



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

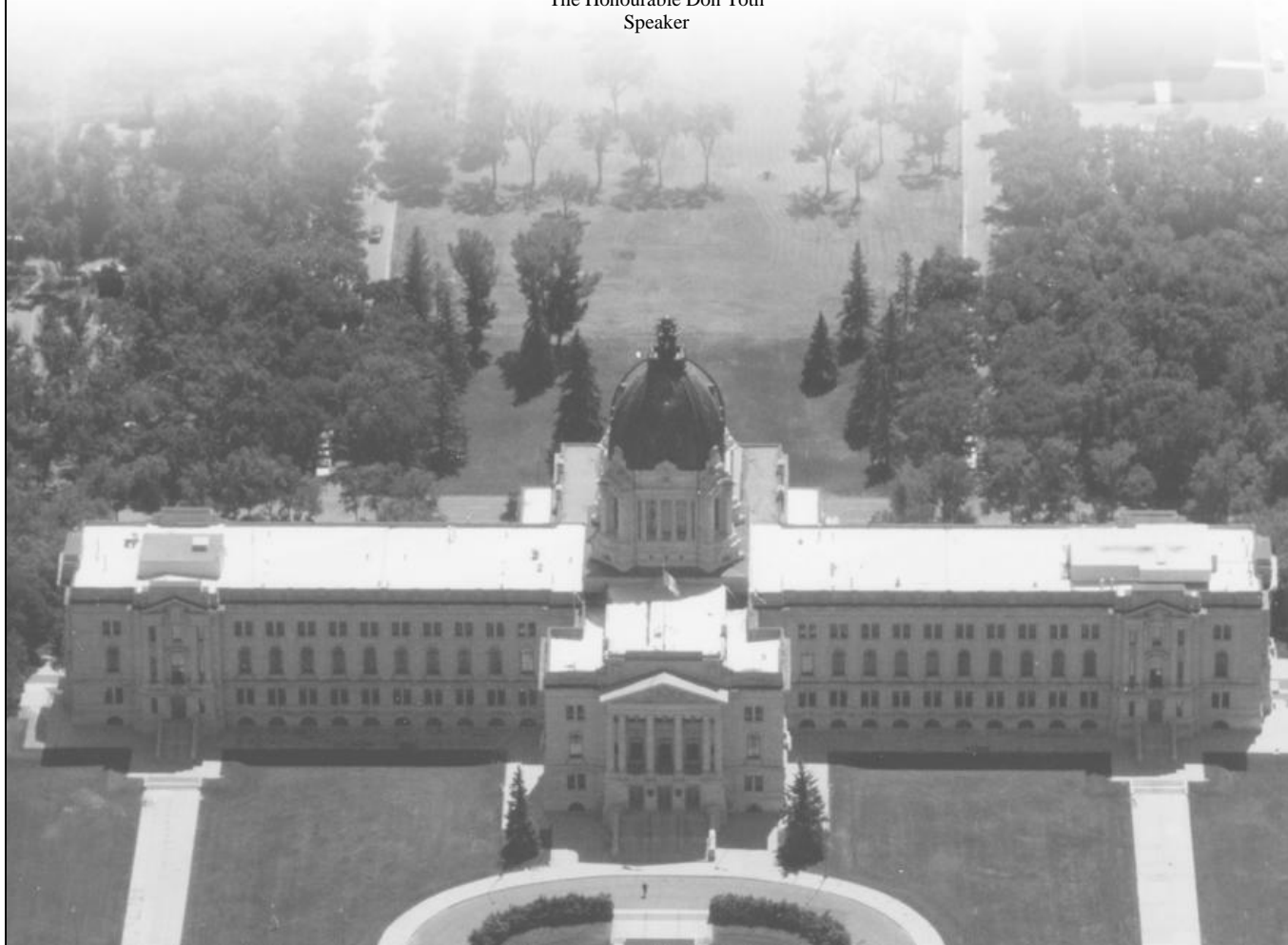
of the

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
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
Vacant		Cumberland

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you my parents, my mom and dad, Jerry and Beryl Tell sitting in the west gallery. And they're back from Arizona. But my dad has been a long-time businessman in the province, in Regina and in the province of Saskatchewan.

And I just want to welcome them here today. They're back from Arizona and ready to get at participating in our community again. So I just want to welcome them here today. Thank you.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to introduce to you and through you to the members and the members of the legislature 42 grade 5 students from P.J. Gillen School in Esterhazy. They have Alisa Leidl, Brett Harrison, and Melinda Schentag as teachers with them today. They have a number of chaperones, Mr. Speaker: Audrey and Nicole Marchand, Kerry-Lynn Geddes, Cindy Hawcutt, Jen Duchek, Dawn Helmeczi, Wanita Lippai, Greg Zimmer, Kelly Morrison, Peter Haugen, Linda Orosz, Wanda Hnatyshyn, Sharon Prazma, and Jackie Tomolak.

