provinces but she chose instead to come to Saskatchewan, a choice which according to Ms. Morrow was partly due to the NDP's graduate tax exemption. And now the Sask Party wants to replace the grad tax exemption with a tuition rebate scheme that would do absolutely nothing to attract people like Ms. Morrow to Saskatchewan.

My question to the member from Saskatoon Greystone: why on earth is he shutting the door on young people moving to Saskatchewan?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education and Labour.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, it's a rather odd phrase when we have a day where our population's up over 1 million to start talking about closing doors. In fact this is an era of open doors in Saskatchewan because people see new opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, growth, prosperity and security, and keeping our promises . . . We campaigned on a graduate tax rebate. That's what we're going to move on, and that's about keeping our word.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, the member can dodge the question, but Ms. Morrow demands an answer.

Mr. Speaker, what a sad message to be sending to the young people of this country who are taking a close look at Saskatchewan. Our economy needs skilled workers from across the country. Pulling the welcome mat off Saskatchewan's doorstep just doesn't make sense.

Why is the Sask Party planning to kill the NDP grad tax exemption and leave nothing behind to help attract young people from out of province?

To the member from Saskatoon Greystone: was this omission intentional, or was it just an oversight? And if it was an oversight, will the minister at least commit to extending his plan to the people who graduate out of province?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education and Labour.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, people from across Canada and around the world are moving to Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan has the fastest rate of growth in Canada right now.

Mr. Speaker, we're keeping our word. We're keeping our promise as far as the graduate tax rebate. What we said we would do is we would see through that former government's commitment for this year, and we would begin to phase in our commitment starting in the next year.

Mr. Speaker, this is completely consistent with the platform. It's completely consistent with what the people of Saskatchewan voted for. And, Mr. Speaker, it's consistent with the outcome of the election.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, the proposed plan does not help people in this situation. My office was also contacted by Ms. Crystal Day, a Regina native who moved out of the province to pursue training in occupational therapy, training that isn't available here in Saskatchewan. Why should she be treated differently than the nurse or physiotherapist that can be trained here in Saskatchewan? Allow me to quote from Ms. Day's letter:

What is fair for some Saskatchewan residents should be fair for **ALL** Saskatchewan residents. To me, not allotting the grad tax benefit is an insult . . .

Can the member from Saskatoon Greystone please answer

Crystal Day a simple question: why? Why is the government removing this benefit from people outside of Saskatchewan? And why is this minister punishing Saskatchewan people who have to get their training outside of Saskatchewan?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for Advanced Education and Employment.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, we are keeping our word. We're going to move forward with our graduate tax plan. And, Mr. Speaker, it was obvious, as we move forward we're looking at programs that aren't offered in Saskatchewan so that we can ensure that those who have moved back, in order to have educational opportunities and employment opportunities, will have new opportunities under the Saskatchewan Party government.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Eastview.

#### Recruitment and Retention of Health Professionals

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party made some pretty clear promises during the election. Their 2007 platform promised to, and I quote, "Hire 800 Registered Nurses, by filling . . . 600 Registered Nurse vacancies and hiring an additional 200 Registered Nurses within the first term of government."

Yet their Throne Speech stated, "The goal will be to hire 800 Registered Nurses within the first term of government."

So we went from will hire to will try to hire — in less than a month, Mr. Speaker. That must be some sort of backtracking record. That beeping you hear is the Sask Party truck backing up.

To the Minister of Health: can he lay on the table today his plan to hire 800 nurses, or will he admit that he actually has no plan?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our plan is very clear. Over the four years of our mandate, we will hire 800 more nurses — 600 to fill the vacancies and 200 more to add to the complement on the floor, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, you have to realize where we are starting from. After 16 years of NDP government and absolutely ignoring the nursing profession in this province, Mr. Speaker, we have a deep hole to climb out of. We will be doing it by retaining, by training, and by recruiting, Mr. Speaker. It's a lofty goal, but a goal that we're not afraid to set, unlike the opposition was.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Health was asked many times to answer how his party would find more health care professionals when he was Health critic. He told the public to wait and see. Wait and see just isn't good enough any more. Assuming he has a plan — and that may be a big assumption, Mr. Speaker — now is the time to show his plan, and let the public along with health care professionals judge the plan on its merits.

We know the Calgary Health Region alone is short some 500 nurses. We know the recruitment and retention of health care professionals is the foremost challenge for governments right across North America and the world. My question is for the Minister of Health: how will his government hire 800 more nurses in four years? What is his plan to move beyond words and into action?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said, our plan over the next four years is certainly to hire 800 more nurses. It's an absolute must. Failing that, our health care system is fragile right now and not meeting our goal will cause big problems into the future.

But how we will do it is certainly by recruiting, retaining, and training, and listening to the stakeholders — unlike that opposition. I'll quote from Rosalee Longmoore. "A decade of denial, neglect and mismanagement by the government and health-care . . . [employees] has produced the worst retention rate in Canada and the highest vacancy rate in Canada." That is coming from the president of the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses — someone that she should very well respect.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. She has another question. The Saskatchewan Party's platform committed to, quote, "Creating 40 New Physician Training Seats and 60 New Physician Residency Positions in Saskatchewan Hospitals." These are some pretty specific numbers from the campaign, Mr. Speaker.

But what did they say a few weeks later in the Throne Speech? And I quote, "My government is also committed to creating more training seats and more residency positions for our doctors." Notice there's no numbers attached any more. No more numbers. This appears to be the first step in the Sask Party's plan to backtrack from their election promises.

My question is to the Minister of Health. Will he state on the record that his government will live up to the specific promise it made during the election, or would he like to start lowering expectations today?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, what we won't do is what that previous government did. They lowered the number of training seats down to 115 graduating nurses in one year. If you wonder why we have a shortage right now, they can look in the mirror, Mr. Speaker, because they closed 52 hospitals, laid off hundreds of workers, and lowered the number of training seats. Mr. Speaker, we need to increase the number of training seats, which we'll certainly do. And I work with my colleague from Saskatoon. We need to retain, much better than we ever did under that NDP record.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's very curious that she would start talking about recruitment and retention today, after we learned that that opposition spent \$1.1 million to try and prop up a terrible record in health care.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

### Seniors' Drug Benefits

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. She has another question. The members on this side of the House are proud of the seniors' drug plan we introduced in March. It truly has made life better for Saskatchewan seniors. When we introduced it, the members on that side weren't so keen. They called it unsustainable. But we knew it was both sustainable and good public policy.

Well not surprisingly, the Sask Party flip-flopped and soon the plan was part of their platform with a few changes. Their plan picks winners and losers by stripping some seniors of the benefits and extending coverage to some, but not all, children and youth.

What seniors don't know is when this will happen. We've been hearing from seniors concerned about when and if they'll lose their benefits. Pharmacists also do not know when they'll have to start treating seniors differently. My question for the Minister of Health is: can he tell us today when some seniors can expect to lose their current benefits?

[14:15]

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — During the election campaign we too introduced our plan and it was very similar, although we did have a cap on income regarding the senior drug plan. What we didn't campaign on though was a universal drug plan that fell flat on its face, Mr. Speaker, a universal drug plan that that

government thought was the saviour in the next election. And it didn't work, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to go back to the \$1.1 million. Most of it, an awful lot of it, was spent to prop up their lagging support, their sagging support regarding the drug plan. Mr. Speaker, my question — and it certainly will be to the premier; I sent the premier a letter — when will they pay back Saskatchewan taxpayers' money that was used to prop up a sagging government?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill No. 5 — The Public Service Essential Services Act

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I'd ask the members to refrain from debate across the floor in order that we can hear the presentation of the introduction of Bills. I call on the Clerk.

**Clerk:** — Item no. 1, Hon. Mr. Norris.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 5, The Public Service Essential Services Act now be introduced and read for the first time.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour has moved first reading of Bill No. 5, The Public Service Essential Services Act. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall this Bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — The next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### Bill No. 6 — The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2007

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 6, The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2007 be now introduced and read for the first time.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The minister has moved first reading of Bill No. 6, The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2007 be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall the Bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — During the next sitting of the House.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**The Speaker:** — Members, before orders of the day, I lay on the Table the annual report of the Saskatchewan Legislative Library.

### STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

#### Ruling on a Point of Order

**The Speaker:** — And also before orders of the day, I have a response to the point of order raised by the Opposition House Leader. Yesterday the Opposition House Leader raised a point of order regarding the appropriateness of a member's statement given by the Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority.

I've had the opportunity to review *Hansard* and to consider the comments made by the House leaders of both government and the official opposition. The Assembly will be aware that the rules provide for two distinct periods during routine proceedings for statements by members.

The first period affords private members an opportunity to make statement on a subject of interest or concern to them. Often these statements highlight an event or an accomplishment by a group or individual in their constituency.

A second period of time affords ministers the opportunity to advise the Assembly of matters relating to government policy, ministerial action, or to announce a new direction of program. Ministers are not permitted to use this period to comment on matters that have previously been announced or to make congratulatory messages. Ministers are also precluded by rule 18(5) from using the time during statements by members to make a statement on matters relating to their area of ministerial responsibility.

In reviewing the statement made by the minister, I find that it is in the nature of a congratulatory message on the accomplishment of the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority in being named the 2007 business of the year by the *Saskatchewan Business* magazine. The statement does not announce a new policy, direction, or program by either the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, the portfolio for which the minister responsible, nor by the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority, an entity falling under the jurisdiction of the SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority]. Accordingly the statement could not appropriately be made as a ministerial statement. The correct time to make this statement was during statements by members.

In arriving at this decision, I recognize the view that the minister's statement could leave the impression that he was addressing a matter that falls within his ministerial jurisdiction.

In reviewing the record, the minister was not technically out of order. However in order to avoid confusion, ministers may want to make a clear distinction that their statement is not related to their ministerial responsibilities.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Biggar.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave to table responses from 100 to 190.

**The Speaker:** — The member has asked for leave. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to, on the behalf of the government, to table responses to questions 100 and 190, and I also included in that package our duplicate answers to questions supplied by the critic of Corrections and Public Safety.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Answers are herewith tabled.

### SPECIAL ORDER

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

### ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Ms. Eagles, seconded by Mr. Ottenbreit, and the amendment moved by Mr. Calvert.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Northcote.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Furber:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to congratulate you for the esteemed position in which you find yourself. It's a position that requires sound judgment, impartiality, and grace. And having watched the proceedings closely for the last few years, I have no doubt you'll do a great job.

Additionally I'd like to congratulate those members who were successful during the last campaign and find a seat in the legislature here with us today. I'd like to single out my colleagues here today who are here for the first time, as am I. Mr. Speaker, what a wonderful accomplishment and what an exciting time — I wish them all the best as they strive to represent their respective constituents.

I love this province, Mr. Speaker. I've spent time in each of its four corners. I was born in Kindersley and spent a lot of my

childhood with my grandparents on a farm just south of there. It was a mixed farm, and I participated in all aspects of life on that farm. I spent endless hours on a tractor listening to my grandpa's stories and gaining an appreciation for life on the farm and for its inherent self-reliance. It's there that I learned the value of a good, strong work ethic, and a hard day's work.

I remember vividly shelling peas with grandma and picking chokecherries in the Great Sand Hills. In the summer I travelled with Schafers to their home in Abbey and with the Archers to their farm near Sceptre. I love the freedom afforded the kids growing up on a farm, but I learned, Mr. Speaker, that that freedom was generally accompanied by an expectation of co-operative contribution. Believe it or not, Mr. Speaker, I am just old enough to have attended a barn raising. I remember lamenting the fact that something like that rarely happened in the city.

I then moved with my family to Prince Albert, a great place to grow up, Mr. Speaker. I had friends with whom I'd spend countless hours exploring the city. I was active in many sports where I learned the value of collaboration and of standing up for your teammates. In junior high I played volleyball and basketball where Coach Regel demanded accountability both on and off the court. I went to a great high school where the staff of the school system instilled in you a sense of community and of a larger purpose, not an easy thing to do for 15- to 18-year-olds, but they did it with dignity and kindness. And I thank them for that.

Being from Prince Albert means that you have ready access to the greatest playground in the world. I spent many weekends camping, canoeing, and fishing, and gaining an appreciation for the natural beauty of northern Saskatchewan. Some of my favourite times still is spent fishing in the Nistowiak Falls with Annie and Janet Roberts. I have lived between Regina and Prince Albert ever since I was a kid.

I'd like to begin by thanking a host of people. Each of us here knows full well that none of us get here without the great help from a number of people. I'd like to quote Jane Howard, if I could:

Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one.

In light of that, I'd like to thank my family for their undying support. I'm sure I feel the same way as most of the folks in this Chamber when I say I have the most supportive family that one could have. They're generous, honest, and forgiving, and thank God for that, Mr. Speaker, because there are times with me when they've needed to be. Mom, Dad, Derrick, Kim, Dion and Christine, Brandon, Brooklynn, Alyssa, Camryn and Elyse and Jaelyn — thank you and I love you.

In addition to my family, I have a network of supportive friends that stretches from Stanley Mission to Maple Creek. I would not be here if it were not for the tremendous support of these folks. You see, Mr. Speaker, I've had a bit of a challenge to face in the last year, and it humbles me when I'm reminded of how many people reached out to me when I needed them the most. I'd like to thank them and let them know that it's because of

them I'm here today.

