



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

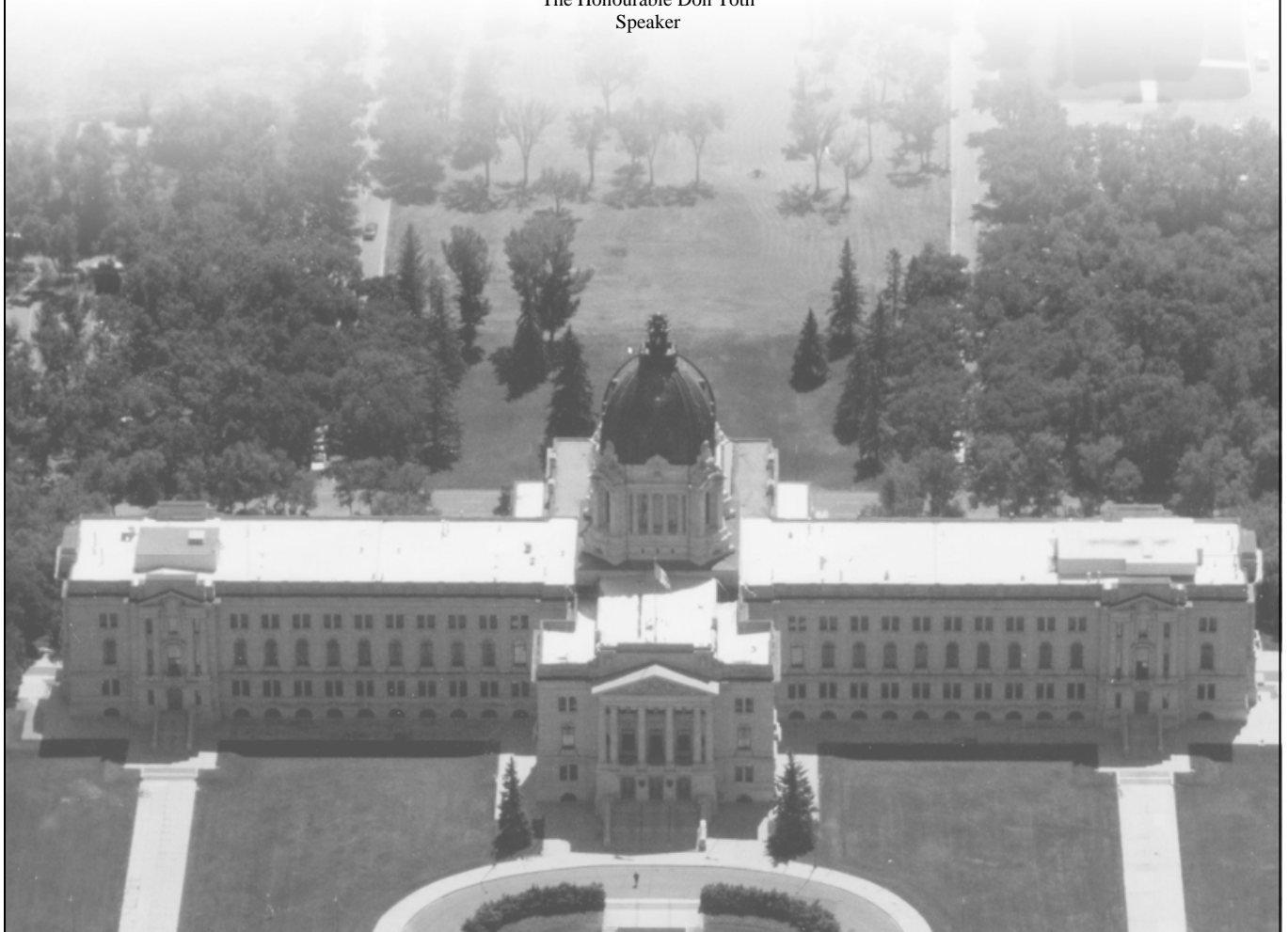
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
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 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

Ms. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you the members of the village council of Pinehouse Lake, Saskatchewan. As many of you know, Pinehouse Lake, Saskatchewan is a northern community which is one of the most progressive, forward-thinking communities in the North.

We have with us today the mayor, Mike Natomagan; deputy mayor, Greg Ross; alderman, Vince Natomagan; and project manager, Shaun Welcher; and alderman, Zedmund Maurice. So please show them a round of applause. Thank you very much.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join my colleague in recognizing the northern village of Pinehouse's mayor and council. Obviously I won't go through all the names, but I want to especially welcome His Worship on behalf of all the council. And it should know that Pinehouse is working towards building themselves a brand new arena, Mr. Speaker, and it's going to be a beautiful arena. They're having some challenges, but they'll get it up.

And the commitment I made to the mayor when we began this project — and he began the project and we certainly supported him — was that when that rink is open . . . It's not if, but when that rink is open, I'm going to Pinehouse to play hockey against them. And on that ice, Mr. Speaker, on that ice there's no friendship. There's no friendship. There's competition. So I'd like to welcome the mayor and the council here and to point out that D-Day is coming, and next year we'll see them on the ice, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Hon. Assembly, first of all four individuals from Thunder Creek constituency involved in the poultry industry, Mr. Speaker: Alvero Santamaria, James Glen, and Dave and George Hofer, both from the Arm River colony, Mr. Speaker. I hope that all members will give them a warm welcome.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, it's also my great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Hon. Assembly my sister, Cheryl Perry,

and her husband, Neil Perry, seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Cheryl is a contract accountant in Calgary for the oil and gas industry and Neil is general manager of IPSCO's scrap enterprises in Alberta. I have to say that I think I've known Neil a little longer than Cheryl has. We were school friends and hockey buddies and I'm happy to announce that they've purchased a house in my constituency . . .

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — In Regina Beach. And I hope that when the time comes, they'll retire here. I hope that all members will welcome them.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to join the member opposite in welcoming Alvero Santamaria, as well as James Glen and Dave and George Hofer. As the member said, they're involved in the poultry industry and they're keen observers of issues pertaining to agriculture in this province and also rural life. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all colleagues to join me in welcoming these four gentlemen to our Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melville-Saltcoats.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with the member from Saskatoon Nutana in welcoming our poultry producers here today to their legislature and ask all members to welcome them here.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I would like to introduce three guests in our east gallery to this Assembly, friends of this Assembly, Joseph Dojack, Lois Thacyk, and Suzanne Thacyk. I ask all of us to give them a warm welcome. Thank you.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, and through you all the members of the Assembly, a person very special in my life, instrumental in getting me where I am here today — my high school sweetheart, the greatest supporter in my life, mother of my three children; the one woman that has

taught me to make things better, not be bitter — my wife of 21 years, Leone.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my distinct pleasure to introduce to you, through you, and to all members of the Assembly a very, very dear friend of mine, Mary Stochmal, and her fiancé, Yong Seong Seo, who are seated in the west gallery right there.

Yong Seong is . . . It's his first trip to Canada, Mr. Speaker. He encountered some difficulties unfortunately, when he arrived in the country, and so the fact that they are here today makes it that much more special. So I'd ask all the colleagues to wish them a Merry Christmas, welcome Yong Seong to Canada, wish them all the best in their future, and welcome them to the province and the Saskatchewan legislature.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, sitting in your gallery is my son, Brent Michelson. Brent is fourth year of university at the U of R [University of Regina]. He is taking a break from classes now that the semester is done and has decided to join us here to see how his dad does at work. So I would ask everybody to treat me with the utmost of respect.

Brent certainly helped me out in the campaign. He's also no stranger to the members from Regina South and Regina Wascana Plains where he helped campaign during his first semester. So please welcome Brent to the Assembly.

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 provincial government to commit to reopening negotiations with Domtar based on the already existing memorandum of understanding so as to see a viable pulp and paper mill continue in Prince Albert.

Mr. Speaker, the petition is signed by folks from the city of Prince Albert. I so present.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — Recognize the member from Yorkton.

Yorkton Community Theatre Production

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, Yorkton Community Theatre is a non-exclusive, varied group of people who enjoy musical theatre and contribute their varied talents and spare time to make it happen. Mr. Speaker, the result is among the best community theatre you will find anywhere, and has been rivalled only by Christmas as a reason to look forward to another Saskatchewan winter.

After a year hiatus, the founding director, Gloria Herauf, is planning to return from the West Coast to produce and direct a spectacular show — Irving Berlin's *I Love a Piano*. Mr. Speaker, the upcoming production will run from January 25 to 27, 2008 in Yorkton. This production marks the Yorkton Community Theatre's eighth musical production over the past seven years, and financial profits from the shows have been returned to the community for scholarships, music lessons, and workshops through the Children Are Our Future program.

The cast of 34 singers and dancers with its orchestra including Malcolm McKitterick from Scotland, as well as many volunteers behind the scenes in production, lighting, sound, set design, and stage crews are sure to create a memorable production. The audience will be treated to over 40 familiar songs in this musical; as well, an elegant scenery, costuming, choreography, and fine singing that audiences have come to expect.

On a personal note, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to let it slip that Gloria was my elementary school music teacher and she must have been 12 years old back then because she still looks as beautiful and young as ever . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well she is.

Mr. Speaker, also her husband, Les Herauf, who is a big part of the production, was my fifth grade teacher and remains as one of my all-time favourite teachers and an excellent role model for a young boy growing up. He in fact is a big part of why I'm here today.

The Speaker: — Member's statement has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Saskatoon Firefighters' Christmas Fundraiser

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, 25 years ago right around this time of year a group of Saskatoon firefighters piled into an old fire truck, drove throughout the city stopping at restaurants and pubs, and sang Christmas carols to their captive audience. Mr. Speaker, the singers were neither practised nor rehearsed. At each stop after the final note had faded, listeners were warned the firefighters would continue carolling unless they made a donation to charity. Listeners gladly paid. Somewhere along the way, Denny Carr, a well-known radio personality, got involved and Saskatoon's Secret Santa Charity was born.

This year volunteers and retirees from the Saskatoon fire department continued the tradition. Starting at Moxie's restaurant they were provided with breakfast and a donation before they set off for a day of merriment and carolling that ended on Buds on Broadway at about 1 in the morning. Mr. Speaker, this year the firefighters raised a record high \$25,400 that'll be used by Secret Santa Charity to purchase food hampers and Christmas gifts for children in Saskatoon.

I want to make a special mention of Saskatoon firefighter, Ron York, who headed up this year's carollers; Mercedes Waymans, who is in charge of gathering names for the Secret Santa Charity.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in a huge thank you to Saskatoon firefighters for making this a merry Christmas both for their listeners and for many, many, families and children in Saskatoon. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Carrot River Valley.

School Division Partners with First Nation

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House of a new partnership between the North East School Division and the Kinistin Saulteaux First Nation.