I would ask all members to welcome them here today. I apologize; I won't be able to meet with them. I have a prior commitment. My colleague from Kelvington-Wadena will meet with them, and they may think that's actually an improvement, Mr. Speaker. So I ask all members to welcome them here today, welcome to their legislature.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce to you a very distinguished guest — two guests actually — who are seated in your gallery. Joining us today are Regina residents Dave Ryan and his granddaughter, Jackee Welder, has joined him. And maybe I'll just ask them to stand and give us a wave, so we know where they are.

Mr. Ryan is no stranger to this building. He worked here with SPM [Saskatchewan Property Management] in this building for a long time as well as in other buildings — we talked this morning — including the Walter Scott Building. I invited Mr. Ryan here today to thank him on behalf of all of us here in the

legislature and behalf of the government for his service and his family's dedicated service to this country.

Mr. Ryan and his seven brothers all enlisted in the army many years ago. Mr. Ryan's brothers — Percy, Thomas, Arthur, Earl, Don, Leo, and Joseph — all fought for Canada in the Second World War. Mr. Ryan was too young to be engaged in that conflict; however he served Canada in the Korean War. Veterans Affairs Canada has recently acknowledged Mr. Ryan, and we wanted to bring him to the legislature today and also pay our own special respect and tribute to Dave Ryan and his family. He traces his family's roots back to Atlantic Canada, and he says they're watching today for this event. And if they are, we want to pass on a special hello to him.

We had a chance to visit this morning, and Mr. Ryan informed me that he, I think it was in 1951, married a southwest Saskatchewan girl. His wife's originally from Gull Lake, and we just want to pay some respect to Mr. Ryan today and welcome his daughter as well.

And I want to offer this quote from Father Dennis Edward O'Brian with the U.S. [United States] Marine Corps, who once said these very fitting words:

It is the soldier, not the reporter,
Who has given us the freedom of the press.

It is the soldier, not the poet,
Who has given us freedom of speech.

It is the soldier, not the agitator,
Who has given us the freedom to protest.

It is the soldier,
Who salutes the flag,
Serves beneath the flag,
Whose coffin is draped by the flag,
Who gives that protestor the freedom to burn the flag.

Mr. Speaker, we welcome Mr. Ryan and join me in paying respect to his family this morning.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Premier in welcoming Mr. Ryan and his family to the Assembly. I've had the good fortune of knowing Dave Ryan for most of my adult life, and he's an exceptional citizen, a great contributor to our community. I happen to know his children as well, and they're terrific contributors to the city of Regina. And, Mr. Speaker, there is not a better individual in our entire province than Mr. Ryan, and so I rise today with the Premier in congratulating Mr. Ryan and on behalf of the opposition welcome him to his Assembly as well.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's

Loyal Opposition.

Mr. Calvert: — As well, Mr. Speaker, I join with the Premier and the member from Dewdney on behalf of the official opposition in welcoming Dave Ryan to the Assembly today. We share with his family and, I know, his friends and neighbours the sense of celebration that he's been honoured in this fashion, and we sincerely extend our gratitude and our thanks.

I also would want to welcome another veteran to the Chamber this morning, Mr. Speaker, a veteran of a different kind of campaign, let me say, the best MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] that Carrot River Valley never had. That would Mr. Mark Pitzel who served as our candidate in the last election. Welcome Mark.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to present a petition on behalf of my constituents in Moose Jaw and some from beyond the exact constituency. And the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to reassess its decision to close the South Hill liquor store, allowing it to continue to serve the people of Moose Jaw and provide valuable revenue to the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I so present.

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

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition signed by a number of citizens of Saskatchewan concerned about the withdrawal of funding from project Station 20 West. And the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitions humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately restore funding to the Station 20 project.

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

And the petition is signed by numerous residents of both Saskatoon and Regina, Mr. Speaker. I so submit.

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, today it's my honour to present petitions respecting both the essential services Act and The Trade Union Act. And the prayer reads as follows:

That we respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan urge the new government to withdraw both Bills and hold broad public consultations about labour relations in the province.

These petitions, Mr. Speaker, are from Yorkton, Bienfait, Estevan, and of course Regina. I so present.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Meadow Lake.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Record Potash Deal with China

Mr. Harrison: — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan economy is red hot. Just a week ago we told this House about the unprecedented interest in our oil and gas sector, as evidenced by the record-smashing \$265 million land sale. Last Saturday's *Globe and Mail* proclaimed Saskatchewan is the new it province. All this week, the Business News Network has been running a series on all the wonderful economic news about our great province. And yesterday, Mr. Speaker, another record was set. Canpotex, the consortium that markets our potash resources abroad on behalf . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I recognize the member from Meadow Lake.