Speaking of being here today, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to thank the many folks that worked hard to see me in my seat here in the legislature. It inspires me to know that there are people in this world that are so willing to give of themselves for something they believe in. They worked exceptionally hard on phones, computers, baking, knocking on doors. Whatever there was to be done, no matter how big or small, my very dedicated team found a way to get it done. I look forward to their continued friendship and counsel over the next four years and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to thank my constituency assistant, Rose. An ideal constituency assistant should be friendly, dedicated, bright, and a good problem solver. Well Rose is all of these things and more. I'm thankful she's decided to continue her work with me. Keep up the good work, Rose. Thanks.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take an opportunity now to thank the former member from Prince Albert Northcote. He was a wonderful orator, a brilliant strategist, and a great defender of all things Prince Albert. He taught me a great deal about life, dedication to family, and I wish him well in whatever he chooses to do in the future.

I would like to, if I could, spend some time detailing the folks . . . some of the highlights of Prince Albert Northcote. P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote lies entirely within the city limits of Prince Albert. It includes a hospital, the North Saskatchewan River, fire station, a large percentage of P.A.'s commercial property, an airport, city hall, SIAST, First Nation reserve land, and much more, Mr. Speaker.

It is home to a wonderful mosaic of people — people from a wide variety of socio-economic background, race, religion, and culture. It was a great place to grow up and is a great place to live and work. I'm very thankful to the people of P.A. Northcote for bestowing upon me the honour of representing them in this great Assembly. I'd like to thank everyone who came out to vote, both for me and for the other folks that put their name forward, because to me participation in democracy is extremely important. I pledge to honour their trust by working at it as hard as I can with them and for them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, on their behalf I'd like to talk about the Speech from the Throne. I found it of note not as much for what it said, but for what it didn't say. There are people in my riding who have a great need for social and affordable housing. Over the past few years, the former NDP government designated nearly \$260 million to social and affordable housing, but during the run-up to the election the Saskatchewan Party presented themselves as right-leaning with a social conscience.

So what is their policy as it pertains to social housing? What is their policy as it pertains to this most basic building block of society? I'll quote from the new minister now responsible for social housing:

Policy is very broad and we did not have a specific program to address housing within our policy. Was it a void? Perhaps.

“Was it a void? Perhaps.” When it was politically expedient, they railed against the former government for not having adequately funded housing. Over a quarter of a billion dollars then was not adequately funding housing, but they perhaps had a bit of a void in their policy.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, one line from the Throne Speech struck me very abruptly: “. . . actions speak louder than words.” Actions speak louder than words, Mr. Speaker. I find this, in the time since the Throne Speech, to have become a very interesting catch phrase — more to that in a moment.

Mr. Speaker, first I'd like to quote from Mark B. Cohen. Mr. Cohen stated, “Nothing can so alienate a voter from the political system as backing a winning candidate.” Never was that truer than in the city of Prince Albert in the last election. The member from Prince Albert Carlton took out an ad that said, and I quote, “A vote for Darryl is a vote for the mill open and people working.” The first large item of business for this new government, Mr. Speaker, was to rip up the MOU [memorandum of understanding] signed by the former government, in spite of the fact that it had been worked on for nearly two years by government; local members of the task force made up of local business people, union, First Nation representatives; and a multinational, publicly traded company.

Now it was their right as the new government to tear it up; I'll accede to that, Mr. Speaker. But what I cannot fathom, what I'll never understand, is that while they were saying these things during the election, they had no plan whatsoever to get that mill up and running — no plan at all for the working men and women of my city and for the citizens of the North, this in spite of the fact that the member from Batoche has been the lead member on a committee that was supposed to have been studying this issue for the last six months. Where is his study? What has he found?

Well I'll tell you this, Mr. Speaker, a very interesting piece of information. I think it speaks volumes for the concern and commitment that they provided on this Forestry file. The local task force offered the former Forestry critic, the member from Batoche, a chance to be briefed weekly on progress as it relates to the pulp mill and the plan to reopen it. Do you know how many of these briefings the member showed up for, Mr. Speaker? None. Not one, Mr. Speaker. That's their level of concern and commitment. Actions do indeed speak louder than words. Only when it became an issue during the campaign did it become important to the members opposite. It's an affront to the community and the people that work and live there.

But worse than that, Mr. Speaker, it was done not for some rigid, guiding policy where you might say well at least they're consistent.

I think we'll find in the days to come that this is solely about picking winners and losers, Mr. Speaker. And you can bet I'll be watching and standing up for the people of Prince Albert. I'll be watching very closely their policy as it pertains to agriculture, ethanol, and I'll be watching this policy as it pertains to transportation.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Furber:** — I do note with great interest the big transportation announcement at the Regina Airport on December 7. It didn't make it on to the government web page list of government news releases. A message from the Premier is there telling me to phone my mother. That made the list but not this big announcement. The mayor of Regina was there, but some of their federal cousins from Ottawa were there as well. But it didn't make the list, Mr. Speaker — very curious indeed.

What are they hiding? And whom are they hiding it from? I would guess, Mr. Speaker, that over time this rigid policy will have the flexibility equal to that of Stretch Armstrong and a game of Twister.

The Saskatchewan Party campaigned on a yearly balanced budget and railed for years against the NDP use of a fiscal stabilization fund. Then they decided to create and implement one of their own. And when the Finance minister was asked whether or not this was hypocritical, he responded by saying he'd been called worse. Actions speak louder than words.

The Saskatchewan Party campaigned on not allowing rural school closures and that they already had a plan that would provide \$350,000 to each school affected, that they had the only plan to solve the problem. Now they're saying at some point they might begin to study the issue. Actions again speak louder than words.

The member from Swift Current stated to the North Saskatoon Business Association that he'd have Enterprise Saskatchewan up and running within a week of taking office. Now the issue is not whether this was a prudent thing to say. Obviously it was not. It's that he said it and hasn't lived up to it. It's been six weeks, Mr. Speaker, and still the people have no idea what this enterprise will look like. Actions speak louder than words.

The words in their platform detailed nothing of essential service legislation. And in interviews just prior to the election they denied that it would be of interest to them. “I don't think we need to get to legislation” is the quote from the member from Indian Head-Milestone.

What have they done in the time since, Mr. Speaker? Well this week they pledged to introduce legislation that will force sweeping changes on the working men and women of this province. Actions speak louder than words. They made promises regarding specific numbers of health care professionals. The Throne Speech, they chose to begin backing away from those commitments. Actions will speak louder than words on those items as well, Mr. Speaker. They made a pre-election commitment to create 100 residencies for doctors. In the Throne Speech, they've already begun watering down that commitment. Actions again will speak louder than words.

I believe the folks that sit across the way are learning that the burden of government is too heavy. They're learning quickly that people actually believe that you'll do the things you say you'll do. And I think that they'll find out that they'll be accountable on these things. I'll be here, and we'll be here in full force to ensure that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that the new government will get a holiday when it comes to the implementation of their policy, and fair enough. The people have voted for change, and you'd be a fool to disregard that, Mr. Speaker. And so they will have a bit of a holiday period for these things.

But you know what you don't get a holiday from, Mr. Speaker? You don't get a holiday from integrity. You don't get a holiday from standing behind your word. You don't get a holiday from refusing to stand up for the people that you're elected to represent. This is where the members opposite have already made critical errors, from which some will not recover. It is for these reasons and many others that I'll be supporting the amendment and not the motion, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the minister responsible for municipal government.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to rise and address you and, through you, members of the Legislative Assembly, our honoured guests here today, and the people of Saskatchewan. In addition it's a great pleasure to congratulate yourself and the Deputy Speaker on being elected to your new positions. We know you will both serve with great distinction.

Now while the primary purpose of my remarks today must be to discuss the Speech from the Throne, I would like to begin with some very important thank yous.

Like all members I recognize that we are not elected through our own efforts, but with the generous assistance of a large and dedicated team of volunteers who donate their time and energy in a common cause. These are people who knock on doors with us; people who do telephone work; people who are involved with communications, volunteer recruiting, and election day activities. Without their incredible efforts, nothing is possible. And I'm very grateful for their hard work and offer them my heartfelt thanks.

One person above all deserves special recognition, my wife Jocelyn — in the gallery today, in the west gallery — whose constant support, insight, and creativity gave me the strength to persevere. She made enormous sacrifices over many months in order to ensure that I had the opportunity to pursue my dream. Now there's no way to thank her adequately, but my getting back to walking the dogs on a regular basis is probably a pretty good start.

I also warmly welcome the opportunity to acknowledge the other candidates for parties who put their names forward in the recent election in Regina South constituency. They campaigned very honourably, capably, and served their voters well. Most especially I sincerely thank the residents of Regina South who chose me on November 7 to be their provincial representative. It's truly an honour and a humbling responsibility to have been elected to serve the people of Hillsdale, Whitmore Park, and Albert Park in our great city of Regina. Rest assured I will approach my duties on their behalf with energy and enthusiasm.

Now the days since the election have been extremely busy and

productive, with many hours spent in meetings with personnel from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. These extremely professional civil servants have worked very hard to provide me with a broader understanding of a wide range of issues and are as dedicated and focused a group as I have had the pleasure of meeting.

Recently some questions have arisen about the change of name in my area of responsibility. The answer, Mr. Speaker, is rather simple. In a sense this ministry is at long last just going home. You see, Mr. Speaker, before its previous incarnation as Government Relations, it was called Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs which was preceded by Municipal Affairs and Housing; and before that Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing; then even further back Municipal Affairs, Culture and Recreation; and originally many years ago, Municipal Government. We have come full circle. That much is clear. What remains somewhat murky are the supposed advantages of the ongoing name changes prior to today and indeed their cost. But these are questions that other members can consider at their convenience.

The people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, voted in favour of a government committed to restoring a relationship of trust with our municipalities. Therefore my work as minister is to forge stronger partnerships with our cities, towns, and villages; to work together with northern municipalities and First Nations communities; and to extend the hand of friendship to our rural municipalities who for so long have felt they were on the outside looking in. My message to them is very simple, Mr. Speaker: rural Saskatchewan, welcome back.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Rural and urban, north and south, communities large and small — all of us have to find new ways to work together as full partners in a true government-to-government relationship because in this way we're going to accomplish a great deal more than we can accomplish on our own. In fact I would like a powerful new partnership between municipal and provincial governments in Saskatchewan to be one of the signature achievements of this administration.

In order to achieve this goal, I've begun the process of meeting municipal leaders from all over the province. It will be my objective to get out of the Legislative Building on a regular basis because it's essential to meet people in their communities to discuss their issues.

Much consideration has already been taking place between Saskatchewan's communities, key representative organizations like SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities], SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association], and the New North, along with personnel from Municipal Affairs.

As I mentioned earlier in question period, our government intends to build on this solid foundation and to make further progress. This is important because we have a lot of work to do to ensure prosperous, safe, and sustainable communities.

During the 1990s, as I mentioned, provincial grants to

Saskatchewan municipalities were cut back drastically. The city of Regina and Saskatoon and all of the smaller communities together lost \$300 million in revenue-sharing grants during that period of time. As a result, the ability of our cities, towns, villages, resort communities, rural and northern municipalities to renew aging infrastructure was seriously impaired. This is because property taxes alone will never fill the infrastructure gap.

Now that times have improved, some progress has been made, but the results have always been erratic, and that makes it impossible for municipalities to plan optimally. The Speech from the Throne offers a different strategy for the next four years and outlines its plans within a framework of growth and opportunity, security and compassion, and keeping our word.

Saskatchewan people will see our government deliver on its commitment to respectfully negotiating a new revenue-sharing agreement with municipalities that will include, as promised, a percentage of the province's own-source revenues. It will ensure sustainable, predictable funding that will allow municipalities to plan programs and expenditures more effectively than at any time in the past.

In addition our government will provide \$300 million in five-year, interest-free loans through the Saskatchewan infrastructure growth initiative. This will assist all municipalities, including smaller communities, in developing the infrastructure needed to meet the soaring demand for new housing, commercial and industrial construction. This innovative, new idea is a central part of our growth agenda to create more opportunities for young people here in Saskatchewan and to attract new business and new residents to our province.

Our government will also dedicate a significant portion of the proceeds from the NewGrade Upgrader sale to assist municipalities in the construction of road and transportation projects.

Finally, while all these new agreements are being respectfully negotiated through consultation with our municipal partners, we will be increasing revenue sharing to provide immediate assistance to municipalities.

The people of Saskatchewan voted for more opportunities for our young people. They told us how every long weekend they watch the steady stream of cars with Alberta licence plates rolling in on Friday and rolling out again on Sunday. Parents want their children and grandchildren back.

As mentioned earlier, the Throne Speech contains a vision of planned development in our communities leading to increased opportunities for our young people right here at home.

[14:45]

Another key component of our growth agenda is Enterprise Saskatchewan. This new vision for economic growth will be an inclusive partnership between government, business, labour, First Nations, municipalities, post-secondary education institutions, and other key economic stakeholders. It will return direction of the economy to the hands of people who actually

create the jobs, invest the dollars, and build the labour force. Enterprise Saskatchewan will set economic targets, chart progress toward meeting goals, and ensure that we remain a competitive and attractive home for investment and job creation into the future.

Mr. Speaker, how do you build a community? Well you start by providing reasons for youth to stay. For too long our young people have left after graduating because there were other places that were more attractive to them. In response, we are offering the nation's most aggressive tuition rebate plan, up to \$20,000 over seven years for students who stay in the province after graduation to start their careers. We also recognize the enormous potential of young entrepreneurs. And so we will be helping young people starting businesses in Saskatchewan by allowing them, under 30, to earn \$10,000 per year tax free for five years.