Kinistin students in grade 10 to 12 have been attending school in Tisdale over the past few years without a formal agreement between the North East School Division and the Tisdale Middle and Secondary School. Last week a formal agreement creating a partnership was signed and formally accepted. This agreement will govern the relationships between Kinistin students and the North East School Division and the Tisdale Middle & Secondary School. This partnership is the first for the North East School Division and one of the first in the province. The agreement will govern the interactions between boards, school, and students to best serve the needs of the Kinistin students to work toward their success.

[10:15]

In the *Tisdale Recorder*, quote:

Kinistin Chief Felix Thomas said, "It has only been in the last generation that we have been expected to go to higher education and that expectation is not there with our children yet, they don't for the most part expect to go to university. We are only one generation removed from having a population as a whole who were quitting school when they were in grade 10 and working in either a farm or rural-based economy."

For the North East School Division this partnership will form the template for the future, working towards the success of Aboriginal students — a goal shared by this government. Mr. Speaker, let us congratulate the North East School Division and Kinistin Saulteaux First Nation on their new partnership agreement.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

St. Walburg Wins International Award

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate the leadership and the people of St. Walburg, a community just north and west of The Battlefords. You see, Mr. Speaker, this year St. Walburg has brought back to their community, and to all of Saskatchewan, two major awards at the world liveable communities annual event, hosted this year in London, England.

St. Walburg won the gold medal in the competition for all communities and the silver medal in the competition for communities with populations under 20,000. This means, Mr. Speaker, St. Walburg can boast of being the world's most liveable, sustainable community.

What an accomplishment, Mr. Speaker. St. Walburg town councillor, Tony Leeson, and Mayor Gordon Lee Hall attended the awards conference in England and say they have been working to implement sustainability and environmentally sound practices for years, have involved volunteer groups from surrounding municipalities, and are proud of their accomplishments.

I call on members of this Assembly to acknowledge and congratulate the people of St. Walburg for their significant achievement, an achievement that brings this community of about 800 wonderful people to the attention of the world and by extension makes us all proud to share our great province with them

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Sutherland.

60th Anniversary of the SaskTel Pioneers

Ms. Schriemer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate SaskTel and its employees on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the SaskTel Pioneers. The SaskTel Pioneers volunteer organization consists of 4,350 current and former SaskTel employees who share a common goal of helping to improve the quality of life in Saskatchewan communities.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, since 1947 the SaskTel Pioneers have volunteered more than 2 million hours of their time to make life better for their friends and neighbours in our great province.

Mr. Speaker, the volunteers are involved in a wide range of activities throughout Saskatchewan. In 2007 here is just a sampling of the worthwhile causes that they have supported. The Saskatoon Pioneers will donate \$50,000 to the St. Paul's urology centre. The Yorkton Pioneers recently won the Communities in Bloom Award for revitalizing green space in the commercial area. The Weyburn Pioneers are continuing their long-time support of Weyburn and area United Way Communion. And SaskTel Pioneer life members are

celebrating the 25 year of participation in the infant hearing assessment program.

Mr. Speaker, the list goes on. The SaskTel Pioneers volunteer their time, talent, and skills for more than 100 ongoing community projects every year. I would like to commend them, and I ask you to join me in doing so. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

Report Card for Saskatchewan Party

Mr. Yates: — Well, well, well, Mr. Speaker. Today is the last day of the session, and that means report card day for the Sask Party.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, we will start with the subject of math. The new Finance minister, just hours after being appointed to his new position, raised the alarm bells about the drastic state of our provincial finances. In the middle of this economic boom, he was in trouble. He couldn't make the numbers work. But, Mr. Speaker, when the quarterly financial statements were released, between the General Revenue Fund and the Crown corporations there were nearly \$2 billion in surplus. Mr. Speaker, a \$2 billion miss — that's an F.

Next to language arts, Mr. Speaker. We all read the Sask Party ads during the election from the member from Prince Albert Carlton claiming a vote for Darryl Hickie is a vote to open the mill and put people back to work. Just days later the Minister of Energy and Resources tore up the memorandum between Domtar and the province, making sure the mill remained closed. Mr. Speaker, an F in language arts for not knowing the difference between the words, open and closed.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, on the subject of drama. We all heard or read the member from Indian Head-Milestone very clearly seven days before the election telling union leaders essential service legislation wasn't needed. This was even reinforced by the leader of the opposition. Days after the election we heard the new Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour telling us he is moving forward with essential service legislation and that they have been working on the issue for more than a year. Mr. Speaker . . .

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The member from Lloydminster.

Contemplating New Opportunities

Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to rise here this morning to congratulate the member from Cumberland. It has recently been confirmed in a national newspaper that the opportunity to represent the people of northern Saskatchewan in the upcoming federal by-election is under consideration. As a

new MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], I understand the hectic schedule of this job and give credit to anyone who is willing to take on both roles as both MLA and MP [Member of Parliament] at the same time. It is because I am certain that no member would, just weeks after a general provincial election, resign just because their party did not win — or would they?

It is also a tribute to that member how popular and how politically ambiguous they are that not just one but two political parties are courting her. It is a further tribute that she would be willing to attach her rising star to either of these failing parties. If this were the case, to turn your back on so many supporters, volunteers, and constituents, it must be difficult — not to mention the friction this must cause in one's caucus. Or is it more of a fight-for-the-door situation over there?

I extend to all those members opposite who are rumoured to be contemplating new opportunities in the new future, the best of luck.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTION PERIOD

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Nutana.

Support for Agriculture

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today we're joined in the gallery by gentlemen that are seeking some help from the provincial government. As members will know, the poultry industry in our province has hit some tough times, and we have three farms that have had birds that have contracted avian influenza. James Glen, who is in our gallery today, has seen 50,000 of his birds destroyed. And the industry, as we know, has come forward with \$100,000 towards the \$225,000 cost of cleanup. But, Mr. Speaker, these folks need further assistance.

I guess my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. I would ask him, what kind of help will the Sask Party government give these gentlemen and the industry as a whole?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, as the member for Saskatoon Nutana has stated — and I'm sure is aware — that this is a federally reportable disease, and the CFIA [Canadian Food Inspection Agency] compensates producers for destroying the animals and for their disposal.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, the Sask poultry industry is providing, as she said, up to \$100,000 to cover the cleaning and disinfecting costs of these barns. What she didn't mention, Mr. Speaker, was that the organization of the Sask poultry industry has told us they feel that that should be adequate for the cleanup or, if it's not, it should be not very much more that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I guess I would ask the member opposite what she feels we should be doing in this case. Should we be putting Saskatchewan taxpayers' dollars in to fund this when it's actually a federal responsibility and being looked after by the CFIA?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I have a book here full of everything that member had to say about agriculture in this province prior to the last election campaign. Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the members opposite time and time again call on the province for assistance for farmers in their time of crisis, Mr. Speaker.

We have people in the gallery today that advise us it is going to cost \$225,000 to clean up their three farms as a result of avian influenza. They have seen 50,000 of their birds already destroyed. Mr. Speaker, each day \$100,000 of export revenues are lost by the poultry industry because the borders have closed.

I ask the member opposite: what help can they get from this provincial government that claims to represent farming people in this province?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I've got a folder here listing everything the NDP [New Democratic Party] government, when they were in power, did for 16 years.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — And, madam minister, there's nothing, there's absolutely nothing. The downloading from that NDP government on rural Saskatchewan and farmers and ranchers in this province should be an embarrassment for that member to get up and ask what we're doing in the first month of our being in power.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the member that when this avian influenza broke out in British Columbia, what did the British Columbia provincial government do? They did not have to put \$1 towards it because, number one, their opinion was it was a federal responsibility and, between the CFIA and the poultry industry in BC [British Columbia], they covered the cleanup and they're dealing with the problem.

So, Mr. Speaker, to that member, after your record for 16 years you should probably look at your past.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Before I recognize the member from Saskatoon, I would ask the members to allow members from both sides to actually be heard when they place the question and respond. Thank you. The member from Saskatoon.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite promised

the citizens of this province that they would do better. The livestock industry is waiting. The hog industry is waiting. And now we have four people in our gallery waiting to hear what this government that promised rural people they would do better, what are they going to do to help these producers, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I will remind that member also that in the last 16 years they had no good relationship with whatever federal government was in power, whether it was Liberal, Conservative, whatever it was. And we see in our programs the families and ranchers who are paying the price for that.

Every time a problem come up, they pointed at either the federal Liberals, the federal Conservatives, Grant Devine from 20 years ago. Everything was somebody else's problem. And now she gets on her feet and wants you to fix all these problems immediately.

Mr. Speaker, we have a big enough job dealing with the repairing of programs in this province to deal with farmers right now, rather than interfering with something that's actually a federal responsibility. We have a big job to clean up the mess from the last 16 years, let alone get into an area that's not our responsibility.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Housing Issues

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The booming economy is certainly great news for many people in the province, but not for ranchers and not for families in search of affordable housing. Saskatchewan's rental vacancy rate is the lowest ever, and rents continue to rise.

Back in June the CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] minister seemed to be aware of the problems when he said, and I quote:

You probably see some ideas come from us and from government prior to an election or just at the early part of the election.

But now that they're in government, Mr. Speaker, what is the Sask Party saying? Not very much, Mr. Speaker. Not a word in their platform and not a word in the Throne Speech. Even the Social Services minister admits, quote:

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

To the minister: why did the Saskatchewan Party say one thing before and during the election and then change its tune once it's in government?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you for that question. The quality of life is definitely a priority for a Saskatchewan Party government. And for the immediate, I have told the media that we will continue with the home ownership programs and the rental programs that were put in place just prior to the election by the former government. So I'm not sure if that member is suggesting that the programs that they put in place, not all that long ago, weren't good enough. Obviously he doesn't think their ideas were very good.

Going forward, I'm happy to say that the Sask Housing Corporation is well positioned to do more, but we're going to do so in consultation with the municipal level of government and the communities. We're going to monitor the markets, and we will come up with something within the new year to address the different housing issues.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:30]

The Speaker: — Recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, this party and this government put their money where their mouth was when it came to housing, Mr. Speaker. And that's what they're living off right now, Mr. Speaker. And I want to point out in fact the current member from Saskatoon Northwest urged immediate action, Mr. Speaker. And I quote: "You can't just wait. You're not the one living on the streets."

Mr. Speaker, actions speak louder than words. In fact the Saskatchewan Party said that in their very own Throne Speech. But what are their actions on the housing front? Nothing, Mr. Speaker. A big, fat zero, Mr. Speaker. Even the minister responsible says, quote, "Was it a void, perhaps?" There's no perhaps about it, Mr. Speaker. Again families are having a tough time finding affordable housing all throughout the province. Rents are going up. Some people are facing evictions, Mr. Speaker. To the minister: if action speaks louder than words, when are we going to see action from this government on the issue of housing, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I don't understand the member opposite. He just finished saying that his government, when he was in government, put their money where their mouth was. I have already said in this Assembly that we are going to continue the programs that were put in place by that member when he was in government. So if he thought they were adequate then, what is he complaining about now?