Mr. Harrison: — And yesterday, Mr. Speaker, another record was set. Canpotex, the consortium that markets our potash resources abroad on behalf of PotashCorp, Agrium, and Mosaic has successfully negotiated a contract with China that will see a 227 per cent — let me repeat that, Mr. Speaker, 227 per cent — increase in the price they will pay for Saskatchewan potash. Under terms of the new contract, representatives in China have agreed to pay \$576 US a tonne for 1 million tonnes of Saskatchewan potash this year. That's up a whopping \$400 US from the \$176 US it agreed to pay in last year's contract.

The Government of Saskatchewan recognizes this growth and the infrastructure needs associated with it. This is why we established the \$1 billion ready-for-growth initiative in this year's budget, and we'll continue to keep our eyes planted firmly on the road ahead, not in the rear-view mirror, as Saskatchewan takes its rightful place as Canada's top economic engine.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Making Canada a Nation Open to Diversity

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last night the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, the members from Regina Rosemont, Regina South, Saskatoon Silver Springs, and myself had the pleasure of attending the Enriching My Canada and Yours, the EMCY's awards gala at the Conexus

Arts Centre.

The EMCY Awards Foundation is a national program that recognizes individuals, institutions, companies, and organizations for their work fighting racism, creating inclusive workplaces, and stimulating dialogue and action on making Canada a nation open to the diversity of the human condition.

Saskatchewan was well represented in the nominees and winners for this first ever national event. Special congratulations to winners Elmer Eashappie, proud member of the Carry The Kettle First Nation in the media category; Reginans Jeanne Martinson, business; Richard “Rick” Engel, sports; University of Regina for universities; and the Sask Intercultural Association, Saskatoon; Hannah Taylor of Winnipeg, youth; city of Regina, city or community; Menaka Thakkar of Thornhill, Ontario for arts and education; and Kai Liu of Ottawa for lifetime achievement rounded out the winners.

I want to thank the president for the EMCYs, Dr. Jawahar Kalra. I want to thank the selection committee members: Renu Kapoor, Pat Hanley, Elmer Brenner, Barb March-Burwell, CJ Rowe, everyone on the gala committee, and all the supporters that helped us to realize that Saskatchewan’s strength really is its people and “From many people, strength” and to help Canada celebrate diversity. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Silver Springs.

Breast Friends’ New Cookbook

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This morning I would like to pay tribute to some remarkable women from Foam Lake, Saskatchewan who have teamed up to fight breast cancer and to support breast cancer patients and survivors.

Breast Friends is a group of 10 women who came up with the idea of writing and selling cookbooks to raise money for breast cancer causes. Besides delicious recipes, the cookbooks offer comforting words of wit and wisdom. Their first two cookbooks have become national best sellers. The third cookbook, *Breast Wishes from Breast Friends*, has just been launched. It already looks like it might be more popular than the first two. Mr. Speaker, the Breast Friends have already raised nearly \$700,000 from cookbook sales.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Yes . . . [inaudible] . . . a round of applause.

This money is being used for things like a mobile mammogram machine, new beds for a rural cancer lodge, and chemotherapy infusion pumps to allow breast cancer patients to be treated closer to home.

Mr. Speaker, many of us have been touched by breast cancer. As Mother’s Day approaches, I hope people will consider

supporting the work of the Breast Friends by buying a cookbook.

I want to acknowledge one of the Breast Friends, Jacquie Klebeck, who is seated in your gallery. Jacquie is the senior administrative assistant in my legislative office. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in thanking Jacquie and the Breast Friends for their selfless contributions to such a worthy cause.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Camp Experience for Saskatoon Students

Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, the Tim Horton Foundation operates children’s camps throughout Canada. Camps are supported by community-based Tim Hortons franchises.

For the past several years, Joni Seaman, owner of Tim Hortons on Idylwyld and 33rd Street in Saskatoon Meewasin, has sponsored a number of students from St. Michael Community School, also in Saskatoon Meewasin.

These students have an opportunity to fly to various camps throughout Canada. Many of these students have been invited to take advantage of leadership camps for the following year. Selected students between the ages of 9 to 12 have come from economically disadvantaged homes. The hope is that the students selected will gain and grow from the camp experience.

The camp is one week long. The Tim Horton Foundation provides everything the campers need. The foundation’s travel program is unique in comparison to others in the camping industry as it includes transportation of the campers outside of their home region. This year St. Michael school campers are headed to Parry Sound, Ontario.

St. Michael Community School is very grateful to Joni Seaman for her continued support in recognizing the value of this experience for the students of the school. And I hope that all members join me in thanking Joni Seaman and the Tim Hortons in Saskatoon Meewasin for their support of this program.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Firefighters Honoured

Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Saturday I had the opportunity to attend the Britannia Wilton 16th annual firemen’s ball where we were treated to a great meal and a fabulous dance.

A special part of the evening was when Captain Ian Brett, communications officer Aaron Buckingham, firefighters John McGerrigle and Craig Robertson were honoured for 10 years service, firefighters Dave Wallace and Joe Kube for 15 years service. A medal of bravery was also given to Captain Shane

Fritsch for his action in protecting a fellow firefighter in the line of duty.