Building communities means making it affordable for people to live in their own homes and operate their own businesses. To realize these goals, I support our government meeting its promise of reducing the education portion of property taxes by doubling rebates over the next four years. This promise, applied to both farm land and urban dwellings, is a step toward making good on our commitment to achieve a better balance in paying for our education system and for restoring equity in rural and urban communities.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, all of these new ideas for growth must be built on the foundation of sound fiscal management. That's why we have introduced the Saskatchewan growth and financial security Act. It requires a balanced budget on a yearly basis — the same as for municipalities — and allocates budgetary surpluses in equal proportions to paying down the debt and investing in our future through economic growth initiatives such as additional funding for municipal infrastructure.

Balancing our agenda for growth and opportunity are commitments for security and compassion. Quality health care is an essential part of vital and sustainable communities, and the people of Saskatchewan have voted for better health care. As reported in the Throne Speech, there is overwhelming support for a publicly funded, publicly administered health care system, but our people need solutions to overflowing emergency rooms, shortages of doctors and nurses, service cutbacks at many hospitals, and long surgical wait-lists. That's why I support our government's ambitious strategy for nurse training, recruitment, and retention, along with the plan to create more training seats and residency positions for our physicians.

In addition I welcome our commitment to conducting a comprehensive patient-first review of our health care system. With input and support from Saskatchewan's own health care professionals, this initiative will identify the most effective ways to address existing problems and create top quality work and care environments.

Further, we will honour our promise to introduce a prescription drug program covering a large majority of seniors along with children, in a cost-effective and sustainable manner.

Building communities not only means providing infrastructure, unshackling natural innovation and enterprise, and improving



health care, it is also about giving our young people the skills and knowledge to succeed. And that's why the people of Saskatchewan voted for top quality education.

To build a knowledge economy in our communities, an economy whose only limits will be those of the imagination, I am pleased to support our government's additional investment in post-secondary institutions of \$125 million over four years. And in order to ensure that our young people are properly prepared for advanced education, we are increasing K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] operating funding to school boards by 20 per cent over four years — an estimated \$118 million investment.

Building communities means welcoming everyone, and since our government is one of inclusion and recognizes the importance of First Nations and Métis peoples to our economic growth, I support our government's proposal to add the history and content of the treaties made with First Nations to the K to 12 curriculum.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — The people of Saskatchewan voted in favour of helping families in need, Mr. Speaker, by reducing child poverty and supporting good work in our communities. In response, our government will provide more funding for school lunch and anti-hunger programs.

We will also make an additional \$20 million available in the next four years to assist community-based organizations across Saskatchewan who are on the front lines offering services to those most in need.

Another important initiative designed to support families is the doubling of the caregivers' amount tax credit, which will significantly assist those who are caring for aging parents and dependent family members at home.

Communities are built when young and old come together to learn about teamwork and character through sports and other group activities. However, there are many who are unable to take part due to high costs. So I am also pleased to support our active families benefit to help families with the cost of cultural, artistic, and sports activities.

The people of Saskatchewan have voted for a cleaner environment. They know our province currently has Canada's fastest rate of growth in greenhouse gas emissions, and as the Speech from the Throne states, "For the sake of our children, this must change." We are committed to achieving our province's greenhouse gas emission reduction target of 20 per cent by the year 2020. We'll provide residents with financial assistance when they choose geothermal and solar heating systems for their homes. We will also lead by example through ensuring new vehicles purchased by government are either hybrid or higher-efficiency types, and we will discount the cost of insurance to drivers buying these kinds of vehicles.

The people of Saskatchewan have also voted for safer communities. The Speech from the Throne promises our hard-working municipal police services 120 new officers over four years. Now as a former member of the Board of Police

Commissioners for Regina's police department, I am very proud to support this initiative.

New officers will allow for more successful approaches to addressing today's security challenges such as youth gang activities and the exploitation of our children over the Internet. The root causes of crime must also be addressed, Mr. Speaker. That's why in addition to the increased investments in education, child hunger programs, and community-based organizations already mentioned, our government will begin the essential work of funding long-term beds for people who are suffering from addictions.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne contains a new vision for our province that the people of Saskatchewan have asked for — a vision that emphasizes growth and opportunity and balances them with security and compassion.

It offers strategies for well-planned economic development and more career opportunities for our young people. It provides much needed assistance for students and young entrepreneurs that will encourage them to stay and build their lives and grow their families right here at home.

It ensures sound financial management, balanced budgets, and an orderly paying down of our provincial debt. It focuses on improving health care, education, and the supports that enable families to succeed. It addresses our responsibility to work towards a cleaner environment, and takes a direct approach to our need for safe families, safe homes, and safe communities.

And to all who share my passion for community building, it imagines a new partnership with our province's municipalities that is stronger and more successful than ever before.

Mr. Speaker, with the above comments in mind, it is a privilege to declare that I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne. Thank you very much.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to start out by adding my congratulations to you on your election as Speaker of this Assembly. I'm sure that the next four years will be memorable under your direction.

Mr. Speaker, before I start my reply to the Throne Speech, I'd like to thank the people of Saskatoon Eastview who have elected me to be their MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for the fourth time. Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Eastview has many wonderful and unique qualities, not the least of which is the vibrant and significant seniors population. Eastview has a very high seniors population. It's mixed with many young families and, as we found out on the doorstep in the November election, many new residents from outside the province.

There are currently two high schools in the Eastview area, Walter Murray and Holy Cross, and soon there will be three with the opening of the L'École canadienne-française. Many

students from these high schools have participated and excelled in national competitions.

Mr. Speaker, our several elementary schools are full of bright young people, busy learning to be our next leaders. I'm particularly fond of Georges Vanier School, as I am an alumni of that school. It is a designated fine arts school and has wonderful programs of music, dance, and art. The community associations of Eastview and the parent councils are active and involved in their schools and neighbourhoods.

Mr. Speaker, there are many seniors' complexes in Eastview, like Scott-Forget, St. Volodymyr, Ilarion, Columbian Manor, St. Ann's, Legion Manor, Brantford Estates, and Sturby Place. I enjoy having talking teas at these residences on a regular basis. Mostly they talk to me, and I listen and learn.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent the constituency that had the highest voter turnout in the province in the last election — 91 per cent. Congratulations to all who came out and showed a strong democracy in action.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to have been the Eastview MLA since 1998, and look forward to the next term of office representing this great constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take a moment to thank the people who worked so hard during the campaign to re-elect me to this Assembly. First, of course, thank you to my family, who are tireless supporters and campaigners — my husband, Don; my son, Sean; my daughter, Heather; my mother, who is a fierce campaigner at 82; my sister, brother-in-law, and my nieces, who all spent a month campaigning with me. Even my baby granddaughter was out on the campaign trail with me as I was on grandmother babysitting duty one day.

Mr. Speaker, next I want to thank the strong, committed, and tireless campaign workers of Eastview — Tamara as campaign manager; April as voter contact; Kay and Craig as E-Day organizers; signs by Milt; and fundraisers, Jim and Jan.

Heartfelt thank yous to the hundreds of other volunteers who dropped pamphlets, made food, did data entry, were scrutineers, phone, or foot canvassers, had or put up signs, and of course donated money. Together we did a superb job and I would not be here without all of them.

Mr. Speaker, it will be a change being on the opposition side of the House, but the people have elected a strong opposition and we will be diligent in our duty to protect the interests of Saskatchewan citizens.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great enthusiasm that I take on the role of Health critic and critic for seniors' issues. As most of you know, I'm a registered nurse and maintain current licensure with the SRNA [Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association]. I've been the associate minister of Health, along with my colleague from Nutana; minister responsible for Seniors; the president of the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses; and vice-president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour.

All of these past experiences have positioned me well for the next four years, particularly as the Health and Seniors critic.

Mr. Speaker, the new Minister of Health can rest assured that I will be happy to score the arguments about recruitment and retention and catalogue our party's achievements when we were in government. This is not the time for that long, long speech, but it will be coming in detail over the next while as we watch the new minister grapple with the problems in the health system — problems, by the way, that are not limited to Saskatchewan, but indeed are the same across Canada.

We will be very attentive to the delivery of the many aggressive and complex promises made by the Saskatchewan Party — and in the minister's own words, the lofty promises — to the people of Saskatchewan for their health system.

Mr. Speaker, on November 7 the people of Saskatchewan chose two things. Yes, the Saskatchewan Party will be government, but there will be a strong opposition to keep the government accountable. And that is what we'll do — watch out for the public interest. And as the watchdog of that interest we will ask questions, debate issues, and expose, if necessary, direction, policy, or legislation that is not in our opinion or in the public's opinion in the best interest of the people or of the province.

Mr. Speaker, one of the first things the Sask Party Throne Speech stressed as part of their stated value was keeping your word. Well, Mr. Speaker, that value has already been tested and found wanting.

The member from Prince Albert Carlton campaigned on the promise of the P.A. mill opening. That promise was quickly forgotten as the memorandum of understanding with Domtar was torn up. A promise for balanced budget legislation, not so much — nothing different from when we were in government and they constantly criticized it. Essential services legislation not mentioned during the campaign and indeed discounted just before the election by the now Minister of Health, and today it's on the order paper.

The people of Saskatchewan did not vote for the Sask Party only to see them do covertly what they cannot do openly — things such as stripping the Crown assets, TILMA-type [Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement] talk about competitiveness, and democratic labour laws, meaning essential services and union busting.

Mr. Speaker, as many of my colleagues have said, Enterprise Saskatchewan gives the power over much of our province's finances to an unelected body of Sask Party appointees. This is very disturbing. How is accountability maintained to the people? We will continue to be vigilant over Enterprise Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there's been much made by the member from Indian Head-Milestone about recruitment and retention, particularly in the health sector. I have a copy of a letter, mentioned by my colleague from Massey Place, sent to the Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour and copied to me as the Health critic, from a very concerned young woman about the policies, about what the policies of the Sask Party mean to her and others like her as recent graduates of health programs not offered in Saskatchewan. And I quote:

[15:00]

As I have heard that the current new program will be replaced with a new tuition program in 2008-09 for students who have studied in Saskatchewan, yet not to those educated outside of the province.

As a new graduate, you can understand my concern, and that of many of my colleagues in the health care professions that were educated outside of Saskatchewan purely due to the fact that Saskatchewan does not offer education for the following professions: Occupational Therapists, Speech Language Pathologists, Audiologist, Respiratory Therapist, Optometrists, Prosthetic and Orthotics, Clinical per fusionists, Medical Sonographers, Diagnostic medical ultrasound technicians, Electrophysiology technologists, Cardiology technologists and Chiropractors.

If the true goal of the Saskatchewan Party is to attract and retain new graduated professionals to Saskatchewan . . .

And I'm continuing to quote:

. . . and their aim is to hire 600 Health Care professionals, then why the limitations? . . . How does the new political party plan to attract and retain new graduated professionals to Saskatchewan when they limit Saskatchewan residents in their career choices?

What is fair for some Saskatchewan resident should be fair for **ALL** Saskatchewan residents. To me . . .

And I'm still quoting,

. . . not allotting the Grad tax benefit is an insult to my and the above listed professions. It depicts that your health care profession being educated outside of the province, by no choice of our own . . . is less important in the health care field than others.

She asks a very good question and has a valid concern with the Sask Party graduate tax plan which certainly does pick winners and losers. It is also another indication of the lack of thought put into some of the promises made by the Sask Party during the election.

The health and seniors file will be my focus. As a registered nurse, past president of the SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses], past vice-president of the SFL [Saskatchewan Federation of Labour], associate minister of Health, as well as minister of Learning — which included post-secondary as well as K to 12 — and minister responsible for Seniors, I will be watching the progress of the recruitment and retention and new training seats for nurses and doctors. I'll be watching the patient-first audit, the new drug plan, and the capital projects promised like fast-tracking the health sciences building in Saskatoon.

I'm interested in how some seniors and families with children over 14 like their new drug plan. I'm interested in how you explain to Saskatoon families how closing the ski hill at Blackstrap helps build healthy and active families.

Mr. Speaker, we as opposition will be relentless in our pursuit

of accountability in all that the Sask Party does as it delivers — or not — to the people of Saskatchewan the promises they made during the November election.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot finish my speech without mentioning how disappointed I am with the lack of any mention in the Throne Speech of housing. Having spent last summer in housing consultations across the province, it became apparent how complex the housing issue is and how vastly it affects different people. Saskatoon is affected the most significantly and, with all the glee around getting Sask Party seats in Saskatoon, it's strange that no mention was made of this very real problem there.

Mr. Speaker, so much for the security focus of the Throne Speech. Nothing is more important to security than a home. Apparently the Saskatchewan Party doesn't care that for a huge segment of our population they do not have that. And how do you address child poverty without talking about a housing strategy?

Mr. Speaker, in closing I'd like to say to the Minister of Health that his job started after November 7, and he is accountable for all that happens from that day forward. He can no longer be the Health critic and blame everything on us and answer to nothing. We'll see how he can square his continued attempt to undermine the public confidence in our health system and a publicly funded and administered health system. And the clock is ticking on the delivery of these promises. Eight hundred is a lot of nurses in a tight international market. I'm looking forward to his magic touch to solve all the problems in the health system.

And, Mr. Speaker, to all the members opposite: I hope the promise of keeping your word is better fulfilled than it has been in your first month in government. Mr. Speaker, for what it says and for what it doesn't say, I will not be supporting the Throne Speech. I will be supporting the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Biggar.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to start my Throne Speech presentation by congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, on your election as Speaker and also to the Deputy Speaker on his election.