I do think that we are in a position to do more, but we're going to do so in consultation. That was something else that the members opposite asked for. Throughout the entire session

they've been saying, well we need to consult. I'm telling them that we're going to consult. We do feel this is a priority and a concern. However we have addressed some issues already with the bus pass issue in Saskatoon. We did that immediately. It was one that his administration totally ignored prior to an election. So things are being done in the Social Services file.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Prince Albert Pulp Mill

Mr. Furber: — Mr. Speaker, when Weyerhaeuser announced the mill closure in Prince Albert, the Saskatchewan Party immediately called for government action. Later the member from Swift Current said, and I quote, "Anything less than a timetable for reopening the Prince Albert mill will amount . . . [in] failure on the part of the NDP." During the election, the member from Prince Albert Carleton ran an ad that said quote, "a vote for Darryl is a vote for the mill open and people working."

But their actions speak louder than words. Upon assuming office, they immediately tore up the signed agreement between the government and Domtar with absolutely no plan of their own to reopen the mill. To the Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing: why did he say one thing during the election and do another thing after?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have said consistently that we are prepared to sit down and talk with Domtar at any time. The Premier has spoken to officials from the company. I have spoken to officials from the company. We've asked them to bring forward proposals with respect to the mill. We've asked them to bring forward proposals with respect to any kind of a cogeneration project that they might be interested in. We're prepared to sit down with them at any time. We have told them that on a number of occasions, and that's exactly what we're prepared to do.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Essential Services Legislation

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, unions and the workers they represent are shocked by this government's actions and total disregard for the rights of working people. Before getting elected, the members opposite stated on numerous occasions that essential services legislation was not needed, not desirable, not on the table. To quote from the Minister of Health, one month before the election: "I don't think we need to get to legislation, I don't think we need to go there at all," Mr. Speaker. In their platform, not a single mention of essential

services legislation.

Well yesterday, Mr. Speaker, we got the real story. Yesterday we saw their approach to balancing labour laws. And it is clear workers will lose, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan Federation of Labour president, Larry Hubich, called the Bill “the worst legislation . . . in the country.” To the Minister of Labour: why did you do one thing before the election and, immediately after, do the opposite?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister Responsible for Employment and Labour.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, last week they couldn't wait to get their hands on the document. Yesterday they received it, and they're struggling to comprehend what the document means. Mr. Speaker, this documentation that has been tabled is consistent with legislation across Canada. It's far from bottom-of-the-barrel. It's middle-of-the-road, and it is helping to rebalance Saskatchewan's labour environment, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Blackstrap Ski Hill

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Here are a couple of questions posed to this new Premier and his new government on Tuesday's *StarPhoenix*. Quote, “. . . did you not campaign on bringing a family-oriented focus to government, including a \$150 tax credit for sports and music activities?” And quote:

How then . . . are you going to justify your decision to close the Blackstrap ski hill for the winter? The place is a great training ground for kids trying to learn a new sport, and even better, it's easily accessible via bus.

Good questions, Mr. Speaker, to which the answer is simple. For the Sask Party, ideology trumps interests and needs of Saskatchewan people every time. Mr. Speaker, during the campaign the Sask Party was all about healthy families and supporting physical fitness and active youth. And yet one of the very first things they do is to ensure that easily accessible winter sport facility like Blackstrap remains closed.

To the Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport: why did the Sask Party tout physical fitness and activity throughout the campaign and then close a major facility that would promote the very thing immediately after?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, the subsidization required or that was paid out by the members opposite was \$225 per day

per skier, capital and operating costs in 2007. Mr. Speaker, what a waste of taxpayers' dollars. What this government is looking for, what we are looking for is a way to have the Blackstrap Provincial Park open 12 months a year, both winter and summer.

Mr. Speaker, there were complaints and concerns expressed from other ski hills in the province about unfair subsidization — again members opposite again picking winners and losers and choosing who was going to get subsidization. Mr. Speaker, what this government is about and what we are doing, it makes financial sense to the taxpayers of this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. I call the members to order before I acknowledge the next member just to remind members that normal tradition has been roughly about a minute for questions to be placed and about a minute for the response. And I recognize there's been give and take, but we've had allowances on both sides. So I just want to remind members of the normal procedure.

I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

School Closures

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we've heard a great deal from the members opposite when school boards were making difficult decisions regarding school closures. And now that they are elected, the silence is stunning. When in opposition they said the government needed to intervene. They said schools should not be closing when there was so much promise within Saskatchewan. They told families and communities that they had a plan to stop school closures.

Now that they have come to power, the plan seems to have disappeared and their interest diminished. In fact the Deputy Premier now says and I quote, “School closures will continue to happen.” Mr. Speaker, it is clear they will not be living up to their promise to make changes to The Education Act or to provide funding that they promised before the election. My question to the Minister of Education: why did you say one thing on school closures before you were elected but do nothing after getting elected?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, I have been very clear on this matter throughout many, many years in fact, Mr. Speaker. There is a clear indication in this province. As we look at the data that has been presented . . . is that in the 10, the last 10 years of the NDP government, the number of students in the province of Saskatchewan has declined by 32,000 students, Mr. Speaker — 32,000 students have not appeared on the enrolments. What does that mean, Mr. Speaker? That will mean of course that there is going to be school closures. School closures where there is a decline in enrolment, where there is not a distance factor, those will continue to close.

Mr. Speaker, what I did say is that we will consult with the

School Boards Association. We will consult with school divisions. And we want to put in place a plan that will indicate to all people that there is a structure that must be followed, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Graduate Tax Rebate

Mr. Broten: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, this government says they want to welcome young people from across Canada to Saskatchewan, and they say they want to welcome home young people from Saskatchewan, but their actions don't match their words. Their grad tax rebate scheme is poorly thought out and excludes anyone from Saskatchewan who studies outside of the province and anyone from outside of the province who wants to move here to start a career. To the Minister of Advanced Education: why don't your actions match your words?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, while I know the members opposite are used to declining numbers, since the change of government we see the population growing in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, our platform will focus on the graduate tax rebate program. We're going to be moving forward on that rebate program, Mr. Speaker. And as we've said, programs that are not offered in Saskatchewan will be under review so that people will get credit for those.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Election Promises

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

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, in one month less a day of Sask Party government, we've learned one thing. They will say one thing before an election to get themselves elected and then do something completely opposite after the election, Mr. Speaker. We've learned that, and the people of Saskatchewan have seen it.

Let's just use some illustrations, Mr. Speaker. You know, before the election they were all out to help Saskatchewan people. What's the first thing they did after election? Well the first thing they did was to raise the salaries of their political staff. That was number one.

Then they said before the election we're going to have a professional public service. What's the next thing they did? Well the next thing they did was to fire some long-term, valuable public servants. That's what they did. You know, then they tried to move off of exposure by saying, well you know, the province's finances are stark. They tried to make people believe the provinces finances were stark when they know they're sitting on \$2 billion of cash in the bank.

Before the election, Mr. Speaker, you know what they said to the people of P.A. [Prince Albert]? A vote for the Sask Party, a vote for that member was a vote to reopen the mill, and they ripped up the deal that . . .

The Speaker: — I ask the member to place his question.

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, my question is as follows: what other promises did the Sask Party make? What other positions did they take in the campaign and in opposition that they now are going to break on the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, let me just say this, that we are very grateful in the Saskatchewan Party for the opportunity, for the privilege to provide a government for the province of Saskatchewan. We are going to work very, very hard to earn the support that we received on November 7, and we've already begun to do that, Mr. Speaker. If you don't mind, I wouldn't mind reviewing — in one short month — the promises that have already been kept by the brand new government.

We committed to no more PST [provincial sales tax] on used vehicles. We kept that promise, Mr. Speaker, already. We promised a smaller cabinet than the NDP. We kept that promise. We promised to, Mr. Speaker, we promised to get the taxpayers out from under a \$100 million pulp fiction deal in PA. Mr. Speaker, we've kept that promise. Mr. Speaker, we promised a rebalancing of the labour legislative environment in this province with very specific commitments. We have also kept that promise, Mr. Speaker. We promised that we would move to create a new economic development authority, Enterprise Saskatchewan. We introduced that Bill this year.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, well there's more. I know there will be more questions. The list of promises we have, that we've already kept in a month, is even greater than that. And we're going to continue to work hard to keep more promises.

[10:45]

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Opposition Leader.

Mr. Calvert: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as Paul Harvey says, here's the rest of the story. Mr. Speaker, this government, before the election, promised to reopen the P.A. pulp mill. Then they tore up the Domtar deal. They said to the people of Saskatchewan, before the election, there is absolutely no necessity for essential services legislation, Mr. Speaker. Right after the election, we have essential services legislation. They said, before the election, well we're going to get rid of the Fiscal Stabilization Fund. Bill no. 1, they put in place the Fiscal Stabilization Fund on a permanent basis, even though the Premier says it's going to disappear, Mr. Speaker.

Now there's one thing they didn't . . . I can't accuse them of saying before the election and doing after the election, and that's this marvellous idea they came up with to get rid of the provincial logo of the wheat sheaf. And I'd like to know from the Premier today, Mr. Speaker, who's idea was that? Who's idea was that? Was it the member of Humboldt that came up with that idea? Was it the member of Advanced Education? Was it the Premier's idea?

Mr. Speaker, the pattern is clear. You say one thing before an election; you do something totally different after the election.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, if I may continue, in the month . . . in addition to that list of promises that we have already kept that I outlined in my first answer, let me add to that that we also promised in the election campaign to crack down on repeat drunk drivers in this province. We've already kept that promise, Mr. Speaker.

We promised to begin to deal with the provincial debt in this province, to make a payment of over \$200 million, in the election campaign. That already happened in November — \$263 million. We have promised, Mr. Speaker, we have promised a lower cost of the political arm of government, lower political costs for this government than we had under that tired, old NDP former government, Mr. Speaker, and we will keep that promise. We're already keeping that promise as well.

So I can understand then why the opposition is so negative, why they're so gloomy today because, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, we're keeping our promises. The province is on a roll, and everyone's looking forward to a great 2008.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Leader.

Mr. Calvert: — Well, Mr. Speaker, let me go further with the list. Before the election this government, this new government promised that they would stand for the rights of Saskatchewan people in dealing with Ottawa for a fair deal on their resources. After the election — oh no — we're willing to sign any kind of a deal with their political masters in Ottawa.