Mr. Speaker, my retelling of this story will not truly do it justice, but I would like to share it with the members of the Assembly just the same. While battling a fire at a production oil facility, some gases caught fire, setting off an explosion. As the firefighters moved to escape the rapidly expanding ball of fire, Captain Fritsch threw himself on top, shielding a fellow firefighter from the wave of superheated gases that blew over, saving both from serious injury. This selfless act of courage while in danger reinforces the respect we have for these highly skilled volunteers, and I was very pleased to shake his hand after he received this award.

Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of the Britannia Wilton firefighters and their service to our community. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

The Priority of Literacy

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the individuals and organizations that participated in the recent Aboriginal literacy forum on April 14 and 15. This gathering in Regina was part of a larger pan-Canadian literacy forum that was held simultaneously at nine different locations across Canada and linked together through interactive technology.

Mr. Speaker, as stated in the values of the Saskatchewan Literacy Network, I too believe that literacy is a basic human right and that literacy training is a social responsibility. When individuals are able to read and write, they are able to feel good about themselves and are able to more fully participate in the activities of commerce and culture in our society. Literacy leads to a stronger economy, healthier families, and more engaged citizens.

Mr. Speaker, although I was not able to attend the entire forum due to House duties, I was able to take in some of the activities on the final day. As I listened to the speakers and visited with the forum participants, I was impressed as they talked about their commitment to improving literacy rates in Saskatchewan, and I was impressed to hear of the various projects that they are pursuing.

Mr. Speaker, while members of this Assembly may have different views on how best to improve literacy rates in the province, I'm sure we can all agree that literacy needs to be a priority for all Saskatchewan residents. And I'm sure we can all agree that the people working in this field deserve to be commended for their dedicated work and sincere commitment to the task of ensuring that every person can read and write.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in thanking the individuals and organizations working to ensure that every citizen is able to reach their full potential through literacy. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

April 18th is a Special Day

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, Friday, is a special day for a special person in my life who also happens to be a dedicated, long-time public servant of this province. Friday night is the official retirement party of my cousin, Tony Walsh, after over 35 years of dedicated service to the people of this province. Not only is Tony a dedicated public servant, but he is also a dedicated family man, a dedicated community volunteer and leader, and a great model for younger cousins such as myself.

Mr. Speaker, upon ensuring many of his friends and acquaintances were invited to the festivities tomorrow, it came to my attention that April 18 is also a very special day to someone we all in this Assembly know and respect and possibly fear. You see, Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is also the 21st anniversary of our own Sergeant-at-Arms's 39th birthday. Mr. Speaker, I'm very sure that here in this Assembly we can't sing, so I'd ask all members to wish cousin Tony a happy retirement and our Sergeant-at-Arms, Patrick Shaw, a very, very happy birthday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Release of Confidential Documents

Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I hope that by giving the Minister of Justice a second chance, we might be able to get some answers for the people of Saskatchewan. The Minister of Justice admits that in his duties as minister, he was told the name of the suspect in the case of unlawfully obtained police files. He says he won't tell the public who the suspect is, but assures us it isn't anyone connected with the Saskatchewan Party. I think the public may desire slightly more evidence than the minister's word.

To the Minister of Justice: will he, in the interest of openness and accountability, tell the public who the suspect is in the case of the unlawfully obtained police files?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the simple answer to that question is no. As Minister of Justice I come into various pieces of knowledge that it is inappropriate to share. If that member when he was minister had released that information, I would have stood up and called for his resignation, Mr. Speaker. And I expect that if I had released that information, that member would have done the same. I have absolutely no intention of releasing that name, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Quennell: — That's not my recollection, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are questions remaining about the Premier's current chief of staff. Mr. Downs stood by on three occasions as MLAs gave false information to the media. The record was not corrected until after a police investigation was launched.

To the Premier: does he condone his chief of staff allowing inaccurate information to be put on the public record? And if he does not, will he ask Mr. Downs to resign?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, this matter was investigated thoroughly by the Regina police. Where there was any misstatements or corrections, they were made promptly. They were made through the police. Any time there was any matter of any significance, it was dealt with, Mr. Speaker. And for that member to stand up now and accuse Mr. Downs of doing something wrong or improper or accuse him of something that would be criminal conduct, I would challenge him to repeat that allegation outside of the House.

The matter, Mr. Speaker, was investigated thoroughly, completely, and accurate, and no wrongdoing was found on the part of Mr. Downs or anyone else within the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have written a letter to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner requesting an investigation into the conduct of Saskatchewan Party MLAs and staff who are involved in the cover-up of unlawfully obtained police files. The people of Saskatchewan deserve to hear the truth. It's clear that members opposite aren't interested in coming clean, so there's no choice but to ask the Conflict of Interest Commissioner to investigate.