At this time I'd like to also just send my best wishes out to former Speaker Mr. Kowalsky. I understand he's had an operation, and I hope he's doing very well. Also I'd like to thank all the new members that have been elected and the re-elected members on both sides of the House. It's an honour to be elected to this House, and I wish everyone well and congratulate them on their election.

I'd like to thank the Premier for appointing me as Government Whip. I appreciate the appointment. I'm enjoying my job very much.

In the last election I garnered 60 per cent of the vote, and I would just like to thank . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Weekes:** — I'd just like to thank the constituents of Biggar for returning me as their member of the Legislative Assembly. I'm humbled. This is my third term. I'm humbled by the first two elections and also this third election. Of course this is very important. This is the election where the Saskatchewan Party formed government.

And I'm looking forward to the next four years in government, to be part of the Saskatchewan Party team to help turn this province around and make this province a better place for our children and grandchildren and people returning and newcomers coming to the province to live and raise their families and work and pay taxes to Saskatchewan treasury. Because that's, at the end of the day, what pays for our health care and our social services and builds the highways is economic activity and the taxes that comes into the government from those activities. And it's very important that we set the province on the right course so that we continue the economic boom that is just taking off in the resource centre. And as we see today that the population numbers have gone over 1 million people and I can only see that going higher and higher over the term of the Saskatchewan Party government in the next four years.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank some members of my campaign team. I'd like to thank Ed and Terry Young, who were my campaign manager and my business manger. They worked very hard in our campaign, and a lot is owed to them. Other people I'd like to thank: Shannon Lanigan and Lyle Zeebeshko. Shannon was someone . . . Like she said, she lived in the campaign office. She was there for easily 10 to 12 hours a day, and she was a great asset to the election campaign in Biggar constituency. Her daughter, Kendra helped out as well. A young lady is expecting a baby in January, and so she was there quite a lot helping out and always supplied the campaign office with Timbits and donuts, so she was greatly appreciated as well. Other people that helped out: Robert and Derik helped with signs, and Shirley and Glen helped door knock and helped do phoning to fill out the roster for scrutineers and those types of things.

There's been other people that helped out on the campaign that are too numerous to thank at this time. I'd like to thank my wife, Cindy, and our children. As we all know, with the spouses back home, that in this political life that it's a very trying time — this trying life, actually lifestyle that we as members have — and we rely on our spouses a lot to look after the home fires. And you know, I've been a member for eight years; my children really have grown up and become adults while I was a member. And certainly many times Cindy was the, as she says, the single parent of the family. While I was either in Regina or out doing my MLA duties, Cindy was at home looking after the kids. And I appreciate their support and continued support, and it's greatly appreciated.

I'd like to also recognize the NDP candidate in the last election in the Biggar constituency. He worked very hard, I have to say, door knocked and worked very hard. He had a key number of workers in his campaign office.

But there's just one story I want to tell about the NDP candidate

in the last election. We had two debates — one in Vanscoy and one in Biggar. And the first debate in Vanscoy was possibly you might say a more structured event. There was prearranged questions so we knew what the questions were and the answers. They did open it up to the audience somewhat, but it was quite a nice affair.

The debate in Biggar was somewhat different. First of all there was only the NDP candidate and myself that even showed up for the debate in Biggar. In Vanscoy, the Liberal candidate from Saskatoon Northwest came to represent the Liberals. We never did see the Liberal candidate in Biggar constituency whatsoever. Also in Vanscoy, the Green Party candidate showed up for the debate, but he did not show up in Biggar.

Now the NDP candidate in Biggar constituency — during the debate in Biggar — began his 5-minute opening comments by telling a story about his idea of how Saskatchewan is. How society in Saskatchewan works. And he went on to say that government is like the parent, and the voters and the citizens of the constituencies of the province are like the children. And the parent is there to guide the children through regulation, labour laws, and so on and so forth. And it was shocking to hear someone describe the voters of Biggar constituency and the voters of Saskatchewan as children.

I can't imagine where he got that type of information unless, unless this is something the NDP party, you know, tells their candidates for the election: that's how you go out and get votes, by telling all the voters that they're children. So vote for the NDP. But who knows, I guess we'll have to find out if that's the kind of courses that the NDP gave to their candidates. But needless to say, the NDP candidate didn't do very well. Anyway it was certainly an interesting debate when my opponents came out with that type of an opening remark.

My constituency, or the Biggar constituency, is made up of many communities: of course the town of Biggar; includes Vanscoy and Delisle and Asquith, Perdue; also the communities of Landis and Wilkie and smaller places like Springwater; and it goes up to Denholm and includes Radisson and Langham and of course Borden, Saskatchewan.

And as we all know that there's been a tragedy in Borden where there's two young basketball players were killed in an accident. And there's still four young men in the hospital, and the mother of one of the deceased basketball players is also injured in the accident. So certainly on behalf of myself and my family and my staff, and I'm sure that all the residents of . . . all the members of the House extend their deepest sympathy and would like you to know that you are — along with the families of Greg, Sandon, Carter, Tarrell, Dustin, and Jordan — are in our thoughts and in our prayers. It's certainly a . . . It's never a good time to have an accident like that, but certainly just before Christmas is . . . It makes it even worse.

I'd like to talk a bit, even though this whole sheaf, wheat sheaf issue wasn't part of the Throne Speech, it wasn't part of the election, but I just feel that it's . . . Being a member from rural Saskatchewan, I certainly have no problems with the idea of changing the logo.

I'd just like to quote Michael Jackson, Dr. Michael Jackson

who is a research fellow at the Canadian Plains Research Centre, University of Regina, and was the chief of protocol for Saskatchewan from 1980 to 1995, and I won't read the whole article in the *Leader-Post* as of December 19 but I just wanted just to quote a few items from here and how he describes this really silly . . . I guess I can only say it's a silly situation around changing those types of letterheads and those types of things. And he says it was:

Conceived in the era of typewriters, it was never . . . [adopted] by successive governments to the requirements of new technology.

He goes on to say it was:

. . . trendy in the . . . [mid-1990s], produces poorly in photocopies or faxes and has a washed-out look on computer screens or Web sites. In print, the wheat sheaf logo appears in unattractive black or faded tan or bilious yellow. Saskatchewan's government letterhead, business cards and signs are among the least appealing in the country.

And he goes on to say:

In addition to its technical deficiencies, the visual identity program has been symbolically problematic. True, it evokes the province's agricultural roots. But agriculture now accounts for only about eight per cent of the Saskatchewan's GDP. The rural economy — fortunately — has diversified into livestock, oilseeds, pulse crops and legumes. Wheat is no longer king — even in the agriculture community there is concern about projecting a monoculture image. Furthermore, the 1977 logo does not make sense to the rest of the world, a drawback to a province so dependant on trade. In his *Leader-Post* column of December 15, Ron Petrie compared the logo to broccoli. Perplexed international visitors have asked me if it represented an umbrella or a mushroom cloud.

And I can only agree with all of these comments. It goes on to say, referring to other provinces who have made change to their logos:

With a bit of care, Saskatchewan could be in their league.

[15:15]

Referring to British Columbia and Ontario and Manitoba and Quebec. To go on:

We have the built-in advantage of an attractive provincial flower, the western red lily, and what heraldry experts call one of the best shields of arms in the country — the lion and (real) wheat sheaves. These could form the basis of a successful logo. After 30 years, a confident, prosperous province can surely afford to spend some money on an image which reflects its character.

The wheat sheaf logo has had its day — in fact, far too many of them. It's time to move on.

Well as a member from rural Saskatchewan, I can only agree

that it's time to move on. The constituents of Biggar, who's basically generally an agricultural community, is proud of our historical past. We're proud of agriculture and proud of our fathers and grandfathers who developed the province and broke the land. And yes, back in the '20s and '30s and '40s, yes they stooped sheaves. That's right. I've heard the stories and if you want to come out Borden thresherman's day every fall, you can come out there and watch the seniors hook up the horses and drive around with their binders and making sheaves and running threshing machines and forking the sheaves into the threshing machine. That's great. But it's historical.

Compare that to today's modern, high-tech agriculture economy. My goodness, we're using GPS [Global Positioning System] and those types of things with a very modern, everyday equipment and so it doesn't make a lot of sense to cling to something from the past. I made the comment when I heard about this logo situation that even in 1977 the wheat sheaf was out of date. I mean, no one had been producing wheat sheaves for probably 20 years. So it's certainly out of date and it's time to move on.

It's time also to portray our province as it is, as it is becoming, as it will be in the future — very progressive. As I said, only 8 per cent of the economy is agriculture-based any more. And it's very important and our government will certainly support agriculture in the future. But we have so many other natural resources that we are . . . that is very important to our economy and manufacturing and tourism. And it goes on and on. And I think logos need to reflect what Saskatchewan is today and will be in the future and present that to the country and to the world.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to make a few comments on the Throne Speech and the content in it. It's interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the NDP have been throwing at us all sorts of comments about the budgetary process. And our government has introduced The Growth and Financial Security Act, and well it's very straightforward. It imposes the requirement to balance the General Revenue Fund each fiscal year, provide for certain . . . it winds up the Fiscal Stabilization Fund. It requires annual surpluses in the GRF [General Revenue Fund] to be applied as follows: 50 per cent to the GFSF [Growth and Financial Security Fund] and 50 per cent to the Debt Retirement Fund. And it also allows for significant unexpected revenues to be transferred to the GFSF rather than split between the GFSF and the DRF [Debt Retirement Fund].

So it's interesting. Before the election the member from Saskatoon Nutana, when she was the provincial Finance minister, would not give a four-year financial report. She only gave one year. Now we wondered why at the time. In question period we asked many times and in the media we asked why she wouldn't give a four-year financial report. And of course, after the election we find out why. We find out why.

Because under the NDP economic plan and budgetary process they could only substantiate one year of a balanced budget. Year two, year three, year four were going to be deficit budgets. The NDP government, if elected, were going to run up an additional over \$4 billion in debt on their plan. So naturally they did not give out four-year financial reports because they didn't want the people of Saskatchewan to know exactly the financial situation of the province.

And it only reminds me of immediately after the 2003 election when the NDP government raised taxes. And the response — asked well why didn't you talk about this during the election campaign? — well the then minister said, well you don't want to talk about raising taxes during an election campaign. Well gee, that would be too upfront, too honest now wouldn't it?

So certainly the Saskatchewan Party government certainly is on a firm footing of keeping commitments and telling people — everybody, everybody — about the financial situation. We've come very clear about the financial situation and our cabinet and our government will be taking steps in the future to address the potential debt that the NDP left behind.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as you know, Mr. Speaker, there's a number of other things that the Saskatchewan Party has promised. It's interesting to note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in the election campaign our platform was called "Securing the Future." And when we brought down our Speech from the Throne, the only thing the opposition could talk about was that oh, you have nothing new to present. Oh we've heard it all before. Well excuse me, we fought an election. Our first Throne Speech was about our election platform promises, and we are going to keep our promises.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Weekes:** — It should come as no surprise that our first Throne Speech would be talking about the campaign that we just won. And it's interesting to note, we've talked on this side . . . Some people have brought up, asked us the question, well now that you're government, what are you going to do? And it always astounded me when we got that question. And I guess people are so cynical by the NDP's 16 years in power that they . . . whenever the NDP said something, well you just never believed it. And so they thought that's what we were going to do. But no, what we are going to do as government is exactly what we said in the election campaign and we expect to be held to that standard.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said before "Securing the Future" is the basis for our Throne Speech. And you'll see legislation which we have already introduced is based on our campaign promises. And our budget coming down next spring will be based on our campaign promises, and the Throne Speech was laid out.

One area that I would like to touch on is the opposition would like to make Enterprise Saskatchewan something, you know, sinister. Well again, it's a campaign promise and it's a Bill that's been introduced and it's going to give the opposition all winter to talk to the stakeholders and talk about Enterprise Saskatchewan. It's all laid out in Bill No. 2. And they say we've broken promises and we have a hidden agenda. Well, I don't know. All that they have to do is read "Securing the Future" which they seem to have forgot was published in the election campaign.

But I just want to point out the stakeholders, or as in the Bill, the membership of Enterprise Saskatchewan are members selected from persons nominated by a prescribed organization or organizations representing business in Saskatchewan, representing labour in Saskatchewan, representing Aboriginal

persons in Saskatchewan, representing rural municipalities in Saskatchewan, representing urban municipalities in Saskatchewan, representing post-secondary educational institutions in Saskatchewan, representing co-operatives in Saskatchewan, representing the resource industry in Saskatchewan, representing agriculture producers in Saskatchewan. I have no idea where the opposition come from with their concerns, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think that they have forgotten something. They forgot that just a few weeks ago they lost the election and they haven't gotten used to it yet. That's their problem. They just haven't got used to the fact they've lost power and as we know, as they know their campaign of fear didn't work. And they haven't changed the way they operate. They still want to throw out the fear factor and try to scare people about what the Saskatchewan Party government's going to do. Well hope beat fear and it will every time.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Weekes:** — And, Mr. Speaker, again and again we will be introducing Bills and a budget based on our campaign promises and the future of Saskatchewan looks good. As we know that right now the population of Saskatchewan is over 1 million and people would say, oh that was going to happen anyway. It was just happening. Well it wasn't just going to happen under the NDP because we talked to businesses and individuals that were not going to make any plans to come to Saskatchewan if the NDP party won the last election. It's as simple as that. With the Saskatchewan Party in government, people made the decision to come to Saskatchewan and we see this in the numbers that's out today.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, certainly I will not be supporting the ridiculous amendment put forward by the opposition, and I will be supporting the Throne Speech. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

**Mr. McCall:** — Yes and now for something completely different, Mr. Deputy Speaker. First of all I'd like to say congratulations to yourself, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's good to see you up there. I know you're not wearing the tricorne hat but maybe you'll get the chance later on.