Before the election, Mr. Speaker — and we've seen evidence of it here today — this party, this Saskatchewan Party said they would stand up for Saskatchewan producers and Saskatchewan farmers. Today they have abandoned Saskatchewan producers and farmers by saying it's not our fault. There's nothing we can do. It's all Ottawa's fault.

Mr. Speaker, the list goes on and on. They promised to open the mill. They've ripped up the deal that opened the mill. They promised to fight fair for equalization. They've walked away. They promised to stand up for schools and small rural schools in Saskatchewan. They've walked away from that. Mr. Speaker, they said they would get rid of the Fiscal Stabilization Fund. They walked away from that.

The one promise they've kept, Mr. Speaker, is a promise that the leader of the opposition, now Premier, once said on province-wide radio, that he would declare war on working people. Well I'm sorry; that's about the only promise I can see that they've kept.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — You know, Mr. Speaker, there will be an interesting choice to be made in this Assembly on the issue of essential services. Those members opposite are going to have to make a choice between the public safety of Saskatchewan people — people who need health care, people who need safe highways — or a choice between their political allegiances to union leaderships, union leaders who were outside at the rotunda yesterday swearing and sputtering rather than entering into a meaningful debate. They will have to make that choice.

We will choose, Mr. Speaker, public safety and health care every single time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — But, Mr. Speaker, we ought to end this session, this session, on some good news. And there's a lot of good news to go around. And the Leader of the Opposition will be happy to know we're now over a million people, Mr. Speaker. Wholesale trade numbers are up. And since the election, in December oil and gas sales are up, record-breaking sales. The Potash Corporation has announced a billion eight investment in the province after the last election. The Riders have won the Grey Cup, Mr. Speaker. You know, with all this good news I'm tempted, I'm tempted maybe to look at calling an election so there could be fewer negative people in the province. But we can't because we'll have set election . . .

The Speaker: — Premier's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I invite the members to come to order.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Ruling on a Point of Order

The Speaker: — Before orders of the day, I want to respond to a point of order. I call the member from Canora to order, please.

Yesterday the member from Regina Dewdney raised a point of order regarding statements made by the Minister of the Environment during the debate on the address in reply. I reviewed *Hansard* and now wish to rule on the matter. The statement at issue begins by identifying the member for Nutana and then continues on to state:

. . . I was cheered yesterday to hear that an NDP member finally told the truth about election advertising money.

It was the contention of the member for Regina Dewdney that the effect of this statement was to indirectly call members of the New Democratic Party liars. While the member for Regina Dewdney characterized his point of order as an attempt to do

indirectly what could be done directly, I find that the issue is more properly framed as calling into question the character of another member.

As noted in a ruling by my predecessor on March 26, 2001:

... the proceedings of this Assembly are based on a long-standing tradition of respect for the integrity of all members. The integrity or motives of members, whether individually or collectively, should not be questioned indirectly in debate.

I've also sought guidance from the Assembly's revised rule book which directs in rule 50(f) that no member may make a personal charge or accusation against any other member.

Finally I refer members to Marleau and Montpetit, which provides on page 522 that:

Remarks directed specifically at another Member which question that Member's integrity, honesty or character are not in order.

I find that the statement made by the minister could be interpreted as questioning the honesty of an identifiable member of this Assembly. Whether intentional or not, language of that nature can be inflammatory. I caution all members to use discretion in phrasing their comments in the future.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to table responses to question 191 to 218.

The Speaker: — Answers are tabled.

I recognize the member from Martensville.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to make a statement.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The member may proceed.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, in light of your ruling today, I withdraw my comments from yesterday.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well first of all I want to begin by congratulating all members of the Assembly, both new members and members that are returning, for their successful election campaigns that we experienced on November 7. I also want to recognize that there are some new, bright young people that have been elected to the Assembly on both sides of the legislature. And I've had an opportunity to watch them, and I think that the province in the future will be in good hands as these young people become more seasoned legislators in the province.

I want to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your election as Speaker to our Assembly. I believe you and I entered this Assembly together in 1986 as young members of the Assembly, and we still are at heart young members of the Assembly. But we've had the opportunity to watch each other as interest from both sides of the House. I know, Mr. Speaker, that you're going to serve this Assembly with integrity and honesty. And we've already noticed that you're prepared to correct yourself if you are in error, and you're prepared to make tough rulings. And for that we thank you because we believe that your presence in this Assembly will contribute to our ongoing democratic process.

Before I get into the text of my remarks I want to begin by thanking the constituents of Saskatoon Nutana for once again re-electing me on November 7 and showing their faith in me. I want to in particular thank the thousands of people who participated in the democratic process on November 7.

And I note, Mr. Speaker, that in fact we had many, many people involved in the various political parties in our constituency assisting their candidates in that process. I want to thank Don Johannesson, who was the Sask Party representative, as well as Grant Karwacki, the Liberal representative, and Gwen Katzman, who was the representative for the Progressive Conservative Party, and as well as the Green Party candidate, the leader of the Green Party, and the Marijuana Party for their contribution to democracy in our province.

I want to acknowledge the campaign team that assisted me during the election period. In particular I want to thank my campaign manager, Trevor Mackenzie-Smith, who is a young person that knows how to do political organizing, and he did a tremendous job, as well as Mairen, Judy, Fahmi, Skip, Rahana, and Wade, along with the 305 volunteers who helped us win our constituency, Mr. Speaker. These folks worked hard. They went door to door, they phoned, they put up signs, they raised money, and they worked hard.

And I want to thank my dad. My dad is now living in Saskatoon. My mother, in the past, has been the person who has looked after the food supplies for all of the volunteers in our constituency, and this time it was my dad that stepped up to the plate. And my dad at the age of 83 has become a tremendous

cook. And people know he knows how to make a good chili, a good stew, a good roast beef, a good roast pork, and he also knows how to do scalloped potatoes. And all of these new things he's learned in the last year and a half as living a life of a bachelor, Mr. Speaker. So I want to thank my dad in particular for really assisting our campaign.

My dad also assisted some young people that were running in the province too, particularly a young woman that was running in Eatonia, or running in Kindersley. She's a marvellous young woman and he made the decision to go and help her because he thinks it's important that young people have the opportunity to come into this Assembly and be representatives of their constituents, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what can a person say about a Throne Speech? And what can a person say about the actions of the Sask Party since being sworn in as government? You know, Mr. Speaker, I listened to the Sask Party members over there during their Throne Speech indicate to the citizens of our province that they in fact represent rural people. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I would say that — and I don't like to say this, but it's true — they were boastful about how they represent rural people in this province, and how they have come to represent 60 per cent of rural people, 75 per cent of rural people. And it's true, Mr. Speaker, they do. They represent rural people in the province of Saskatchewan. But, Mr. Speaker, what we will want to observe with great interest is how are they going to go about representing rural people.

Mr. Speaker, we had a group of poultry producers in our Assembly this morning. They came here, Mr. Speaker, because they have faith in the members opposite that they're going to be able to deliver some assistance for those poultry producers because they're in a bit of a pinch right now. And the pinch, Mr. Speaker, is this — they did the right thing. They had some sick birds and they contacted their veterinarian. And, Mr. Speaker, the veterinarian contacted the Canadian Food Inspection Agency because the vet wasn't quite sure what was going on in those barns.

[11:00]

And, Mr. Speaker, as a result of doing the right thing, the CFIA destroyed, destroyed 50,000 birds. And they're now in the process, Mr. Speaker, of trying to find the money to clean up those three chicken barns. And, Mr. Speaker, the industry has come forward and agreed to provide \$100,000 in support. But these gentlemen don't have the \$125,000. They have some money, but they don't have the \$125,000 to get those barns cleaned up. And, Mr. Speaker, they came to this Assembly this morning seeking answers from the members opposite because they believe that that party there, with all of the words that they said prior to the last provincial election campaign, would step up to the plate on behalf of rural people and farmers and producers in particular.

And what did we witness this morning, Mr. Speaker? We witnessed a dodge. We witnessed the Minister of Agriculture who, time and time again, when he sat in a chair over there in opposition, called upon the Government of Saskatchewan to do something for agriculture producers in the province. And I would just remind the member of this, that BSE [bovine

spongiform encephalopathy] was also a federal responsibility. BSE was also a federal responsibility. And he called for the Government of Saskatchewan to do something, to step up to the plate. And we did. We did.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have some producers in the province . . . And let's remember this. As a result of avian influenza in Canada, that border is now shut. It is shut for the entire feather industry in this country. They can't ship an egg across the border. Ostriches can't go across the border. Meat can't go across the border. Nothing can go across the border because of the outbreak on that farm north of Regina. And what do the members opposite say to people who believe in them? They say, call the federal government, Mr. Speaker.

Well you know the members opposite are kind of cozy with the federal government. They know all about their cousins in Ottawa. And what has he said? Has he said, I'll go to Ottawa on your behalf? Has he said, I'll write a letter on your behalf? Has he said, I'll pick up the phone on your behalf? He has said absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of those poultry producers that were in our Assembly this morning.

Now, Mr. Minister . . . The minister has said, Mr. Speaker, that it's a federal responsibility. Well, Mr. Speaker . . . And then he parrots back what apparently our government said for 16 years. Well I have 16 years . . . or not 16 years — when did you get elected, 1995 — I have 12 years of the Minister of Agriculture's words in this binder. And, Mr. Speaker, his actions, his actions do not meet the words that he spoke in this Assembly and outside of the Assembly for the last 12 years.

Mr. Speaker, no sooner, no sooner had this government been sworn in . . . I think they were still over at Government House. After they were sworn in as government, the Premier, no sooner — I think it was that night — instead of talking, the Premier talking about his star candidates that were now cabinet ministers, what did he talk about? He told the entire people of the province that the place was broke; that the finances, I think, were stark. That what's the Premier said. And then a few days later he said well you know, maybe it wasn't that bad.

And then the Minister of Finance comes out and he says, well you know, it's manageable. And then what did we learn when the mid-year financial report was tabled with the citizens of our province? We learned that we had \$1.9 billion in cash — billion, b-i-l-l-i-o-n — \$1.9 billion in cash.

Now I ask the citizens of our province, I ask them this: what government, what incoming government . . . And we can go back a very long time. We can go back to Tommy Douglas. We can go back to Thatcher. We can go back to Blakeney. We can go back to Devine. We can go back to the Romanow government. We can go way back. I almost feel like the Friendly Giant. We can go way back, Mr. Speaker, and not one government in the history of the province has ever come into this Assembly as a government and had \$1.98 billion in cash, Mr. Speaker. Not one government has ever come into the Assembly, walked up the steps of this Assembly and had an economy that was running on all cylinders. Not one government has ever come into the Assembly with the highest population growth in Canada prior to them getting here, Mr. Speaker. And not one government has ever walked up the steps of the

legislature that had an economy like we have.