The investigation will only be as successful as the Premier allows it to be. To the Premier: will he, his MLAs, and his staff commit to co-operating fully with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's investigation into the events surrounding the receipt and subsequent release of the unlawfully obtained police files?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are

entitled to ask the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, the police, or anyone else to investigate. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, and I can assure all members of the House and members of the public that the members on this side of the House will completely, fully, and promptly co-operate with any investigation that's undertaken, unlike the members opposite who in 1992 chose to engage in an act of cover-up of a fraud that took place in their caucus.

When Pat Lorjé brought it forward in 1994, they once again chose to consciously make a decision to cover it up. And again, Mr. Hagel, when he was a member of this House, chose to take a course of action that prompted him so that he was in this House apologizing and retracting statements that he had made. That is not the conduct that you will get from this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, it's clear from the Minister of Justice's answers that he's not interested in being open and transparent. One of the many questions lingering is why he will not share the name of the suspect with the public, while at the same time assuring them that the suspect is not connected to the Saskatchewan Party. I wonder how many suspects' names the Minister of Justice knows. I doubt it comes down to one, Mr. Speaker, and it's this one.

There are legitimate concerns that the minister is involved in protecting himself, his party, or his associates by refusing to be open with the public. Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: will he ask the Justice minister to step aside until the investigation is completed?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, my understanding from the media is that the investigation is complete and it's not going any further. The indication was — and there's no issue about it — there was not enough evidence to charge anybody in this matter, and so my understanding, there is no current investigation. If the member chooses to make a reference to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, you may rest assured that the members on this side of the House will fully, completely, and appropriately conduct themselves and co-operate with that investigation, unlike what took place in 1992, 1994, and 2007 with the members across.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — And, Mr. Speaker, if that member wants to accuse anyone on this side of the House of doing something illegal or improper, I challenge him to repeat it outside of the House and then he will find what it's like to be on the receiving end of a lawsuit, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Support for Technology Supported Learning

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, school divisions are scrambling because of this government's decision to eliminate the correspondence school and offload the technology supported learning program to school divisions as of next spring. The TSL [technology supported learning] has ensured that rural and remote students access to a wide range of courses including essential prerequisites. Mr. Bob Vavra, e-learning coordinator from the Chinook School Division, was quoted in the *Leader-Post* denouncing this decision. I quote. "[This] . . . is really going to hurt the rural, small-town schools."

Mr. Speaker, it's amazing that while this government has \$1 billion in the bank, they'd be off-loading responsibilities on to school divisions, eliminating the correspondence school, and cutting almost \$1 million from curriculum and e-learning. To the minister: with \$1 billion sitting in the bank, why cut such a valuable program to rural Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, discussions about technology supported learning have been going on for over four years. There has been a process in place that was started by that opposition when they were in government to ensure that more options, Mr. Speaker, more options are presented by technology supported learning.

Mr. Speaker, there are many . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — You know, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite chirp and say, it wasn't us that did it. It was you. Yes. As the Minister of Education I took the initiative to put in place a plan that has been worked on for four years, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there will be a delivery of classes. There will be the opportunity for rural schools and other students in larger centres to have a greater access to classes. Mr. Speaker, we had the SSTI [Saskatchewan Social Sciences Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy] in this building not more than 10 days ago. One of the teachers that I met from Moose Jaw is in fact delivering five classes. Three of the classes, accounting 10, 20, and 30 are online. Psychology 20 and 30 are online. You know, Mr. Speaker, she is going to be enhancing the possibilities to provide those classes to students right across Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize . . . I just want to remind members, till you're called . . . The reason I waited is because

members so close were interfering. It would have been hard to hear the question. I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, a minister can try to excuse himself with some sort of plan within the ministry. He has the authority to make these decisions in his ministry. I find it passing strange that this Sask Party, which paints itself as a defender of rural Saskatchewan, would cut such a valuable program. The TSL program has been offered and has benefited rural students for many, many years. You'd think that with improved high-speed access, declining rural school enrolments would make e-learning more attractive, not less.

Mr. Vavra states, and I quote, ". . . students will not be able to take courses [that] they've taken in the past." The Ministry of Education website still lists these valuable courses from grade 10 English and native studies to calculus 30 and physics 30. Will the minister assure us today that students in all divisions will still be able to access all of the courses they've grown accustomed to and deserve access to, despite the off-loading and the cuts?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, for that member to suggest that there's off-loading and that there are cuts to this program is absolutely wrong. We're in fact going to enhance the program. We're going to work with the stakeholders. We're going to work with the school divisions. We're going to work with principals in schools to understand their needs because, Mr. Speaker, things have changed.

You know, Mr. Speaker, in 1968-69 I took correspondence from this department through the access to Ukrainian programs. I did that, Mr. Speaker. Today we're going to be offering it online. It in fact will be a better program, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:30]

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Now, Mr. Speaker, in the Canora School Division when I was there, students in Canora accessed calculus programs. They didn't do it by correspondence. They did it online with Campbell high school here in Regina. Mr. Speaker, that was in the late '80s. So for that member to suggest that we're moving backwards somehow by implementing technology supported learning and enhancing classes, he's just got it wrong.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's the cuts that are the problem here. It's not whether or not technology has an opportunity in education.