I'd also like to congratulate the Speaker of the House and point out that obviously he's one of the deans of the legislature, been here since 1986. I think he was a good choice for Speaker. I'm sure you'll have a good time helping him out there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I think he'll be fair. I think he's got respect for both the give and take, the cut and thrust of debate, but also the respect to run a fair House. So I think he was a wise choice on behalf of the Chamber as a whole, but particularly for your side. As well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Speaker and I share an interest in the affairs of Westhill Baptist church, particularly the youth group there and what goes. And so I look forward to seeing how the Speaker runs this place, which is sometimes a bit more unruly than a youth group, I'm sure.

And yourself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've seen you in the House. I've played hockey with you, against you a little bit. I know you're a tough player, lots of hustle. But you know I expect you'll bring those same qualities to the Chamber and I congratulate you on it. So it's always . . . I hope this won't cut into your speech making from the floor of the Chamber or take the edges off your elbows at all, but I congratulate you on the election to Deputy Speaker.

I'd like to congratulate the MLAs that have been elected to this place. I'd first of all like to say that obviously there are some folks that were not returned and there were folks that I had the honour of serving with. And to be frank, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll miss some of those people. And I guess what we'll do is we'll keep in touch and keep that connection and that friendship going, though not in this Chamber. But sincerely, congratulations to the members who have been elected.

Given that John G. Diefenbaker quotes will likely now be all the rage in this Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker — I know yourself, a big fan of John Diefenbaker — I'm reminded of what John Diefenbaker once had to say to a group of newly elected parliamentarians. He said the following, and I quote; to the young MPs who have just come I would say that:

. . . for the first six months after you . . . [are here], you will wonder how you got here. [Then] After that you will wonder how the rest of the members . . . got here.

Seriously though, congratulations and good luck to discharging your duties to all the new MLAs as members of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly.

I want to say thank you to my family, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Not just for the campaign, but for all the way down the line. To my wife and my love Kelly, to my mom and dad, my brother Ian and his family, sister Carla and her family — even the Tory members in that family. Carolyn, Madeline, Sean, cousin Lloyd — these are all people who play a vital role in my ability to work as the MLA for the people of Regina Elphinstone, in helping me to stay grounded and focused on what's important in life. So I thank them very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I want to thank my campaign team from the Regina Elphinstone-Centre NDP. First and foremost, my long-time friend and co-worker Colleen. I work with her in the constituency office. She does tremendous work on behalf of the people of Regina Elphinstone-Centre, and it's always interesting, and I'm sure many members in this House have had the occasion to run into people out on the doorstep that you've been working with for case work. And it was almost without fail, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if I ran into somebody that had had dealings with my office and Colleen, being very much a part of those dealings, they were very grateful for the work that had been done and very impressed with the professionalism and the care and concern that Colleen brought to the job. So I'm very fortunate to be able to work with this individual, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'm very happy to be able to continue in this work for the people of Regina Elphinstone. I was very lucky to work with her in the campaign as well.

[15:30]

I want to thank my campaign Chair, Tamara, my campaign manager, Leanne, and our business agent, Elaine Torrie, and the rest of the campaign team, and the Elphinstone NDP and friends that helped out in the campaign. They gave so much help and support and wise counsel throughout the campaign and beyond. I'd note, with interest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that their efforts this time garnered even more votes for the NDP this time, in this election, than in the last election; that we had more signs up, more cash raised as well. Above all, I'm grateful for the support of 62.5 per cent of the voters in Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Regina Elphinstone-Centre is a wonderful place, Mr. Deputy Speaker — a lot of great diverse neighbourhoods. We've got the Regent Park, three polls up in there; the old warehouse district and a very exciting place which my colleague from Rosemont knows a lot about, and the vital business district that they have there, the vital nightlife. Perhaps yourself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know you get out from time to time. Maybe yourself, you've been out to see the nightlife there on Dewdney, the great downtown that we have in terms of the thriving things going on there, and increasingly more people living downtown. It's a great place.

I think of things like the Derrick building that had sat derelict. It had become known as the derelict building. That has been renovated and has become the Renaissance Retirement village. And the people that are there . . . And our government worked in the capacity then to help make that possible.

I think of the new businesses that are coming downtown. I think of the fact that we've got soon-to-be-opened, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the largest Tim Hortons in Canada — in all the world for that matter. So I mean, if you want to get your extra large double-double you'll know where to get it down on Broad Street there, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think about the STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] depot that's going up on the corner of Sask Drive and Broad and the great service hub that that will be for people coming from around the province to come to Regina and the great adornment that that will bring to that great part of Regina Elphinstone-Centre in the core neighbourhood. The core neighbourhood itself, the old Germantown in the inner city Regina, a very diverse place, a lot of folks from Slavic backgrounds, Ukrainian backgrounds in particular, a lot of folks from German backgrounds, but also a lot of Vietnamese and Burmese and Chinese and the great . . . You know, the mosaic writ small into one neighbourhood, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's a fascinating place to visit.

I think also of the transition area and Cathedral and just the, you know . . . Cathedral, if ever there was a vibrant community, Mr. Speaker, a community that embodied the very word vibrant in terms of one of the largest community arts festivals in Canada that is held successfully every year, the great number of artists and creative people that live in that neighbourhood and that give it a real verve and a real vibrant pulse, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I feel very much privileged to represent part of that neighbourhood.

And then I come to my home neighbourhood which is north central Regina. North central's the largest neighbourhood in

Regina Elphinstone-Centre. It's where I was born and raised. It's where my grandma and my dad came in off the farm in the '50s. So McCalls have been around north central one way or the other for many years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we've seen the neighbourhood go through a lot of different changes.

But one thing that never changes in north central, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the spirit of the people. It's a diverse place — a lot of people from First Nations and Métis backgrounds, from Vietnamese, Chinese, again a lot of different Slavic folks, and people from right around the world. But I think . . .

There's a great quote from a woman in Thelma Wallace who was very active in the community association back in the '70s. The community association celebrated their 30th anniversary just recently, and Thelma Wallace said the following, Mr. Deputy Speaker. "Some people like to knit," she says. "Other people like to bowl. Me, I've always loved a good fight."

And Thelma Wallace was part of a community association that back in the '70s it was active on a number of fronts in terms of housing, in terms of education, in terms of improving the opportunities for young people. And you see the fruit of that generation and those kind of activists to this day in the 30th anniversaries of groups like the Regina Early Learning Centre that got its start in Elphinstone, in north central on the corner of Elphinstone and 7th Avenue. You see it in groups like the Rainbow Youth Centre that is thriving to this day. And I'm heading there later on with the member from Rosemont, perhaps other members from this Chamber to help out with their Christmas dinner.

You see it in groups like the Ehrlo Community Services and the kind of action that they've brought to the neighbourhood. And this past Sunday, we celebrated the 15th anniversary of the Outdoor Hockey League, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We didn't have a chance to get you out there suited up, but maybe sometime for the outdoor hockey league we'll get you . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I'll just remind all members that they're not to bring the Chair into the debate.

**Mr. McCall:** — My apologies, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Thanks for not asking me to resign or withdraw or anything like that. But anyway I'll behave. Honest. Anyway I can't hear you over the wildly, gyrating members of the Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I'll take your meaning.

Anyway, north central is a vibrant place. It's gone through, it's gone through a number of challenges in terms of the . . . In the 1980s, the housing stock . . . There were a lot of people that moved in after World War II that started to leave their houses. A lot of places were bought up by landlords that were less than scrupulous, Mr. Speaker.

And in the '80s when a place like the Cathedral was getting a large infusion of social housing, had gotten a large infusion of social housing earlier in the '80s, there was nothing being done in north central through the '80s. And then in the '90s, of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we didn't have any money.

And one of the things that I'm very proud of that's happened over the past few years in north central is that, in terms of the

hundreds of millions of dollars that we brought to bear in terms of social housing in this province — the first kind of investment being made in that regard in decades, Mr. Deputy Speaker — there's been a great number of new houses built in north central where people get good, decent, affordable housing. And that's . . . When you think about what makes for a good neighbourhood, Mr. Deputy Speaker, good housing is essential to that. So that's been very helpful.

I think of things like the Housing Standards Enforcement Team that I talked about earlier today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of going through and — chapter and verse, root and branch — taking out the substandard quality housing and working to provide work orders on places to make sure that the standard is brought up or to demolish some places and make sure that the people are moved into better standard housing.

You know, there's one woman I think of that talked about moving from a place like that into one of these new units of social housing. And she said, you know, I feel like I live in my own little castle now. And the kind of change in quality of life that that brought to that woman and to her young family, I think those are the things that we come to this Chamber to do, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think about the other community-based organizations throughout, throughout north central and throughout the inner city. I think about groups like the Regina Work Prep. Centre, about the Stepping Stones daycare, about the Early Learning Centre as I've mentioned, Circle Project, Aboriginal Family Services. And I think about the North Central Family Centre, and I know the members in this House, some of them are very familiar with the work that goes on there.

And I think there's a lot of great things that happen in this neighbourhood, a lot of people working hours that you could never be properly recompensed for, but they do it because they believe in making a difference in the neighbourhood. And a lot of these people are from north central itself and people from the inner city itself, and they're trying to take some control of their own destiny and make a better life for themselves and their families. And I think that's having an impact, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think about the great faith-based organizations throughout north central — groups like the Indian Métis Christian Fellowship centre which is an outreach of the Reformed Church of Canada; the Healing Hearts Ministry and Pastor Walter Selke and the folks there; the Salvation Army and the great work that they do throughout the inner city, especially at Waterston house, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think about Regina Rescue Mission and Souls Harbour and the fact that they've merged and come together. And you've got the Porters working with the Carrolls and some very dedicated people that have done a lot of great work coming together to do even better work, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I think about the affordable housing units that they're bringing online over on Angus Street just before the tracks.

You know, there are a lot of great things happening there, and I have the privilege of working with a lot of these dedicated people, and it's a privilege that I take very seriously, and I'm very thankful for, Mr. Deputy Speaker.



Of course Regina Elphinstone-Centre, it's home to Taylor Field, Mosaic Stadium. Of course we're very happy to see the Grey Cup come to the field and very proud that that's the home of the Riders. Also the lion's share — or should I say the Roughriders' share — of the green mile is located in Regina Elphinstone-Centre. You've also got the Regina Exhibition Park located in north central Regina. And you know, they're not just the largest employer in the neighbourhood; they're also a good corporate citizen and work closely with community schools in the neighbourhood as a good partner and as a good source of support and volunteers.

So I represent a riding that I feel very fortunate to represent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm very thankful for the trust that the people have placed in me, and I hope to continue to represent them in opposition to the best of my abilities just as I have over the previous six years.

It's going to be interesting in the days to come, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because this progress that has been built up in the inner city for renewal and for revitalization, of course I and my neighbours and the people that sent me to this Chamber, they want to see that continued. They want to see the good work of the safer communities and neighbourhood units in helping people take back their neighbourhood from gangs and drug houses. They want to see that work continued.

They want to see the revitalization that is embodied in a place like Scott Collegiate where we've got over the past four or five years, you know, functioning athletic teams and arts and recreation programs and graduating classes the size of which we've not seen since the early '80s, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And that's hugely hopeful because of course Elphinstone-Centre in north central in particular is the youngest neighbourhood in Regina and possibly the youngest neighbourhood in all of Saskatchewan. And when you think about the average age being 17 in north central and 35 in the rest of Regina, it's a very young place. And you see that on the street, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And you see the need for people having good schooling and the good work there, but you also see the need and you realize the need for things like better early childhood development. And I think of the tremendous work that's been done over the past years in a program like KidsFirst, and giving families that are at risk and youth that are risk a better shot at a better life. And if you can have a good pregnancy and a good birth, the chances of having a better outcome as you come into your early teens and as an adult — they're so much more improved, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. McCall:** — So I'm very proud of the work that's been done under the heading of KidsFirst, and I very much want to see that work continue. And I also want to see the partnerships that have been struck with the Circle Projects and the Rainbow Youth and the Aboriginal family services, I want to see those partnerships continue, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I want to see Scott Collegiate which has again a vital role to play in the revitalization and renewal in inner-city Regina. In

the summer, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it came out as number two on the provincial capital list out of the Department of Learning, now the Department of Education — number two.

And so when you think about what's going to happen in this budget, I'm going to be watching to see that the progress we're making at Scott Collegiate and the renewal that's embodied in all the planning work that's done for a new high school and how that figures into a shared facility overall in terms of working with partners in the city and the health region and others, I want to see that work continued, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I want to see the work continued at the Exhibition Park where this government had put up, when we were in government, we put up a tremendous amount of money to work for the renewal out there, not just with the multiplex which is a great success, but with the overall renewal of the park as a whole. And I want to see that support continue, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I want to see the work of the skills trade centre which takes the great Bricks and Mortar program out of Martin Collegiate and continue to build on that. I want to see the people that have left primary education or secondary education that are coming back to those critical education opportunities, I want to see them succeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[15:45]

And the great start that we've got with the skills trade centre, I want to see them patch up to Mount Royal and the great work that's being done in Saskatoon at Mount Royal Collegiate and the skills trade centre they've got up and running there. I want to see that work expand, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

From a local perspective, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are a number of things that I'll be watching in the days ahead to see where they wind up on the priority list for the government of the day and how the priorities of the government of the day mesh with the priorities of the people that sent me to the legislature.