And what do the members opposite try and do? They try and spin us, spin us, that we're in stark, dire straits. Well, Mr. Speaker, we know that that's nonsense and the people of the province know it's nonsense because on coffee row, people were exasperated by these people trying to spin them a line that the place was broke. Well, Mr. Speaker, so then shortly after, they acknowledged that well maybe things aren't that bad. It's not stark. It's manageable.

Then they provide a couple of press releases. The first press release announces that they are dismissing eight deputy ministers and then shortly thereafter they dismissed an associate deputy minister.

Now five of these nine people have 132 years of public service. Barb MacLean, the deputy minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation had 28 years. That was a pretty long time to be a public servant. And I think Barb MacLean was a young person when she entered the public service in the province of Saskatchewan. John Wright, 31 years of public service. He too was a young person when he entered the public service of Saskatchewan.

Bonnie Durnford, 21 years. She too was a young person that entered the public service of Saskatchewan. Lily Stonehouse, if you count her regional college service, her SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] service, and her government service, 30 years of service to the citizens of our province. And then Paul Osborne, 22 years. One hundred and thirty-two years of dedicated public service to the people of the province.

These people are career civil servants. Mr. Speaker, I've had the honour as a cabinet minister in working with several of them. And I can tell the people of the province that not once, not once did these dedicated public servants ever indicate to me that they supported a particular party whether it was Liberal, Conservative, NDP, or something else. Mr. Speaker, they acted as dedicated professionals who were there to serve the people of our province, Mr. Speaker. That's what they were there to do and, Mr. Speaker, that's what they did.

What did the people opposite decide? That they were going to take 132 years of dedicated public service and send it down the road, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier has confirmed that this little exercise will probably cost the taxpayers of this province \$4 million for nine civil servants.

And, Mr. Speaker, they have indicated in this Assembly during this session that they are going to fire more people. There are more people coming. And when we asked them, when we asked them, are there career public servants, people who have dedicated their working life to the citizens of this province — are they going to be gone? — not once would they answer the question. Not once would they tell us whether or not dedicated career public servants, who came into the public service as young people, spent their working life on behalf of the public, not once would they say that there are people like that that they are not going to fire, Mr. Speaker.

Well along with that little press release where they announced

the people were going to go someplace else out of government — these people with 132 years of public service — they announced their new chiefs of staff. And what did they tell us? They told us that they were going to double their salaries. So, Mr. Speaker, \$10,000 a month.

But I did notice, when we read those questions yesterday that we asked, that the women cabinet ministers, their chiefs of staff earn less than 10,000, but there are several male cabinet ministers where their chiefs of staff earn 10,000 or more, Mr. Speaker. And I guess I want to know what's wrong with the Minister of Tourism that her chief of staff doesn't get \$10,000. What's wrong with First Nations and Métis affairs? Cathe Offet, who is a long-term ministerial assistant — she served in the former Devine administration — she doesn't get \$10,000. Or the Minister of Social Services. Why are the women cabinet ministers, Mr. Speaker, why aren't their chiefs of staff quite at the top with some of the male cabinet ministers over there, Mr. Speaker? I want to know why don't they make as much money.

Now, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. I call the members to order. I call the members to order. I invite the member from Saskatoon Nutana to proceed.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, the member over there from . . .

The Speaker: — I call the member from Indian Head-Milestone to order please. The member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Now the member over there is having quite a little hissy fit . . .

The Speaker: — I'd just invite the member to proceed with her comments, and not directly involve the other members, and speak through the Chair.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well through you, Mr. Speaker, I note that the Minister of Health is having quite a little hissy fit, and he's saying that I am bringing civil servants' names into the House who can't defend themselves. Well, Mr. Speaker, the five civil servants that I've talked about are gone. They no longer work in the public service. They are the five who were fired.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think I can talk about chiefs of staff. And you know why? Because they are political staff. And what I said was why would Cathe, who I know, Mr. Speaker, why doesn't she make \$10,000 a month? I've noticed that the male cabinet ministers have several . . . or have chiefs of staff that make this kind of money. I'm just asking the question: why is it that she's not making that kind of money when she is a long-term chief of staff? She knows how to serve a minister, Mr. Speaker. But you know, I guess that's something they'll have to figure out for themselves, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I also note that they want to rebrand government. I note that they are going to go to ministries away from departments. And when you look across the country, which provinces call departments ministries? Well I think Alberta does. I think Ontario does, and I think that came through in the Mike Harrison government. And I think BC

does, Mr. Speaker. So I guess that's kind of a Tory thing to do.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if you look at Wikipedia, I do note that there's another ministry, there is another ministry that will be . . . There's another ministry called, I think it was in *Harry Potter*, and they were make-believe ministries, Mr. Speaker. And I also, who was the other guy that had a ministry? I can't quite . . . Oh, *Monty Python*. Oh yes, the ministry of silly walks, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think this ministry thing is kind of a Tory thing to do.

And then, Mr. Speaker, let's talk about Domtar. Let's talk about Domtar. Now, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, what did they decide, what did they say before the election? They told us that we better have a timeline to get this mill up and running because we have an integrated forest industry in the province of Saskatchewan and we had to have a timeline. Get that mill up and going now, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, people worked hard. They worked really hard to find someone who was interested in restarting the mill, and Domtar stepped up to the plate. And we entered into an agreement with Domtar. And in fact the fellow from Prince Albert, who became a member of this Assembly, he promised that a vote for him was a vote to reopen the mill and get people working again.

And what was the first thing that they did before they even spoke to Domtar? Did they phone Mr. Royer? Did they talk to anybody at Domtar? Did they talk to the mayor? Did they talk to the forest industry advisory committee? Did they talk to the workers? Did they talk to Darryl, even . . . I mean, pardon me, did they talk to the member from P.A. before the minister went out at 3 o'clock on a Friday afternoon? Note the time — 3 o'clock on a Friday . . .

[11:15]

The Speaker: — Order. The member knows you're not to make note of a member's presence in the Assembly. Thank you.

Ms. Atkinson: — Did they go and talk to anybody before the minister went out at 3 o'clock in the afternoon and said, that deal is ripped up? No, Mr. Speaker. So much for consultation. They didn't even have the courtesy to contact the president of a large company that, you know, Mr. Speaker, people in the forestry industry in some parts of the world rely upon for jobs and contracts in small business. They didn't even have the courtesy to phone him and have a discussion about this before they did it, Mr. Speaker.

And then, Mr. Speaker, not only did they rip up the Domtar deal, they can't tell the people of Saskatchewan what they're doing to get the place up and running again. They don't have a plan. They don't have a timeline. They have nothing, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, then I want to talk a little bit about essential services, essential services. Well it's very interesting. I know that the Minister of Health prior to the election told, I think it's about 35,000 health care workers in the province — who, by the way, their contracts are coming up, some of them — he told them, we don't need essential services legislation. No, we don't need it. Don't worry, be happy. You can vote for us. We won't put essential services into legislation; we can negotiate it. We

don't need legislation. And then what happens? Then what happens? These members come up the steps of the legislature into this Assembly and they decided to introduce essential services legislation.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there are 100,000 unionized workers in this province. There are over 60,000, as I understand it, public sector workers in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, they try to lead us to believe that this is balanced legislation, just kind of like Manitoba. But I note that Manitoba's legislation doesn't include the University of Manitoba or The University of Winnipeg. I note it doesn't include municipalities. I note it doesn't include police officers. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have to ask this question. Did they tell the police officers in this province, the police unions, that they were going to introduce essential services legislation before the election? Did they tell the three members of their caucus who come out of the police profession in this province that they were going to introduce essential services for police officers? I don't think so.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the member from Sutherland, was she told that they were going to take away the right of police to strike by essentially allowing employers, Mr. Speaker, to designate people that do not have the right to go on strike? Did they tell the Minister of Tourism that we're introducing essential services, Mr. Speaker? I don't think so. Did they tell the member from P.A. that they're taking away the police officers' right to strike? Because, Mr. Speaker, I can imagine that they will need to have many police officers designated as essential services, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I suspect not. I suspect they did not come clean with the police associations of this province and tell them that they were introducing essential services legislation into this Assembly. In fact I suspect they told them that they wouldn't be covered by this legislation. And, Mr. Speaker, they are. The police are covered by this legislation, and I suspect they told them that they were not going to be covered.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I know that we will have many more things to say, many more things to say about their agenda in the days ahead, Mr. Speaker. We know this. We know this. They are going to, quote, "go to war on working people in this province."

And, Mr. Speaker, we know this, that they believe that they represent rural Saskatchewan. Well, Mr. Speaker, we will see. We will see. We will see what they do to their friends in rural Saskatchewan. They promised them that they would stand up for the livestock industry, the poultry industry, the hog industry, school divisions to keep rural schools open.

Well we'll see. We'll see whether or not at the end of this four-year term what kind of evidence we have to support their views that they're going to stand up for rural citizens. Because I suspect at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, that they will treat rural citizens no different than they treat working people in this province. And then we'll really know who they stand for. And I suspect, Mr. Speaker, there are a few of their friends that they'll work for. There's a few of their friends that they'll work for. But at the end of the day working people and farm families and rural families will be let down by the members opposite.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, I'd ask leave of the Assembly to introduce a guest.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Member may proceed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to introduce a guest seated in the west gallery. My daughter, Lindsay, has arrived from Calgary. I think she was up at about 4:30 this morning to catch a flight and has arrived here in Regina and will be travelling home with me, I believe this evening when we're all finished, and she'll be spending Christmas at home with family. And I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming Lindsay back to the province of Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a privilege to enter the debate with respect to the Throne Speech that was read here in this Assembly, well just under I guess, two weeks ago now.

Before I begin, Mr. Speaker, let me take the opportunity to congratulate you on your election, acclamation to the Speaker's Chair. I think what you've heard from members on both sides of the aisle in terms of congratulations is indicative of, well of the reputation that you have earned — after a very many years in this Assembly — for honesty and for integrity and for fairness. And we've already been witness to that here in the early days of this new Legislature. And I just want to congratulate you very personally on this and welcome your leadership here in this Legislative Assembly.

I also want to offer a congratulations to the new Deputy Speaker for the Assembly. I've seen him as well in that Chair looking, well a little more comfortable than you might want him to look, frankly, when he's in that Chair, Mr. Speaker. And we also have appreciated his officiating over the proceedings and his presiding over the proceedings and look forward to the fairness that he will bring to the job as well.

I have a number of other thank yous to make to those who are

around me today. I am very grateful to each and every one of these new, well newly elected members — some newer than others; some a little older, Mr. Speaker; some a lot older, Mr. Speaker. But I want to say for the record how grateful I am to all of them for their support as a leader of the party and I also want to say in an extended way to their respective teams in their areas, to their families, to the party — to our Saskatchewan Party if I may — through the Assembly.