I'm starting to see a pattern here though, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party has handed down a provincial budget which has in essence reduced or offered status quo funding to 20 out of 28 school divisions. Many divisions are receiving reductions far exceeding their loss of students. A meagre \$1 million has been dedicated towards schools of opportunity, enough for a grand total of three schools to access full funding.

The Sask Party plan completely ignores urban Saskatchewan. Save our Schools, SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities], Real Renewal assess changes to The Education Act as not effective, and now they're cutting a program aimed at bringing education to the learner and improving access to our education system.

To the minister: can he explain why both rural and urban schools and students are losing under his leadership?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, I think it's pretty obvious what this government feels, how this government feels about education. Education is a priority. We've shown it in this budget with the Finance minister increasing the Education budget by 25 per cent, Mr. Speaker, unlike that group over there who for years were in fact reducing the grant by a 4 per cent and a negative 2 per cent and a negative 2 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, there are boards who are going to be affected in a negative way. And I'm going to give the member opposite one example. Saskatoon public board, which is the largest board of education in this province, is in fact going to receive less grant money this year than last year. Mr. Speaker, why? Because the assessment in the city of Saskatoon will provide them with nearly \$6 million more without increasing the taxes. That is why, Mr. Speaker, there is a foundation, there's a foundation operating grant that distributes the grant money equitably and thoroughly to all 28 school divisions.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Dental Sealant Program

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You'd think with all the time that the minister had to prepare, he could have done a little better job on his dental sealant answers. While his answers were woefully inadequate on most fronts, they did highlight his complete inability to understand the point of the dental sealant program.

The program he cancelled was a pilot project that helped disadvantaged children get better access to dental care. It was a

program that focused on prevention and improving health outcomes. It was a program that helped the very children who need and deserve that government's utmost attention.

To the minister: why, with hundreds . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Member may place her question.

Ms. Junor: — To the minister: why, with hundreds of millions of dollars flowing into the provincial coffers, is he taking money out of the mouths of disadvantaged children? Is he really that cold-hearted?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I answered the question yesterday as the Finance minister had taken notice. But I'm certainly more than willing to review the facts of the pilot project that that former government put in place.

They put in place a program that was going to see grade 1 and grade 7's receive dental sealant. It was a pilot project in two health authorities, Saskatoon and Moose Jaw, at a cost of \$300,000.

Until the end of March, up until the end of March, 225 students received sealant. That's well over \$1,000 a student to receive sealant. When you go through the private, the system, the infrastructure that's already available through the dentist's office, it would have, that same amount of sealant provided would have cost the government \$24,000, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Minister of Health can complete his comments.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — The decision was a sound decision because when you take \$300,000 for 225 students, extrapolate that over the 12 health regions, their estimate of 800,000 was woefully low, Mr. Speaker. The cost would have been much greater.

Students that are from families of low income receive benefits through the family health benefit. That is still the case.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, the minister misses the point. These children don't go to the dentist. They don't go there to get the benefits. The dentist has to come to them. The minister doesn't have to take my word for it either. If he'd like, he can listen to the health professionals he claims to listen to. He can listen to SAHO [Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations] who in 2007 passed a resolution commending our government on introducing a targeted dental sealant program. And this year they went further, passing a resolution to lobby the government to implement a province-wide dental

sealant program.

And Gerry Uswak, acting dean of the University of Saskatchewan College of Dentistry, called the program's cancellation a disappointment.

To the Minister of Health: health professionals, the very ones he claims to be in step with, say this program is important. With more than \$1 billion in the bank, why is he continuing his attack on the poor?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I find it really quite interesting coming from that member. That government was in power for 16 years. They didn't do a thing for the inner city as far as dental sealant programs. In the last few months of its dying mandate it put money towards a program that they thought would prop up their political interests. I find it very interesting, Mr. Speaker . . .

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — I find it very interesting, Mr. Speaker. The program wasn't offered in the inner city of Regina. It wasn't offered in the inner city of Prince Albert. Mr. Speaker, it was a pilot project to see how cost-effective it would be.

When you look at \$300,000 for 225 students, Mr. Speaker, it wasn't cost-effective. The program will be delivered just the way in Saskatoon the way it is being delivered here in Regina and the way it has been in Prince Albert for the last 16 years under that government, Mr. Speaker.

That government didn't act on it, Mr. Speaker, until the dying days. We looked at the cost-effectiveness and have changed that decision.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, what is the point of unprecedented prosperity if it's not shared with the most vulnerable among us? Middle-class views do not work in these neighbourhoods. These districts were chosen because they were ready to go with this pilot project.