In past, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had the privilege of serving as the minister for Corrections and Public Safety and the minister for Advanced Education and Employment. I had the great privilege of conducting a review of accessibility and affordability issues for post-secondary education. And again, I had opportunity in the campaign to participate in a debate with the now member for Saskatoon Greystone that had a lot of complimentary things to say about the report and the findings therein.

And I'll be watching to see how this government picks up on the things that were in that report, such as a centre for northern learning to expand the learning opportunities that are available out of the North, both in a centred way, perhaps building on Northlands College and NORPAC [Northern Professional Access College] and NORTEP [northern teacher education program] out of La Ronge, but also the satellite learning opportunities that are available there, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I'll be watching to see what kind of plan comes out of this government in terms of Aboriginal secondary education completion, which is a critical component in terms of, if

Aboriginal people are going to go on to post-secondary education it makes sense that one of the greatest predictors of that is completion of secondary education. We don't do a good enough job on that front, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I'm going to be watching very closely to see if they pick up on the things like expanding NORTEP and SUNTEP [Saskatchewan urban native teacher education program] and making sure or maybe moving to a new program like Sask TEP [teacher education program] which increases the supply of Aboriginal First Nations and Métis secondary teachers. Because again, in terms of having an education system that is welcoming and brings people along, it's very important to have those critical role models at the front of the classrooms. So I'll be looking to see what's done in that regard, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I'll be looking to see what they do with regards to credit transfer in terms of making sure that if I'm going to be doing university classes out in Yorkton or in Swift Current at Cypress Hills College or at many locations throughout the province in our excellent regional college system, I'll be looking to see that credit transfer so when these students look to come out of Parklands College in Yorkton and move into the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], that they don't have half of their classes that they were counting on being stripped away from them. And we need these better articulation agreements between the different parts of the post-secondary sector, and I'll be watching very closely to see how that progresses.

I'll be watching very closely to see how tuition is impacted in the coming budget because of course we caught a lot of grief from the members opposite and, most importantly, from students, about the way that tuition had increased over the past years. Despite the fact of Saskatchewan leading post-secondary education funding on a number of indicators, tuition had gone up. And the only time that we got some containment on tuition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was when we froze tuition and we bought that reprieve in terms of the unrelenting march of tuition upwards.

So the new government's put all their eggs in the basket of a rebate, pointing in part to the example of Manitoba. Manitoba of course has a rebate system but they also have some of the lowest tuition on the front end in all of Canada. And I guess I'll be very interested to see how monitoring tuition actually translates into real accessibility for students. I'll be interested to see how the bursaries come out of this new scholarship fund that they're planning, which I think builds on the great example of the Centennial Merit Scholarship and the success that's been had there.

I'll be interested to see what happens in terms of training space expansion. In the campaign we put forward a number of 10,000 training spaces which we think would have eliminated the need or the backlog in terms of people waiting to get advanced basic education. You know, people that didn't, that the secondary system didn't work for, that are coming back because they realize they need the skills and the training to take advantage of the great opportunities available in this hot economy and in this great labour force situation that confronts us, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And will we have those training spaces in the next budget when

we need them? We'll see. Will they build on the record expansion of training space opportunities that has occurred in this province over the past two years? We'll see. Will they build on the partnership that we struck with the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology and help them become a centre of Aboriginal training excellence in this coming budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We'll see.

You know, the time is now to take advantage of this great, this great advantage that we have in Saskatchewan, which is that young Aboriginal population, that young First Nations and Métis population, that wants the training opportunities, that wants to get the skills training to get into that economy, to get the good jobs, and to make a better living for themselves and positively impact their families and the community. And we'll see what happens with the partnerships that we had built in trust and respect with organizations like the SIIT [Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies].

I'll also be looking, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of what's done around child care, because of course in this Throne Speech it's essentially a hold-the-line position, where we promised an expansion of child care spaces.

And if you think about people that are going to get back into the workforce, oftentimes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they're coming with children. They're coming as single parents, and they have every right to expect that they should be able to have their kids well taken care of, and that that early childhood development . . . it's not a choice between either, you know, good care for your child or you can't go to work. And we'll see what happens in terms of child care spaces in this budget to come, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Because again the expansions have been made over the past number of years. There was a lot done, but there's more that critically needs to be done.

I guess the last thing I'll say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, last sort of theme I'll address is that I'm very happy to have the, to be assigned the duty of responsibility for First Nations and Métis Relations issues in the caucus. And certainly I've had a great number of teachers on these kind of issues over the years. When I first arrived in the House, I sat behind Keith Goulet, the then member for Cumberland House, you know, himself a great educator, you know, one-time principal of Gabriel Dumont Institute. And he was . . . I learned an awful lot from him, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I've also learned an awful lot from the current member for Athabasca and from the current member from Cumberland, herself who was the first First Nations minister in a government in Saskatchewan in the history of the province.

You know, I've had the privilege to sit alongside history makers, and people that have really blazed that path forward for First Nations and Métis people, and that have that respect that these two individuals have in spades, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I've learned a lot from them and I hope to continue to learn a lot from them.

I learned a lot from our leader, the member from Riversdale, who when he was premier set out for himself the goal of going to every First Nation in the province. And he didn't quite achieve it, Mr. Speaker. But I'll bet you this, that he's been on

more First Nations than any three or four premiers in this province's history put together.

I think of going out to Star Blanket First Nation with him in Treaty 4 territory, as we're in Treaty 4 territory here today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where the Chief Starblanket — it was during the centennial year — and he said, you know, oh this is our centennial celebration, because this is the first time we've had the premier show up to our First Nation. And Star Blanket's not that far out of Regina. It's in those File Hills First Nations right by Balcarres. And you think about that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's, you know, centennial of the province, and they were just happy to have the premier. And I guess that's something I'll be looking for in the days to come in terms of that work that's to be done, in terms of trying to bring people together in this province and bring First Nations and Métis people fully into their rightful place in the economy and society.

I think we got a good start to it. We've got the mace runner sitting right here for all to see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and representing the critical nature of the treaties and the importance of the treaties to this province, and the fact that the mace rests on the beaver pillow and rests on the mace runner, and that it represents the sun shining and the grass growing and the river flowing, and that's for how long those treaties were signed, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I congratulate the members opposite in terms of the feast that was held in this building last night. I think that's a positive move. I think the more times that we can get together as people in this province where there have been differences in the past, I think that's positive. So I congratulate them on the gesture. But I guess we'll see down the road, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how the gesture is followed up in terms of action.

And I think in terms of the action that we have taken in terms of adult basic education and taking training on to First Nations; you know, stepping over that old federal jurisdiction. I think of the work that had been done in terms of taking roads to reserves where that pavement used to run up to the edge and then it was federal responsibility. Well we got sick and tired of waiting for the feds, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There was a need and we wanted to move on these fronts.

And there's more work to be done. And we'll see how this government lives up to the need that is out there, to the tremendous opportunity that is out there in terms of First Nations and Métis people in this province. I guess I'll be interested to see how duty to consult works out in terms of their practice, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'll be very interested to see that.

And I'll be interested to see how things like the First Nations University of Canada and how that's . . . Are we going to be backing up First Nations in terms of dealings with the federal government or are they going to be apologists for the federal government to First Nations? Because of course we know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the federal government of the day tore up the Kelowna accord, tore up the Kelowna accord. So we'll see what comes of this, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Anyway I think I've exhausted my time, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Your interest seems to be flagging in my remarks. But I thank you for the opportunity to be able to participate in this Throne

Speech debate, to come and say a few words on behalf of myself and to say thank you to the people of Regina Elphinstone-Centre who have sent me here to represent them in this Assembly.

I'll be voting for the amendment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and against the Throne Speech — just to clear that up in your mind — and will be watching very closely and acting very vigorously in the days to come as an opposition to hold the government of this day to account. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Melfort.

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's with great pleasure that I stand . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — Thank you. It's with great pleasure that I stand and engage in the Throne Speech of the first session of the twenty-sixth legislature of the province of Saskatchewan. And what a pleasure it is to be on the government side of the House in order to be actually part of the team of men and women who proposed this Throne Speech and who put together such concrete examples of why the people in this province have placed their trust in a new government.

But before I talk about the Throne Speech in specific, I would like to offer some congratulations. First of all to Mr. Speaker on his assumption of the Chair, on behalf of the legislators of the province of Saskatchewan. The Speaker is certainly a person who over the years has earned the respect of all of the members of this Assembly in the way he's conducted himself, both in this Assembly and outside as a member of the legislature. He has always conducted himself with a great deal of professionalism and integrity and I know it's going to be a great deal of pleasure for all of us as members of the Assembly to work with Mr. Speaker.

On the next level I would like to congratulate yourself, Mr. Speaker. At the risk of engaging you in the debate, I want to extend my congratulations. It's been a tremendous pleasure to work with you in terms of your duties as an MLA, and I know that you'll conduct yourself with a great deal of professionalism and responsibility and impartiality in the role that you are now filling. And on behalf of all of the legislators I would like to thank you for your commitment to the office.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — I would like to also offer my personal congratulations to all of the new members of the opposition and of government on their election to the responsibilities as members of the legislature. I remember with a great deal of fondness 1995 when I assumed the honour of being the member of the legislature for Melfort-Tisdale at that time, and it actually took me some time to appreciate all of the dimensions of the responsibility that I had assumed on behalf of my constituents.

And all that I can say to new members on both sides of the House is, savour the opportunity and savour the responsibility,

and treat it with a great deal of gentleness and respect because the people that elected you are certainly counting on you to do your very best job of representing their interests.

And no matter how much we kind of take pride in how well we've done in our own elections, we all have to remember . . . is that no one got elected by unanimous consent. No one won 100 per cent of the votes of their constituents. And so there are always people out there who think differently than we do, and that's a good thing. But once we become members of the legislature for that constituency we're honour bound to represent not only those who supported us — even though that's much easier to do sometimes — we're there to also represent those who differed with our opinions. And that is a thing that I think does each of us well to remember at all times, that we are members of the entire constituency, and make sure that our constituency offices and our own time are available to all as we conduct our duties and discharge our responsibilities.

[16:00]

I also would like to thank those veteran members that have let their name stand on opposition and on government side of the House and who have been successful, and also to thank those who were not successful who let their name stand and sought re-election and were not successful. No matter how you cut it, when veteran members are coming back to the legislature or allowing their names to stand again, they have brought with them a lot of experience and a lot of commitment and many years of service to the people of this province, and as such need to be noticed and respected for the work and the contributions they have made.

Many of us over the years have had opportunities to attend parliamentary functions representing our province in other jurisdictions in Canada and nationally and internationally. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think everyone realizes that when we represent this province — members of the opposition and government — we have a responsibility to always do our best, and the veteran members of this Assembly have always represented the province of Saskatchewan very, very well. And it has always been a very prideful thing to participate with other members in representing this great province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to recognize and congratulate the Opposition House Leader on his responsibilities. I certainly have come from that office and recognize how important it is in order to have the affairs and conduct of this Assembly function in a smooth and a efficient way, that you absolutely need the co-operation and support of the opposition and government House leaders, and also working with you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the Speaker of the legislature to make sure that the business and the agenda of the legislature is properly conducted and that we can indeed do the jobs that we are called to do, recognizing that we have different agendas, that we have different responsibilities. But at the end of the day we're all part of the big, broad Government of Saskatchewan, if you like, that is discharged to represent all of the citizens of this province.

In taking my seat again in this legislature there are some special thank yous that absolutely have to go out. And I will try not to mention a lot of individual names at the risk of leaving some of them out. But the first name that I will mention, I have no

hesitancy of mentioning the name at all because this individual is so important to everything that I am and everything I have been over these many years, and that's to my good wife Carole.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefer:** — Carole has been always there. She's been always supportive. She was the best campaigner in this election, certainly was an active and assertive and pleasant door knocker, was pleased to attend functions in communities with myself through the campaign. And even as the campaign ended and we were pleased to receive the news that we did in terms of our own personal and the party support and the likelihood of new responsibilities, she has never wavered in terms of her undying support for this office that I hold and I cannot take enough time and often enough to thank her publicly for all of her great service.

I also want to recognize our family. We have three daughters, three sons-in-law, and six grandchildren. And I received a text message just a few minutes ago that a seventh grandchild may be imminent and so I'm a little bit nervous about standing here as potentially a new grandpa . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefer:** — I'm waiting for the PalmPilot to vibrate again and to say, way to go grandpa, or something of that nature. And so I must assure the House that I would much rather be doing something else, but if I get a message this House and this Assembly will be the first to know.

You know when you speak of your family, quite often over the course of events the girls have said, you know sometimes, Dad, I have to answer questions on your behalf, that I'm confronted in my workplace or my profession or with friends that are asking questions that perhaps you should be more responsible and maybe more appropriate to answer.

And so I think we have to recognize that very many times that in service to our constituents and service to the province, it puts our family members on the hot seat. And I think that it's important for all of us not, for me at this stage, to just recognize my own family but to recognize families of all members and to thank them for the awkward times, the awkward situations, and sometimes the situations where they're really put on the hot seat on behalf of their parent for the office that they hold. So thank you to all the families.

I would like to mention my Melfort constituency campaign team. You know each of us think that we are pretty important in our own right as the candidates that go into an election, but I have to tell you that most of us rely so very heavily and so very fundamentally on the team of men and women that come around us and support us through a campaign. There are any number of jobs and tasks that simply are too formidable for us to do on our own, be that from stuffing pamphlets to baking muffins, to putting up signs and to making phone calls, and to coming along on door-knocking occasions or whatever. And I would like to, without naming them specifically, to thank very much the campaign team that worked so very, very hard to get me re-elected.