A big thank you on behalf of Tami and I for all the very personal support and encouragement that we have received since the ides of March 2004 when I had the privilege and honour to become the Leader of the Opposition. And we saw that support in our family and our house to just an amazing degree in the immediate time before the campaign and during it. So I say to my colleagues here thank you very, very much for that.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — I also want to say, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to single too many people out, but a new government has to be able to have a successful transition. And there's a couple of thank yous in this regard.

I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Riversdale. We met immediately after the election and plans were in place, including the government — the former government — making the first necessary severance moves in terms of the political staff of the government. They were also — with a few exceptions that had nothing to do with the hon. member — very co-operative just in terms of the physical move and the rearrangement that occurred. And I want to say for the record that I am grateful to the member for Riversdale and to the members opposite for their co-operation in those early days of transition.

As I also would like to thank the civil service of this province, the professional civil service, who have also worked hard and were actually working hard — just in case, I assume, in a contingency sort of a way prior to the election — to be ready to provide advice to a brand new government. And I want to thank them all because we have appreciated that advice and we have leaned on that advice in many respects. So we thank them as well.

And from our perspective on this side of the House, I think on behalf of all members here, I want to thank the member for Canora-Pelly, my friend the Deputy Premier, for his leadership on transition. He has just done an excellent job in what can be a very difficult task and answered questions publicly and privately and I thank him today.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — I have some thank yous to make to people in Swift Current if I may, Mr. Speaker. And I know the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Nutana, went quite long, so I hope I can perhaps have the indulgence of members including the huge numbers of members that have stayed on the opposite side to hear this speech. I hope I have their indulgence to maybe go a little bit longer this morning as we saw from the member for Nutana.

I do want to say thank you to the people that helped with our campaign in Swift Current. I wasn't there. In the two previous elections in 1999 and 2003 I had a goal, and we met the target. We met the goal of knocking on every door in Swift Current or almost every single door in Swift Current. I don't think there's any better substitute by the way, campaigning, than to be on the doorsteps and talking to people, and that was my priority in the first two elections I ran in.

Mr. Speaker, this time I was unable to do it because we had to knock on other doors in other great places, in other great places like Greystone and Regina Wascana and Regina Qu'Appelle and well, before the election, up in Carrot River Valley where not too long ago I made a poor decision to actually fly with the hon. member for Carrot River Valley in a plane that he was piloting.

But we, Mr. Speaker, we didn't get a chance to door knock in Swift Current at all, to campaign there at all. So you can imagine how heavily we relied on the team in Swift Current to get to every doorstep because we did get to every doorstep in Swift Current. We wanted to make sure that everyone in Swift Current received the Saskatchewan Party platform, "Securing the Future." We wanted to make sure they saw what it is we were offering, the vision that we have for the province. And I think just north of 70 per cent of the vote is a good indication that the team did a great job in Swift Current and the platform that we're now implementing was well received.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — So thank you to Shanuna Fjaagesund and Crystal Martens and my parents, John and Alice Wall, and the campaign Chair, my very good friend Bryon Campbell, and Dwight, and many, many others in Swift Current too numerous to mention for all their work in Swift Current in the election campaign.

And if I may, Mr. Speaker, let me just say again, as I enter the Throne Speech debate, that I wish to thank my wife Tami and our kids, Megan, Colter, and Faith. They are obviously a source of great and ongoing support, probably more than I deserve on certain days. And that has really been true since November 7, since the election campaign. And I just want to say for the record again thank you to Tami and Megan and Coulter and Faith for the stuff they have to put up with because their dad has this interest and now this new job. So thank you to them.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Why is the member on her feet?

Ms. Eagles: — With leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The member from Estevan may proceed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Eagles: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I want to

introduce someone very special in my life. My husband Vic is in the west gallery and accompanied by my daughter-in-law Marnell. And, Mr. Speaker, as you know, Vic has been through many challenges this last while, and I just ask all members to welcome him.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, just if I may as well welcome Vic to his Legislative Assembly, and Marnell. It's a great pleasure to see him today. Certainly it always is a pleasure to see Vic. He and I often can share comments about what it's like to put up with the member from Estevan. And we just welcome him here and it's great to see Vic.

[11:30]

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.]

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we're debating a Throne Speech that really has no surprises in it. There's not a lot of surprises in this particular Speech from the Throne and you know there shouldn't be, Mr. Speaker. There shouldn't be very many surprises in it because we've just come through an election campaign in the province of Saskatchewan and political parties made their case to the electorate. And one particular case was more successful than the other. One particular platform did earn a majority government, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — And so it ought not to surprise anyone that a brand new government would like to get to work on that platform. It might surprise a few that this actually, this time period between the election day and the Throne Speech was the shortest in the history of the province of Saskatchewan — shortest period of time between an election of a government and a calling of the legislature to get to work. That might surprise people.

But what ought not to surprise anyone is that this document, the Speech from the Throne, that was read from the — well ironically enough, coincidentally enough — from the Throne, is full of the ideas that we campaigned on, Mr. Speaker. Because when we were campaigning in the election, and when we were proposing our ideas and making our commitments we weren't just passing time, Mr. Speaker. We were making commitments that we intend to keep that we are already keeping in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the number of commitments that have already been kept — we went over a little bit in question period today — I think are a source of surprise. I think most people in the province of Saskatchewan, when they consider the list of commitments of promises already kept after only a month of a brand new government being sworn in, is clearly . . . would be a surprise to most.

Consider, Mr. Speaker, that on the first day right after the election, and it's referenced in the Throne Speech, but right after the election we kept our first promise. And I remember the headline in the *Leader-Post*, it was a talk poll about 75 point font, and it said, "First promise kept."

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — And the promise that was kept, Mr. Speaker, of course was that we need set elections, fixed election dates in the province of Saskatchewan. For far too long, and usually, usually in the hands of the members opposite in their party, games would be played with the calling of an election. Maybe, maybe . . . I can remember the first election I ran in when the Leader of that NDP Party, the then premier, when the leader of that party tried to manipulate the date of the election because he knew rural Saskatchewan was upset. He knew rural Saskatchewan wanted no more of his government.

So what did he do? He called an election during harvest, Mr. Speaker — right in the middle of harvest. He thought, he thought, Mr. Speaker, that it would be just a cute little trick to make sure that those folks in rural Saskatchewan couldn't make their point, their case in the election campaign.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I remember that election campaign. And they shut down the combines. They took time early in the morning. They lined up at polling stations to send a message to that party that disrespect for rural Saskatchewan, the ignoring of rural Saskatchewan wasn't on.

The NDP didn't get that message in '99. They didn't get it in 2003. But I think they got it on November 7.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — So we have said no more games with election dates. And you know what? You give up some political capital, I guess — small "p" political capital. That's why the NDP would never make this change. They'd talk about it but never make it.

Because you know there would be those who advise a political party, perhaps all political parties, that if you give away the chance to manipulate or set the election or ramp-up spending or making a bunch of promises or ramping-up advertising prior to an election, if you give that up it's just not politically smart. And so we ought not to give it up by going to fixed election dates, Mr. Speaker. That would be the advice that they got and that they obviously agreed with, because they never did it.

I think all political parties have heard that same counsel before. But there are some political parties that would say, well that's not good enough. Because this place isn't about us. It's not about the political apparatchik of members opposite or any

other party. It's about the people of the province of Saskatchewan. They deserve to know the date — the date on which they can either rehire or fire the government. And that was the first promise kept, the Bill introduced in this session of the legislature already, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — We said, Mr. Speaker, that we would cut the used car tax, the NDP used car tax. Mr. Speaker, that has already been done. That promise has already been kept. And I think that PST used car tax became a bit of a metaphor for that election campaign. You know people were thinking about maybe buying a new car or new used car, perhaps some of them, when they heard about the promise. And I think they were probably looking out at their driveways. And some of them — myself included — would be looking at, well a used car that's getting a little old and . . .

An Hon. Member: — An old Dart.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Yes. An old . . . Well it's a Scamp, actually. The hon. member for Cannington, it's a Scamp. And I might be looking at that thing. Well it is getting a little old and a little worn out. Tired and old might be the definition for a car. Maybe, maybe we ought to trade up, they might say.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as it turned out, in the election campaign the people of the province looked at members opposite, looked at the NDP and said, they look pretty tired. They look pretty old. The emissions are far too high. Maybe it's time to trade up, they said. And they did it on November 7. So we kept that promise.

We also promised before the campaign to have a smaller cabinet. Promises kept. Promises kept, Mr. Speaker. We promised that we would undo, that we would not honour the last-ditch, political desperation that was really a trick on the people of Prince Albert — that Domtar deal that didn't exist. \$100 million of taxpayers money risked in the wake — in the wake, Mr. Speaker — of an \$800 million taxpayer loss on a pulp mill in Meadow Lake that went bankrupt. In the wake of that, they made this desperate pitch to the people of Prince Albert who saw through it for what it was.

And by the way, to members opposite and to the member for P.A. Northcote, they still are seeing through what was obviously a political desperation — a tactic and a trick by the NDP to try to win the next election. And we committed that we would not follow the folly of previous governments, that we wouldn't put money into mature businesses in this province any more, we wouldn't risk taxpayers' money in that way. But rather, we would focus on the fundamentals. And with respect to the Domtar deal, Mr. Speaker, the promise was made and the promise was kept.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — We promised, Mr. Speaker, tougher laws for drunk drivers. We promised to crack down on drunk drivers. We said, look if you are a three-peat offender, maybe you ought to lose your vehicle. Maybe we ought to give prosecutors the authority in this province, as one other jurisdiction has done, to seize that vehicle. We made that promise in the election, Mr.

Speaker. We've kept that promise in the first month of our government.

We promised in the election a new growth and financial security Act with four-year projections, unlike what we got from members opposite who sort of forgot to attach the four-year projection with their last budget, Mr. Speaker. Sort of forgot to attach the fact that the Finance officials — the same Finance officials now advising the Government House Leader and the Minister of Finance — were telling that government if you don't get spending under control, you could face a \$4 billion cumulated deficit over four years, Mr. Speaker. That's what the officials were telling this government. That's what they ignored. And that's what they failed to tell the people of the province.

Well we committed to disclosure and transparency in the election. We committed to a new financial security and growth Act. We made the promise in the campaign. We've kept the promise in the first month, Mr. Speaker. It's been introduced in this Legislative Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we promised a brand new form of economic development in the province, where we would take the politics out of the economic development cycle. And politics has far too long played a role in the decision of how taxpayers' money is spent and how we do economic development in Saskatchewan.

It's not a partisan statement. It wasn't just the NDP. It's been literally every party before that. And we've seen how that's worked for a province. With all the resources we have in Saskatchewan, the province hasn't grown in population — is now, is now — but hasn't grown, hasn't grown since 1929.

And so our economic plan, our Enterprise Saskatchewan plan asked a question: isn't it time to try something new? Isn't it time to let the private and the co-operative sector create the jobs in the province? Isn't it time to listen to labour and post-secondary and the municipal sector and First Nations and business, and come together to deal with our economic challenges, come together to ensure this current boom is a lasting prosperity for all the people in the province? We think it is time.

So we talked about Enterprise Saskatchewan during the election campaign and prior to that, Mr. Speaker. And words are not as important as actions. Members are right about that. So the Minister for Enterprise and Innovation introduced the Bill already this sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would rebalance the labour laws of the province. For too long in Saskatchewan there has been an imbalance. Too long in Saskatchewan there has been an imbalance between the power of the union leadership in Saskatchewan, ceded to them by those NDP members opposite when they sat here, an imbalance between the power ceded to that union leadership and the people of the province whose services . . . the services of course

are owed to them whose treasury it is.

This province, the economy itself, the services we provide belong not to any member in this House — not to you, Mr. Speaker, not to Mr. Hubich, They belong to the people of the province.

And so we committed in the campaign to make sure that there were essential services agreements in place. That's what we said in the election campaign, that there would be, before a strike, essential services agreements in place.

Now one way to do that is to rely on the voluntary agreement of the union leadership. That's one way. We saw with the CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees] strike that that doesn't always work. Sometimes it does work. In the case of the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses, they have done a very good job of responsibly laying that out. But it doesn't work in every case.

So our commitment in the platform — remember that, Mr. Speaker — was to make sure that these essential services agreements were improved so the other option is to legislate it. The other option is to make it the law of the land.

And I've noted with interest, I have noted with interest the verbal gymnastics of members opposite as they have mischaracterized comments made by myself prior to the election campaign. They've said well, they've said nobody ever mentioned essential services law before the campaign. And the member's . . . well the member's smiling. He'll be interested in this. They said nobody ever mentioned essential services legislation or a law before the campaign. Well here we go. January 12, 2007 — earlier this year — here is a headline from a national newspaper. I think it was the *The Globe and Mail*. Here is the headline: "Sask opposition pushes for essential services law . . ." That was 11 months ago: "Sask opposition pushes for essential services law . . ."

So I won't hold my breath, Mr. Speaker. But I think if hon. ladies and gentlemen opposite were to do the right thing, each of them would stand in their place and apologize for misrepresenting what we have said.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . You didn't have to have access to the national paper. You didn't have to read *The Globe and Mail* to know that because on CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] news, here's what the reporter said earlier this year when SGEU [Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union] was threatening to take snowplow operators off of the highways of the province of Saskatchewan.

You remember that, Mr. Speaker? I do because this party, the Saskatchewan Party stood up and said, no way. No way should that be happening in the province of Saskatchewan. We did say to the government of the day, if one snowplow operator is not available to ensure that motorists in winter can travel on a safe highway, then we do need legislation to make sure they're on the job.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — And here's what the report said. "The Sask Party is . . ." and I'm quoting, Mr. Speaker from a CBC reporter, Colleen Underwood who said in the stand-up at the end of her story, "The Sask Party is proposing . . ."

I'm going to slow down here, Mr. Speaker, for members opposite: "The Sask Party is proposing legislation that would force workers deemed essential to return to work."

Mr. Speaker, we have absolutely talked about the essential services requirement in this province. And you know members opposite are going to have to make a choice when this Bill is voted in the spring. How will they vote, Mr. Speaker, when this Bill comes forward?

Remember what it prescribes. It simply says to unions and employers: look, you've got 90 days, and you have to hammer something out because public safety and health care is more important than any union, than any employer, than any strike. You're going to have to hammer it out.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Now the political ally of the NDP, the SFL [Saskatchewan Federation of Labour] who give money to the NDP, who sit on all their boards, they don't like this Bill. The head of the SFL was very angry about it out in the rotunda yesterday. They want this . . . They call the Bill draconian. That's what the SFL has said.

[11:45]

So there's the Labour critic member opposite, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of members opposite; what will they do when the vote comes on this Bill? Whose side will they be on? Will they be on Mr. Hubich's side, who represents union leadership? Or will they be on the side of those who might need cancer care, who will be facing a work interruption? Will they be on the side of motorists who deserve a safe highway? Will they be on the side of Saskatchewan residents who will need to know that there are safe streets or that there are protective services out there or that there ambulance services out there?

Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you what. I'll tell you what. This side of the House will come down firmly on the side of those who deserve to know that those essential services on health care and public safety are in place. We're going to vote with the people of the province of Saskatchewan on that Bill. How will the members opposite vote, Mr. Speaker? That's what . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Because then all of the hot air about essential services we've heard for the last eight days, all of the hot air from members opposite is going to seem like pretty thin, pretty transparent if, in the spring, they finally come to their senses and say — you know what? — we're going to have to vote with the people. We're going to vote with the people of the province of Saskatchewan who deserve this essential services. And I encourage them to do that. I encourage them to get their priorities right.

Mr. Speaker, we have also . . . But we've committed certainly

to do that prior to the election. We very specifically committed in the campaign platform document to amend the trade law, The Trade Union Act of the province of Saskatchewan. Here are some of the radical ideas that we have long thought should happen with respect to trade union law in the province.

We believe that if there was a secret ballot to decertify a union, that maybe there should be a secret ballot to certify a union. We believe, we believe that in the course of the certification or a decertification, in a responsible manner, an employer, an employer who's creating the jobs . . . And I'm sure employers in this province, and members would agree, are going to do whatever they can to make sure their workplaces are safe and their employees are maximizing their income and there is fulfilment from work. That our Bill would say something as radical as those employers, women and men, across this province should have the right to communicate with unions during certification and decertification processes. Not unfair labour practices, but the right to communicate, to provide some information — that was the second radical notion that the Act proposes.

And here is another one, Mr. Speaker, that is that the NDP and Mr. Hubich called draconian. They say that this is draconian. That we would change the labour laws of the province, The Trade Union Act, to say that if a union and an employer negotiate an agreement longer than three years, if they in good faith and freely collective bargain agreement longer than three years, they ought not to have to come to this Legislative Assembly for permission because that's the laws under that NDP government.

They not only . . . They don't trust employers in this province, the NDP. They don't even trust union leadership, which is the group that gives them a lot of political donations because what they would say to the unions of IPSCO and IPSCO itself, the employer. When IPSCO negotiated some long term . . . wanted to compete for some long-term contracts, when those two groups freely and independently collectively bargained an agreement that would be for five years, in the interests of the company, in the interests of the employee, that government made them come hat in hand and ask for permission to do that.

Well that's the third radical change that the hon. minister has tabled in this Assembly. We're saying if you . . . [inaudible] . . . an agreement for one year, two years, three years, or five years, we say, God bless you and go about your business. That's what we say.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — We also promised them, Mr. Speaker, that we would have lower political costs than the outgoing government. I was shocked to see the Premier's own personal staff budget when I got into this job. I couldn't believe it — almost 300 grand a month in wages. Well, Mr. Speaker, the overall political cost of the brand new government is going to be a lot less than it ever was under that tired, old government — now clearly a tired, old opposition.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we've gone beyond that. All

those items, by the way, is referenced either specifically or indirectly in the Throne Speech so that you will know that I'm certainly on . . . continue to be on point in the address in reply, Mr. Speaker. I would also want to point out though that we have not stopped at that, that there are some other issues that our ministers have been working on, left over by the NDP government. And I'll share a few of them with you if I can.

The Minister of Agriculture, for example, has already been working on something we had long called our provincial government to do. We wanted the old, tired NDP government to show some leadership on CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization], work towards some improvements, because that program needs a lot of improvements . . . negative margins, reference margins, some other issues that we had always raised.

Well guess what, Mr. Speaker, guess what? Our new minister and the new Ministry of Agriculture, the deputy, the staff, our new chief of staff, have made it a priority. And they're not obviously responsible for all the changes. But our government has already contributed to positive improvements to that program, Mr. Speaker, that we called for. That's very positive for farmers in the province of Saskatchewan. That was something left undone by the previous government and the previous minister who's been, I think, suitably and very adequately replaced by a brand new member for Regina Qu'Appelle, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — We were also left a bit of a mess with respect to the bus pass program for low-income residents in the province. The previous, the outgoing government had not done its homework, had frankly let down the city of Saskatoon, most municipalities — ignored them actually — and the new Minister of Social Services a month into the new government, it is already fixed to the pleasure and to the support of both mayors and councils in Regina and Saskatoon.

And finally the Minister of Finance has been busy because he did inherit those four-year projections that demonstrated that the NDP were not keeping a control on spending. And, Mr. Speaker, those controls will happen in a responsible way. We will get spending under control. This government's hallmark will be about fiscal responsibility, fiscal probity, Mr. Speaker, as we continue to grow, as we continue to grow the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the last campaign was pretty informative about the choices, about the choices. Mr. Speaker, what we saw in the election campaign was a desperate NDP that was prepared to say absolutely anything to get elected. They were prepared to say absolutely anything to get elected, not just about what they were proposing, but also about the Saskatchewan Party.

And the fear tactics we saw, the fear tactics we saw in this election were absolutely ridiculous. I think it shocked the people of the province of Saskatchewan. And the member from Dewdney is smiling from his seat. He always claims to be one of the . . . a member of the brain trust of his party. So the brain

trust of his party decided, going into the last election, that their only hope, their own desperate hope to try to cling to power was to scare the people of the province of Saskatchewan — to scare seniors, to scare anyone they could find. Well, Mr. Speaker, the people of the province saw through it; their own party supporters saw through it.

I note with interest a letter to the editor in my own Swift Current paper by an individual that I know and respect, but who I don't agree with politically, Ms. Barbara Campbell. She is a New Democratic supporter and has been for some time. And you know when Lamb Chop, the dog-faced sheep was produced by the NDP, that wolf in sheep's clothing campaign — do you remember that, Mr. Speaker? — this individual wrote this letter to the editor. She said:

I'm a member of the New Democratic Party, and I feel very strongly that members and voters deserve better than this.

She says:

The NDP had better start talking about itself, and its own record — both the accomplishments and the mistakes.

She goes on to say:

. . . I am embarrassed at the way the NDP [have] received . . . drought-stricken farmers . . . I was there, and I saw their lukewarm reception . . .

And her letter goes on, Mr. Speaker, very disappointed in the tactics.

Not just the people of the province but their own supporters hung their heads in shame, in shame, when they saw the scare tactics that were attempted to be perpetrated by members opposite. We heard stories from Yorkton, Mr. Speaker, that NDP campaigners were saying, if you vote for the Sask Party, you're going to be kicked out of your seniors' home; you're going to lose your health benefits. That's the kind of thing that was going on in the election campaign.