I would like to thank the people of the constituency of Melfort who have placed their trust in me. You know, I grew up in Watson, Saskatchewan and a very good friend in Watson is a lady that's 90 years old by the name of Edna Rowlett. And Edna, after the election, used to . . .

I should back up a bit. Edna used to work with my father, who passed away in 1968, but they were long-time working colleagues in Watson, Saskatchewan. And after the election Edna sent me a little note and she said, it's really too bad that your dad isn't here today because he would be so very, very proud of you. But I want you to know that I'm proud of you. And that meant an awful lot to me in terms of the people and expressing some of the sentiments of the people of Saskatchewan, and certainly sentiments from my hometown that I have the great pleasure of representing as a part of the Melfort constituency.

You know, in assuming my responsibilities as the minister in charge of Finance, I was really daunted in the thoughts of the task that was before me. And one of the very great comforts that I had in the very first day of the role I was assuming was to hear that Mr. Doug Matthies, the deputy minister of Finance, had agreed to stay on and to serve the people of Saskatchewan most incredibly.

And I certainly want to not only thank Mr. Matthies for his service in the past in a number of roles with the public service, but his continued service to the people of Saskatchewan as the deputy minister of Finance and would like to, on behalf of government members, thank all of the people in the Department of Finance who do such a very, very good job of making sure that the people of Saskatchewan, and in particular their finances, are truly and properly safeguarded so that the decisions that we make are based on complete facts and good information. And so let me thank the Department of Finance in particular and the deputy minister, Doug Matthies, for his service to the people of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — You know, I was very pleased in the first week, I was pleased in the first week to go and spend a couple of hours over at the department. And I said I wanted to go over and say hello and thank you and get to see where people worked and express my gratitude for all the support, not only that they had given up to that stage but all of the support that I knew in anticipation of the Treasury Board discussions and the preparation of the budget would be required. And it was just a delightful opportunity to go and see these truly professional people, where they worked, and to say hello and thank you on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan. And I think it is probably a very factual statement to say that this was a similar experience across the piece for ministers as they recognize the professionalism and quality of the civil service that support us each and every day.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I couldn't help but thinking back 10 years ago when eight brave people, four former Conservatives and four former Liberals — myself being one of that latter stage — dreamt a dream about talking about the possibility of the formation of a brand new party in Saskatchewan to break with the kind of the stagnation and the stalemates of the past that

would provide a legitimate change for the future.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — Mr. Speaker, it is at some times time that you think back and 10 years into the future and dreamt that perhaps we would be given the opportunity to govern this province. And certainly when I look back now it seems in one hand is a long time ago, and on the other hand just like it was yesterday when this all happened. And I'm very, very proud. And I would be remiss, because seven of us are here, if I didn't mention our former colleague, Mr. Ben Heppner from Rosthern, who is now ably represented by the member from Martensville.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — With great deal of pride, when I went to the new office in the Department of Finance that is reserved for the minister, it was with a great deal of pride that I put the picture of the eight of us on the mantel of the fireplace and that's where it'll stay as long as I occupy that office.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — Mr. Speaker, I've listened with a great deal of interest over these last number of days on the Throne Speech debate. Members on both sides of the House outline their concerns and their aspirations for themselves and for their constituents and for the future. And a great many words have been said about the content of the Throne Speech. And I would like to touch briefly on it as well.

You know, when we campaigned and when we conducted ourselves as an opposition, we also tried very diligently to make sure that we were representing some hope for the future. We said that there were some fundamental things that are needed in this province in order to get it onto a sustainable path for the future. We needed to make sure that there were some balances in terms of the priorities, so that in essence we made sure everyone had the opportunity to move forward together.

We said there had to be growth and opportunity. There could not be progress unless there was that real belief and dream and drive to grow this province. You know I can remember many, many times over the past where I would say, you know, why can't Saskatchewan people build Saskatchewan? Because it doesn't take anybody to figure it out very much longer, that by and large Saskatchewan people have been very instrumental to build Alberta; have been instrumental to build British Columbia. Why in the world can't we turn our attention to building our own province for the future?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — And the answer, of course, is that there was never the framework and the support and the attitude that we could do it. That we could believe in ourselves and, if given an opportunity, Saskatchewan people indeed could secure futures. And I am pleased to see that that whole situation is beginning to turn around. And I'm pleased to see the very positive news that is beginning to emerge in terms of the future of Saskatchewan.

We also said that we can't solely focus in these balancing priorities just on growths and opportunity, because you have to have a reason for doing it. You have to have some legitimate reason for saying, why do you want to prosper? Why do you want to grow the economy? Why do you want to increase the opportunity for revenue in the province? There has to be reason for doing it, or what's the point?

And of course the point is, is we have to build a more secure and compassionate society and province for those people who maybe are unable, who are unable to participate to the level that they would've liked to. And they need to be given a hand up and not necessarily a handout. And they have to be given the opportunity to fully participate. And that doesn't matter what the colour of these people are, or the country of origin.

We have to be a welcoming place to make sure that our First Nations people truly feel at home and legitimately a part of the economy of this province. We have to make sure that people that have come here from other countries in the world, either as refugees or immigrants, feel part and comfortable with our economy, and indeed become even comfortable with our weather and our winters.

But most important, most important in this day of cynicism, and most important in this day of cynicism and particularly after the 16 years of NDP government, there has to be a government that's known for keeping its word.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — And so, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to live up to those fundamental principles that were outlined in the Throne Speech that was delivered in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I will refrain, so I can allow some colleagues to have some time on the floor, from going into the details of the programs that are outlined in the Throne Speech. But I would say this, is that when we balanced the priorities and we put these priorities into place for our first term of government, we recognized that there is more to be done than what is outlined in this Throne Speech. These are the priorities. These are the balancing of priorities between growth and opportunity and security and compassion. And we're going to do those things as we've outlined them because we're going to keep our word, Mr. Speaker.

And we look forward with a great deal of anticipation to the challenges of the four years ahead. And I look forward to working not only with my colleagues in this side of the House and the Government of Saskatchewan, but also to the opposition — but more importantly to work with the people of Saskatchewan so they will clearly see and identify that we have kept our word. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[16:15]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Martensville.

**Hon. Ms. Heppner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like

to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election to the Speaker's Chair. I know that your experience in this Assembly will serve you well and I wish all the best in your new role.

This has been quite a year for me. It has been just over a year since I was first nominated to be a Saskatchewan Party candidate in the constituency of Martensville. Since then, we have won two elections in Martensville and formed government.

Much to the consternation of the member for Cannington, I achieved a 77 per cent majority in the by-election in Martensville this past March. For a few months at least, it held the record in the highest result for the Saskatchewan Party. That result apparently helped to raise the determination of other members, and the member for Cannington now holds the record by achieving a 78 per cent result in the past election. And I would like to publicly congratulate him for his efforts.

However, Mr. Speaker, the people of Martensville were determined to have their voices heard. After years of averaging around 3,500 votes for the Saskatchewan Party, we saw over 6,000 votes in this past election.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Heppner:** — The people of my constituency wanted change. They voted for change and with their unwavering support we achieved that change.

And, Mr. Speaker, we all know that we would not be here without the help of others. Throughout this past year, with all the challenges that it presented, one thing was constant and that is my constituency assistant, Whitney Friesen. I want to thank Whitney for all his help, his support, his advice, and his friendship. I would also like to thank Whitney's wife, Rebecca, and his children, Simon, Matthew, and Julieanne for their patience and generosity in letting Whitney put in the hours necessary to ensure that I was able to stand here today.

I would also like to thank the many volunteers and supporters that stood by me this past year. Their time and effort cannot be overlooked. Every time our signs were knocked down, folks were out the next day putting them back up. Mr. Speaker, it must have been incredibly windy during November as my signs went down just about daily. I've had many phone calls, emails, and letters of support which have also been very encouraging.

And to our new Premier I would also like to say, thank you. The encouragement that he has offered me over this past year has strengthened me as we both adjusted to the loss of my father and his friend. And I would like to thank the Finance minister for his kind words. My dad is certainly looking down on his seven former colleagues with great pride.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Heppner:** — The Premier's faith in me and his appointment of me to his first cabinet is extremely humbling. And I'm determined to do my best in my new position as Minister of Environment.

And last but certainly not least I would like to thank my mom. Her encouragement and prayers mean more to me than I can say. Both mom and dad stood by me as I searched to find my place in this world, and I don't think any of us could have imagined that my journey would have ended here.

As I said, the overwhelming support of those around me have left me determined to do the very best job I can on behalf of those who sent me here. And it is my honour to stand here today in support of my government's first Throne Speech.

I firmly believe that the Saskatchewan Party, its MLAs, staff, cabinet, and leader have established a plan to ensure that our province's future is secured. We know that the majority of the people of this province believe that as well, as they chose positive change on November 7.

I'm honoured to be the Minister of Environment, and I'm excited about the environmental policies that we have laid out in our platform, policies that will be implemented over the next few months and years.

And while the NDP talked, emissions continued to rise. And, Mr. Speaker, the opposition continues to use the phrase that actions do speak louder than words. And that is true. And while the NDP were content to talk, we will take action.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Heppner:** — I listened with interest as the opposition leader ranted the other day about our plan for the environment. Mr. Speaker, the hypocrisy of his bluster is almost laughable. During his party's time in office the NDP oversaw a 62 per cent increase in greenhouse gas emissions in our province. That is double the national average, and that is their record. The NDP would like to claim that they are leaders. The only thing that they led on was leading the country in greenhouse gas emissions. That is their record. It is not a record to be proud of, and it is not a record that we can ignore.

The NDP have complained that there is no mention of our plan in the Throne Speech. Mr. Speaker, we all know that a Throne Speech is an overview of a government's agenda. The budget speech gives the details of that agenda. Keeping that in mind, perhaps the opposition leader would like to explain why in the NDP's last budget speech the word environment didn't appear once — not once, Mr. Speaker. That is also their record. The NDP cares so much about the environment that they couldn't be bothered to mention it in their budget speech.

In addition, the Leader of the Opposition when he was premier appointed himself the minister responsible for climate change. Well, Mr. Speaker, the member for Riversdale is responsible. He is responsible for overseeing the massive increase in greenhouse gas emissions in this province. He claimed watching *An Inconvenient Truth* was a significant moment in his personal understanding of climate change and its impact on Saskatchewan and used money from the Crowns to bring Al Gore to Regina.

And with all this being said, Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that I stand here on day seven, the second-last day that this Assembly sits, and still have not received a single question

about climate change. For an issue that is apparently of the utmost importance to the opposition, I find that pretty shocking. And I expect I might get a question tomorrow but I won't hold my breath on that.

I can assure the people of our province that the environment is a very important issue to this new government. Yes, the NDP left quite a mess and on this side of the House we are determined to engage both Saskatchewan residents and our Crown corporations in initiatives that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Through SaskPower we will be offering low-interest loans to help people install solar and geothermal power in their homes. Through SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] we will reduce the registration fees for hybrid cars. We will maintain programs that offer incentives for energy-efficient appliances.

And we will do something that the NDP didn't even think of doing. We will negotiate with the federal government to ensure that fines, penalties, and offset money will stay right here in Saskatchewan. This money will be used to fund technology that will further help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in this province and contribute to our economy. Through the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority we will ensure that Saskatchewan residents continue to have access to a secure, clean water supply.

Mr. Speaker, in an attempt to look like they were doing something prior to the election, the NDP needed some cash to throw around to buy votes. And how did they come up with that money? They privatized the NewGrade Upgrader. They started privatizing Crown assets to pay for promises. But we really shouldn't be surprised, as the member for Saskatoon Nutana has in the past openly contemplated privatizing SaskEnergy. The people of this province should be breathing a collective sigh of relief that the NDP are no longer in a position to sell off our Crowns to pay for their election promises.

And as a brief aside, Mr. Speaker, while we're talking about the member for Saskatoon Nutana, I was cheered yesterday to hear that an NDP member finally told the truth about election advertising money. The member admitted that over \$1 million taken from the Ministry of Health, money that could have been spent on training or hiring nurses, was spent on political advertising. I would only hope that now that the admission has been made, that the NDP will do the right thing and repay the Ministry of Health the money that its party used for its own political gain.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Heppner:** — Mr. Speaker, we will take action to secure the future of our province for the generations who will come after us. We will ensure that our environment is healthy and our resources are protected.

Mr. Speaker, we understand that the opposition is confused by the way that we're governing because we're actually doing what we said we would do. We understand that this is a foreign concept for the NDP. It was the NDP who said that an election is no time to talk about taxes and then hiked the PST [provincial sales tax] immediately after the election.

It was the NDP whose members openly speculated about privatizing SaskEnergy and then engaged in fearmongering, accusing others of wanting to do the same. It is the NDP who claims to value the Crowns and then privatized the NewGrade Upgrader so they'd have a slush fund prior to the election.

Mr. Speaker, we are the party who does what we say we will do. It is this government who promised fixed election dates. Promise kept. It is this government who promised that we would remove the PST from used cars. Promise kept. It is this government who promised to not risk \$100 million of taxpayers' money on a non-binding MOU. Promise kept. And it is this government who promised to end the NDP's style, interference in business. Promise kept.

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Yates:** — To raise a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — What's the member's point of order?

**Mr. Yates:** — Mr. Speaker, in just a few moments ago, the member from Martensville raised the issue that, and said, I quote, referring to the member from Nutana, finally an NDP member told the truth.

Mr. Speaker, the rules are very clear that you cannot do indirectly what you cannot do directly. And in making that statement, she's in fact calling members of the New Democratic Party liars, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask you to review the *Hansard* and rule on that issue.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Gantfoer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly think that if you will check the record, that you will clearly see that the member from Martensville was completely within her rights and using the very best of parliamentary language in terms of the context of her speech, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to your ruling.

**The Speaker:** — I thank the members for their comments and having missed the comment personally I will review the record before I make a ruling. I recognize the member from Martensville.

**Hon. Ms. Heppner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, it is this government who promised to end the NDP-style interference in business — promise kept. It is apparent, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP learned nothing on November 7. They are the same, tired, old NDP. The people of this province spoke loud and clear on November 7, and they voted for positive change.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Heppner:** — Mr. Speaker, the people of this province did choose. They chose accountable government and rejected NDP vote buying. They chose fairness and doing what is right and rejected the NDP's payoff of Murdoch Carriere. They chose the open door policy for business and rejected the NDP style of picking winners and losers. They chose a vision of hope and rejected the NDP campaign of fear.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the Assembly we are aware of the responsibility that we have as the people of Saskatchewan did choose this party to govern.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. Heppner:** — Mr. Speaker, we accept that responsibility and will work hard for all people of this province to ensure that their future is secure. We will work to ensure that this a prosperous and growing province. We will reverse the negativity of the past 16 years of NDP rule, the same party who didn't believe that it was statistically possible for our province to grow. We will work hard to make sure that our promises are kept to the people of this province, and I'm sure in time the NDP will get used to that style of governance — keeping your word and doing what is right.

Mr. Speaker, it is with pride that I stand here today to support my government's Throne Speech and to reject the opposition's amendment.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saltcoats.

**Hon. Mr. Bjornerud:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I only have a few minutes today, but I want to start by congratulating you on your position as the new Speaker of the legislature. I want to also commend the member for Arm River for taking on the job as Deputy Speaker, and I know you'll both do a very fine job, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, interesting even I was thinking about what I would say today and I was thinking about question period and the areas that the NDP are asking questions in question period, after having 16 years to fix all the problems, that all of a sudden out of the blue, these problems have become fresh again.

We saw an NDP government that closed hospitals in the early '90s. We saw an NDP government that chased nurses out of this province in the early '90s, chased doctors out of rural Saskatchewan in the early '90s, and have the audacity to get up in question period and ask what we're doing to fix it. And we've been here three weeks, Mr. Speaker. I can't believe this is happening, Mr. Speaker.

I'm also surprised, Mr. Speaker, with the problems that we have in agriculture right now that we've gone two weeks, and we haven't had one agriculture problem. I guess what that tells me, Mr. Speaker, is that rural Saskatchewan and agriculture still doesn't rate high on the NDP scale of what's going on in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the member from Martensville and the member from Melfort and others have talked about this Throne Speech and what this government will be doing, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP government in 16 years neglected to do.

Mr. Speaker, what we are going to do is treat Saskatchewan people as one — whether you come from urban Saskatchewan or you come from rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Finally rural Saskatchewan will have a voice in this legislature, and it's been a long time coming.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!



[16:30]

**Hon. Mr. Bjornerud:** — Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues have said before, this Throne Speech is about growth and opportunity. And I think the morning after the election on coffee row showed that the best. Everybody was beaming like when they come to coffee row. It was fresh air in Saskatchewan finally.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Bjornerud:** — After 16 years, 16 years, Mr. Speaker, of being held down with walls around Saskatchewan, neglecting rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, finally Saskatchewan has an opportunity to grow and treat Saskatchewan people fairly and bring our kids home from Alberta, instead of after Christmas and at Easter, watching our kids leave back for Alberta, BC [British Columbia] or Ontario. You know what'll happen after the Easter long weekend and they go to Banff skiing? They'll come back to their jobs in Saskatchewan and back and live in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Bjornerud:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes. Mr. Speaker, and talk about agriculture and the commitments we made during the election. Mr. Speaker, we committed to dealing with the education tax on farm land. And Mr. Speaker, we will keep that commitment.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order. I must inform the Assembly that under rule 29(5) it is my duty at this time to interrupt debate and put the question on the amendment.

It has been moved by the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, seconded by the member from Regina Douglas Park:

That the motion be amended by adding the following:

That this government no longer enjoys the confidence of the Assembly because it has a hidden agenda that picks winners and losers, because it puts the interests of the federal government ahead of Saskatchewan citizens, and because it is already making excuses to abandon election commitments.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — Those in favour of the motion say aye.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Aye.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — I believe the nos have it. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 16:32 until 16:45.]

**The Speaker:** — Please rise.

[Yeas — 19]

Calvert	Harper	Junor
Trew	Van Mulligen	Atkinson
Nilson	Yates	Higgins
Belanger	Furber	Iwanchuk
Forbes	Taylor	Beatty
Quennell	Broten	McCall
Wotherspoon		

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed to the amendment please rise.

[Nays — 36]

Stewart	Elhard	Bjornerud
Draude	Krawetz	Boyd
Eagles	McMorris	D'Autremont
Hickie	Cheveldayoff	Heppner
Tell	Gantefoer	Harpauer
Norris	Morgan	Hutchinson
Huyghebaert	Brkich	Hart
Kirsch	Schriemer	Allchurch
Weekes	Chisholm	Wilson
Duncan	Michelson	LeClerc
Ottobreit	Ross	Reiter
Bradshaw	Harrison	McMillan

**Clerk:** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the amendment, 19; those opposed, 36.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I declare the amendment lost. Debate will proceed on the main motion. I recognize the member from Kindersley.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise in the Assembly today to speak to the Speech to the Throne and let everyone know of course that I'm very supportive of what the government has put forward here. This is a speech that, this is a speech that speaks to the future of our province; a future that is very optimistic, a bright future, one that we are just beginning to see across this province, the optimism that we've never seen before. The kinds of things that are coming forward point to a very exciting future for this province.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, you will know that this is my first time to speak again, other than a little bit in question period since I was re-elected. Through the years of '91 to 2002, I was a member of the Legislature, but this is my first time to be back in the Legislature and I'm very happy . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Just to sum up my feelings, Mr. Speaker, in a few short words, I would look back to the past a little bit to

the immortal words of . . . that sum up my feelings about being back here, the immortal words of Mama Cass when she said, I'm back. I'm back baby; I'm back.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mama Cass kind of sums it up. But I'm also, Mr. Speaker, very humbled by the fact that the good folks of the Kindersley constituency again exhibited their confidence in electing me once again. I had the very distinct pleasure of being elected in '91 with a very small, very small majority at that time. I think it was around 500 votes; the next election in '95 with a bigger majority, the next election in '99 with a bigger majority, and this one with an even bigger majority.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — I don't know the figure right off the top of my head, but I think it's 66 per cent, something in that magnitude, which isn't too bad for a farm boy from Eston, Saskatchewan in a good constituency like Kindersley.

The people of that constituency, Mr. Speaker, you would know, are very, very good people. I think they represent the salt of the earth. I think they represent all what is good about Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — They believe in things like hard work. They believe in getting up in the morning and pulling on your boots, pulling on your jeans, and getting down to work.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — They believe in things like, they believe in things like being a part of their community. They believe in things like investing in Saskatchewan. They believe in investing in a business, investing in opportunity in Saskatchewan. They believe in things like church. They believe in things like schools. They believe in all of the services that are good for the province of Saskatchewan.

That's the kind of constituency that Kindersley is. They are the people that believe in creating opportunity. And that's why we see, not just agriculture, but we have a strong economy based on agriculture, farming, and ranching. We have an economy based on oil and gas sector. We have small business. We have larger businesses. We have, I think, what represents the broad base of Saskatchewan people in this province. And I would say to the people of Kindersley, I am so honoured to be a part of that constituency, so honoured to be the member elected in that constituency. And I look forward to serving them for a long, long time once again.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — And I would, I would say that in a decade or two when the young man that sits opposite from me here, in a decade or two when he decides to step down as the Premier, he will hand it off to another person just as it's been handed off to him. And it will be a good day for Saskatchewan when we see after 20 years of service from this Premier here.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — We will see at that time, we will see at that time a province that has grown dramatically, a province that is prospering, that has continued to prosper through the years because of the policies that our Premier has put in place — the policies that are exhibited, the policies that are exhibited in the Throne Speech, that everyone in Saskatchewan is looking towards the optimism of this province for the first time in decades.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — A province, a province, a province that has been waiting with bated breath for a change of government. And no matter where we go in Saskatchewan these days, we see that from the people of Saskatchewan. At every event that members of this side of the House, the government, have attended in the last couple of weeks, person after person after person are coming up to us and saying, finally in Saskatchewan we got it right. We got a government that's going to build this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Finally in this province, finally in this province we have got a government that's going to speak towards the optimism, are going to put in place policies that allow the creation of wealth in this province, allow for jobs, allow for employment, allow for the kind of things that we are going to put in place that are going to build this province like we've never seen before.

The Throne Speech speaks to all of those kinds of opportunities. Our platform speaks to all of those opportunities. And I think it's important that everyone in Saskatchewan understands the kinds of things that the Saskatchewan Party is going to put in place. And the Throne Speech speaks to all of them.

You would know, Mr. Speaker, that we've just gone through an election campaign in the last little while — November 7. And in the lead-up to that election campaign we saw a lot of things happen. We saw a lot of things happen in this province. We saw a government, the members opposite that represented that government, that went on a spending binge like we have never seen before in an effort to try and shore up their electoral possibilities.

But the good news was, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province saw through it. For the first time in a long, long time they saw through the kinds of things that a government, a failed philosophy, a failed government, and a failed premier had put in place. Now what they see is the kind of optimism that's opened up that is unprecedented in the province here in Saskatchewan.

It was a campaign, our campaign, the Saskatchewan Party's campaign was a campaign that's based on our philosophy — one that says that we believe in hope, one that says that we believe in dreams, one that says we believe in rewarding hard work and success. Those are the foundations of the Saskatchewan Party.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Those are the kinds of things that speak to the optimism that is in Saskatchewan that we've never seen before in the past 16 years exhibited by the members opposite.

In direct contrast to that, Mr. Speaker, what did we see from the NDP? What did we see in the lead-up to it? What we saw in the election campaign was a campaign based on fear, a campaign that was based on negative attitudes, a campaign based on negative advertising, a campaign that was based on everything that we should be opposed to in Saskatchewan in the most vigorous fashion we can possibly be. We should never allow this province to ever sink back into that kind of negative type of advertising, negative type of campaign. We will never, we will never allow that sort of thought pattern to permeate this side of the House.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — I can only imagine, Mr. Speaker, that campaigned through a number of elections — and many of my colleagues have campaigned through a number of elections as well — I can only imagine what it must have been like during the election campaign for people that were supporting, or put their names forward as candidates for the NDP, to get up every morning and say to yourself, how can I be the most fearful? How can I spread fear in a fashion that's going to cause some people to doubt the optimism that there is on our side of the House? How can we do that?

It's difficult to understand, Mr. Speaker. Every day when I wake up, and I know every day when the members on this side wake up, they wake up with an optimism in their heart. They wake up with some hope. They wake up with some dreams. They wake up and say to themselves, what can we do that's good for our province today?

The alternative wake up and say, how can we tear down? How can we spread fear? How can we convince people in seniors' homes that they should be afraid of the Saskatchewan Party? How can we create in the minds of labour that we should be afraid of the Saskatchewan Party? How can we create in agriculture how people should be afraid of the Saskatchewan Party? How can we make students feel that they should be feared by the Saskatchewan Party?

All of those kinds of things, all of those kinds of things were what the campaign was all about. And as a result of that I think it was very, very clear to Saskatchewan people for the first time in a long, long time. I think they got fooled in the last election campaign, but on November 7 they are no longer fooled by that kind of campaign any longer.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Never again. And I would invite the members opposite, if they haven't heard the Premier speak in the speech that he made in Saskatoon in one of the rallies that we had at the end, I would invite you to look it up on the Internet and you will hear a speech that speaks to the kind of optimism that this party's all about.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — And you know, I was out in Alberta in the last few days at The Energy Council that Saskatchewan is now a part of.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — For the first time we are a part of that organization. We have been pushing the members opposite to belong to that for a long, long time. But I'll tell you what was happening out there. They had a great big banner up welcoming Saskatchewan to The Energy Council. The Energy Council will be the council that sets energy policy for North America . . . [inaudible] . . . very, very soon. And I can tell you that while you don't want to be a part of the future, the Saskatchewan Party does.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — The Saskatchewan Party is going to continue with that kind of growth agenda here in Saskatchewan because it's exactly what we believe in. We believe that if we are going to lead in this country and lead in North America, we're going to have to be a part of the organizations that believe in those kinds of things as well. We're not going to be an observer status type of operation like you people were — an observer status, which is the only thing that you guys wanted to be a part of rather than being a full participant. Someone at the table that can help set policies here in this province and in Canada and in North America. You sat there in observer status rather than being a part of it. And it also speaks to the kinds of concern that we see in agriculture as well.

We see in agriculture the kind of thing where we in Saskatchewan and over the years used to set agriculture policy. And unfortunately now we don't set agriculture policy, as a result of the activities of the member opposite. But I dare say, under the new Agriculture minister, we will.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — The hour's approaching the adjournment time, Mr. Speaker. But prior to saying that, I just want to conclude the debate off here this afternoon by saying that this Premier was going to be here for a long, long time. This young man is going to be the Premier of this province for a long, long time because he represents the generational change that was so necessary here in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The hour now being 5 o'clock, this Assembly now stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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