We saw the nonsensical *Monty Python* ads with disembodied heads floating around. They said Enterprise Saskatchewan would actually be about privatizing assets in the province of Saskatchewan. It just didn't end, Mr. Speaker. It just didn't end.

One thing, one thing though did end, Mr. Speaker. What ended was their opportunity to ever do that to the people of the province of Saskatchewan again.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — That's what ended. People rejected the tactics. They rejected the fear tactics on the part of that party, and they chose something else. They chose a positive message. They chose women and men who campaigned very hard and now are working hard to implement the Speech from the Throne. They chose women and men who were campaigning hard on a positive message of growth for the province of Saskatchewan. They chose hope — that's what they chose — in the last election.

And so what have we seen since the election, Mr. Speaker? Well there's a new mood right across the province — rural and urban, north and south. People are pretty positive. They're optimistic about the future.

After the election we saw oil and gas sales break records in the first week of December. We saw the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan after the election announce \$1.9 billion in new investment in Rocanville, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We've seen trade numbers go up, Mr. Speaker. The population is over 1 million. The Riders have won the Grey Cup. And as I said in question period, it would be tempting perhaps under those conditions to call an election because after that election we'd have more positive people and fewer negative people, Mr. Speaker. But . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — But while the member from North Battleford chirps from his seat, he's got something right. Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. We already called it. We kept the promise for set elections, like we will keep the promise in the Throne Speech that we have made, like we will keep the promises of the platform, like we will keep the promise of Saskatchewan. That's why I'll be voting in favour of the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion presented by the member from Estevan, seconded by the member from Yorkton:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor:

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — All those in favour say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — All those opposed say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — I believe the ayes have it. Standing vote. Call

in the members.

[The division bells rang from 11:57 until 12:09.]

The Speaker: — I call the members to order. Those in favour of the motion please rise. I call the members to order. Those in favour of the motion please rise.

Yeas — 36

Wall	Stewart	Elhard
Bjornerud	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	

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. I would ask members to come to order and allow the vote to proceed, please.

Reiter	Bradshaw	Harrison
McMillan		

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

Nays — 19

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

Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 36; those opposed . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The motion is carried.

Clerk: — Correction. The vote was 36, 19.

The Speaker: — The motion is carried.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

General Revenue Fund Supplementary Estimates — December Executive Council Vote 10

Subvote (EX01)

The Chair: — We're here to do supplementary estimates for the month of December, Executive Council. I recognize the Premier and I'll ask him to introduce his officials.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair of committees. It's a pleasure today. There are some, as you know, some supplementary estimates we have to take care of, some housekeeping. And to help us do that it's a pleasure to introduce Garnet Garven, the new deputy minister to the Premier. Just by way of introduction to members, if I may, he comes to us from the University of Regina where he was the dean of business administration. And we're going to look forward to his counsel and advice over the coming years.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[12:15]

The Chair: — The vote before us is central management and services in the amount of 258,000. Question. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: —

Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2008, the following sum, 258,000.

Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Vote 10 agreed to.]

The Chair: — I thank the Premier and his officials for being here today.

Motions for Supply

The Chair: — The next item under committee, of estimates is resolutions. Recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I move:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain changes in expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2008, the sum of \$222,755,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

The Chair: — Also I would ask the Minister of Finance while he's on his feet to introduce his officials.

Hon. Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I welcome to the Chamber the deputy minister of Finance, Mr. Doug Matthies.

The Chair: — Do the members take the question as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Question. Agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain changes in expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2008, which is to extend that they may remain unexpended in the fiscal year, are also granted for the fiscal year ending on March 31, 2009, the sum of \$2,500,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

The Chair: — All those in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — All those opposed? Carried.

I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I move:

That the committee rise and that the Chair report that the committee has agreed to certain resolutions and asks for leave to sit again.

The Chair: — The minister has moved:

That the committee rise and that the committee Chair report that the committee has agreed to certain resolutions and asks for leave to sit again.

Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Agreed.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

FIRST AND SECOND READING OF RESOLUTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of committees.

Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Finance has agreed to certain resolutions and has instructed me to report the same, and to ask for leave to sit again.

The Speaker: — When shall the resolutions be read the first time? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that the resolutions be now read the first and second time.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Clerk: — First and second reading of the resolutions.

The Speaker: — When shall the committee sit again? Recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantfoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Later this day.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance, Government House Leader.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Bill No. 7 — The Appropriation Act, 2007 (No. 4)

Hon. Mr. Gantfoer: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, I move that Bill No. 7, The Appropriation Act, 2007 (No. 4) be now introduced and read the first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has moved that Bill No. 7, The Appropriation Act, 2007 (No. 4) be now introduced and read the first time. Is leave of the Assembly granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave is granted. 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? Recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantfoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. By leave of the Assembly and under rule 72(2), I move that the Bill be now read a second and third time.

The Speaker: — Is leave of the Assembly granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 7, The Appropriation Act, 2007 (No. 4) be now read a second and third time. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second and third reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — I wish to remind the members that His Honour is here for Royal Assent. Would the members please rise.

ROYAL ASSENT

[At 12:23 His Honour the Administrator entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following Bill.]

His Honour: — Pray be seated.

The Speaker: — May it please Your Honour, this Legislative Assembly has voted the supplies required to enable the government to defray the expenses of the public service.

In the name of the Assembly I present to Your Honour:

Bill No. 7 — The Appropriation Act, 2007 (No. 4)

to which I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

His Honour: — In Her Majesty's name, I thank the Legislative Assembly, accept its benevolence, and assent to the Bill.

[His Honour the Administrator retired from the Chamber at 12:25.]

The Speaker: — Pray be seated. Why is the member from Melville-Saltcoats on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — With leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The member may proceed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and, through you, to all members of the legislature George and Esther Haas who played a big part in my successful re-election again this time. And also Neil Mehrer — Mr. Speaker, Neil is the reeve of the RM [rural municipality] of Churchbridge, and George is a counsellor out there. And I'd ask all members to welcome them here today.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Why is the member from Saskatoon Southeast on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — To introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and, through you, to all members of the Legislative Assembly, seated in the west gallery, Philipp Strenger who is a good friend, was a candidate for the Saskatchewan Party in the 2003 election, and I'd like to ask all members to welcome him to his Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Why is the member from Rosetown-Elrose on his feet?

Mr. Reiter: — Request leave to bring Christmas greetings, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The member may proceed.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Christmas Greetings

Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was thrilled to be asked by my colleagues on this side of the House to bring Christmas greetings. There's certainly far more veteran members of the Assembly who are far more capable than I am of doing this, but they asked a rookie, which leads me to believe that probably none of the veterans wanted to do it.

But in spite of that, Mr. Speaker, I'm very honoured to bring greetings on behalf of this side. And Mr. Speaker, next week people around the world will be celebrating the Christmas season with their family and friends. The Christmas season brightens up the entire province. This can be seen not only in lights and decorations, but also in the attitude of people around the province. Winston Churchill said, "We make a living by what we get, but make a life by what we give."

The Christmas season is a time for giving, and the generosity of Saskatchewan people is beyond compare. This is shown through donations to food banks, the Salvation Army, and many other charities. What makes Saskatchewan people so exceptional is that spirit of giving does not end with the holiday season but rather carries on year-round. I feel confident that the Saskatchewan Party government and the constituents of this province share the same sentiments of hope and goodwill.

[12:30]

On behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, it's my honour and my privilege to wish my colleagues on both sides of the House — and indeed all the people of Saskatchewan — a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Taylor: — With leave to bring greetings, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member may proceed.

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I'm happy today, on behalf of the official opposition, our leader, the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, and my caucus colleagues, to wish all in this Assembly — members, staff, Pages, and

support staff — the best of the season and good wishes for the new years.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we are indeed very fortunate to live in one of the safest, the most livable places in the world. And I hope and trust that each and every one of us will take the time with our families and friends over this special time of year to take stock of our circumstances and think of those around the world and here at home whose quality of life could benefit from our collective and individual efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I'm reminded of an old saying about the turtle on the fence post. Mr. Speaker, you know the turtle on the fence post didn't get there by himself. Mr. Speaker, it's very important that we collectively and individually work to help each other, and this is the time of year to think about that more than ever. I wish all members of the House and those who are watching, on behalf of the official opposition, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and the best of 2008.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — Before placing the question, I ask leave of the members to make a statement.

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Thank you. While this has been a short fall session due to the timing of the last provincial election, it has nevertheless been an interesting, informative, and lively session. It would appear members have adapted very well to their role in the Assembly. While most residents who tune into the Legislative Assembly channel observe the role and behaviour of members, there are many others involved in this magnificent building whose work and promptness in responding to concerns enables the roles of the members to move forwardly and efficiently.

Our thanks are extended first to the Clerks at the Table, to the Sergeant At Arms, and the Legislative Pages. We would also like to express our gratitude and appreciation to the Legislative Assembly Services. These offices include the Office of the Clerk, journals, human resources and payroll services, communication and technology services, financial services, Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel, security, Hansard, the Legislative Library, and the Office of the Speaker.

I would also like to thank each and every one of the members of this Assembly for their ongoing commitment to the citizens of our province and for the essential role they play in nurturing our system of parliamentary democracy.

I close by acknowledging the time of year — the Christmas season. I trust it'll give each one of the members an opportunity to pause and count their blessings, renew friendships, and rejoice in the miracle of Christ's birth. Christmas is indeed a message of hope, love, and joy. Chief Joseph however reminded us as well that there are those amongst us who may

not have that same joy, may find it to be sad and lonely. I would ask that as members gather with family and friends to rejoice this Christmas season that you give some thought and time to think of those less fortunate. Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

The motion before the Assembly is to adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — This Assembly stands adjourned until the call of the Chair.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:33.]

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GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Brad Wall
Premier

Hon. Bob Bjornerud
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Crop
Insurance Corporation

Hon. Bill Boyd
Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of Crown Corporations

Hon. Dan D'Autremont
Minister of Government Services
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Liquor and
Gaming Authority
Minister Responsible for the Information
Technology Office

Hon. June Draude
Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations
Minister Responsible for Northern Affairs

Hon. Wayne Elhard
Minister of Highways and Infrastructure
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission
Provincial Secretary

Hon. Rod Gantfoer
Minister of Finance

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Minister of Social Services

Hon. Nancy Heppner
Minister of Environment

Hon. Darryl Hickie
Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing

Hon. Bill Hutchinson
Minister of Municipal Affairs
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan
Gaming Corporation

Hon. Ken Krawetz
Deputy Premier
Minister of Education

Hon. Don McMorris
Minister of Health

Hon. Don Morgan
Minister of Justice
Attorney General

Hon. Rob Norris
Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour
Minister Responsible for Immigration
Minister Responsible for the Workers'
Compensation Board

Hon. Lyle Stewart
Minister of Enterprise and Innovation

Hon. Christine Tell
Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Capital City Commission