The members opposite are sitting on a mountain of cash with more than \$1 billion, and more is coming each and every day. They continue to tell us how much more money they are getting. Yet they are choosing to put the health of inner-city children at risk to save a few hundred thousand dollars.

To the minister: how does he defend such a mean-spirited and unnecessary cut in the face of Saskatchewan's unprecedented wealth? And more importantly, will he do the right thing for children living in Saskatchewan's inner city and restore the

funding to the program? Will he put his money where their mouths are?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting listening to that question as she says for a few hundred thousand dollars. Number one, she's absolutely wrong. She has no clue of what that program was going to cost when you extrapolate it over the 12 health districts, Mr. Speaker.

But she wants to talk about priorities. Let's talk about priorities.

The priority of this government is to move on human resources, which that government never did, Mr. Speaker. It's to make sure there's enough nurses and doctors in our hospitals to supply the services. But even more importantly, Mr. Speaker, with an investment of \$100 million for infrastructure, as opposed to \$5 million from that government, those are the priorities of this government — to make sure we have buildings and people that can supply the services to all Saskatchewan residents.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Revenue Sharing With Municipalities

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker we've seen a fair bit of policy on the fly this week — the talk of massive property tax hikes being a result of this Sask Party's inadequate budget; the minister denying that there was any problem and defending the 7 per cent increase that was proposed. He told us all to brace for a tax increase and denied that he could do anything to help, even with a \$1 billion surplus sitting in the bank. Finally the Premier just couldn't take his ridiculous answers any longer, and he put the minister out of his misery.

Will the minister finally stand in the House and admit today that his budget failed the municipalities in Saskatchewan, get off this mountain of money, and do the right thing?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Mr. Speaker, I'm sad to report that the unfortunate member from Moose Jaw Wakamow is suddenly suffering from total amnesia. She has completely forgotten that it was her party that shamelessly took \$300 million from the revenue-sharing pool intended to help municipalities. She has completely forgotten that it was her party that crippled the ability of municipalities to meet their

infrastructure needs without resorting to property tax increases. And, Mr. Speaker, she has completely forgotten that it was her party that caused the financial challenges facing municipalities today.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the opposition has completely forgotten all of these things but the new Saskatchewan Party government has not. And we are moving as quickly as possible to repair the damage that they left behind.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Higgins: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister's been dragged kicking and screaming to a point where he is thinking about increasing funding to municipalities, and now ratepayers have to count on him to work out the details in a timely fashion. The minister says there is still much to be negotiated, but it seems to me the only thing that needs to be negotiated is how much money he can convince the Minister of Finance to put on the table.

To the Minister of Municipal Affairs: he's dragged his heels long enough. How much money is on the table, and will he promise to get it to the municipalities before they have no choice but to increase property taxes?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Mr. Speaker, the only kicking and screaming I've seen is on the opposite side of the House in response to our answers to their questions. I understand that.

Mr. Speaker, more amnesia from the unfortunate member from Moose Jaw Wakamow. She conveniently forgets that it was her party that decided that supporting municipalities wasn't that important after all. She forgets that it was her party that took money needed by her own constituents in Moose Jaw for much needed road repairs and decided to buy a potato plant instead.

She also forgets that it was her party that decided that the only time it was worth giving a significant increase to municipalities was, conveniently, just prior to the election in 2007, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the opposition very conveniently forgets all of these things. The current government doesn't forget, and we are acting.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Higgins: — Well this has been quite a dramatic session, I must say, Mr. Speaker. I almost feel like I should be buying a ticket, for heaven's sake. Now the minister also fails . . . If he wants to do a bit of a history lesson, he should go back a little

farther and realize that his party and his cousins left this province in debt up to their eyebrows, and there was reasons for that. Now they moan and groan, but Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. The member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Ms. Higgins: — So, Mr. Speaker, we have to deal with the here and now. This government is sitting on a surplus of over \$1.5 billion in surplus cash sitting in the bank, which they are quite content to keep there. Meanwhile municipalities are struggling to provide the services that they need to upkeep and renew in their areas. Mr. Speaker, it's an issue.

Our government previously, whenever there was money available, we provided an appropriate share to the municipalities. Will the minister provide an appropriate share of their resources and surpluses to the municipalities across Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Shame, shame, shame on the opposition, Mr. Speaker. Only these folks could imagine that after 16 years of disrespect to municipalities, 16 years of systematic neglect of their financial needs, 16 years of clawing back hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars from municipal coffers that need to be spent on road repairs and other infrastructure needs — only this group could leave 16 years of desolation and destruction and expect a new incoming government to provide a miracle cure in 16 days.

Mr. Speaker, if it wasn't so pathetic, if it wasn't so pathetic and tragic it would actually be laughable. It's ridiculous in its extreme. We are seeing disrespect. We are seeing arrogance. They're defining this sort of thing for us. Mr. Speaker, I can't image anything worse. We are fixing the problems that they created and we're happy to do so.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:45]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I'll ask the members to come . . . The member from Kindersley will come to order. And the members will pay attention so we can hear the Bills brought forward.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 31 — The Executive Government Administration Act

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 31, The Executive Government Administration Act be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that first reading of Bill No. 31, the executive government amendment Act be now read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed.

Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 32 — The Executive Government Administration Consequential Amendment Act, 2008/Loi de 2008 apportant des modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Executive Government Administration Act

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 32, The Executive Government Administration Consequential Amendment Act, 2008 be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that first reading of Bill No. 32, The Executive Government Administration Consequential Amendment Act, 2008 be now read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed.

Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 37 — The Parks Amendment Act, 2008

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 37, The Parks Amendment Act, 2008 be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — When members are prepared to pay attention, we will move on. The Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport has moved first reading of Bill No. 37, The Parks Amendment Act, 2008. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed.

Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask leave of the Assembly to move a motion concerning hours.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

MOTIONS

Motion to Revise Sessional Order

Hon. Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move by leave of the Assembly that the order of the Assembly adopted April 9, 2008, regarding the revision of sessional Assembly and committee sitting times be rescinded and in substitution thereof:

That the *Rules and Proceedings* for the sitting times of the Assembly and the sitting times for standing committees shall be varied on an interim basis for the remainder of the first session of the twenty-sixth legislature as follows:

1. Notwithstanding rule 6(1), the ordinary times for the daily meetings and adjournment of the sitting of the Assembly on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays shall be at 1:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. of the following day with a recess from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.
2. Standing committees shall meet and adjourn at the following times when convened:
 - a. on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays: 10 a.m. to 12 noon;
 - b. on Thursdays: 2 p.m. to 12 midnight, with a recess from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.
 - c. on Fridays: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
3. By order, the Assembly and standing committees may adjourn earlier than the sitting periods defined by this sessional order; and further

The provisions of this sessional order shall come into effect the sitting day after its adoption and shall expire upon the adjournment of the Assembly on the sitting day preceding the completion day of the first session of the twenty-sixth legislature.

I so move.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader, the Minister of Finance, that by leave of the Assembly that the order of the Assembly adopted April 9, 2008, regarding the revision of sessional Assembly and committee sitting times

be rescinded and in substitution thereof:

That the *Rules and Proceedings* for the sitting times of the Assembly and the sitting times for standing committees shall be varied on an interim basis for the remainder of the first session of the twenty-sixth legislature as follows:

1. Notwithstanding rule 6(1), the ordinary times for daily meetings and adjournment of the sittings of the Assembly on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays shall be at 1:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. of the following day, with a recess from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.;
2. Standing committees shall meet and adjourn at the following times when convened:
 - a. on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays: 10 a.m. to 12 noon;
 - b. on Thursdays: 2 p.m. to 12 midnight, with a recess from 5 to 6;
 - c. on Fridays: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.;
3. By order, the Assembly and standing committees may adjourn earlier than the sitting periods defined by this sessional order; and further,

The provisions of this sessional order shall come into effect the sitting day after its adoption and shall expire upon the adjournment of the Assembly on the sitting day preceding the completion day of the first session of the twenty-sixth legislature.

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: — Agreed. Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE BILLS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 901 — The Briercrest College and Seminary Amendment Act, 2008

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

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this Bill request is for the name change. It's simply to reflect the expanding role and developing nature of Briercrest College.

Briercrest College is an outstanding learning institution just outside of my home constituency of Moose Jaw North. It's actually in the constituency of Thunder Creek, next to the town of Caronport.

Briercrest College Institute, as it was initially called, opened its

doors in October 1935 in a rented house in the town of Briercrest with 11 students enrolled. Just 10 years later, by 1946, the student body had grown so much that the school rented all of the available space in the town of Briercrest, including the disused Yale Hotel. Later that year, in 1946, Briercrest Bible College Institute purchased the Royal Air Force base in Caron with the task of converting the air base into dormitories, classrooms, offices, and staff housing.

The former air base soon outgrew the town of Caron and took on its own identity known as Caronport. Caronport High School was added to the institution and opened . . . [inaudible] . . . September 1946. A grade school also began in that year. Enrolment grew and many new buildings were constructed to accommodate the growing student body.

In the early 1970s the school began to recognize the need for academic . . . [inaudible] . . . Briercrest became a candidate for accreditation with the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges in 1973 and earned full accreditation in 1976. In 1982 the name Briercrest Bible Institute was changed to Briercrest Bible College. The seminary began in 1983. All of these developments were coupled with the aggressive expansion of academic programs.

Currently Briercrest Bible College has an enrolment of about 1,200 students from Saskatchewan, Canada, and also from around the world. The school's leadership has set an agenda of excellence. It strives to exemplify the best in Christian ethics. Briercrest is also an incredible source of in-migration to Saskatchewan as 10 per cent of the enrolment comes from other parts of the world.

Bill No. 901 is in recognition of the expanded role Briercrest College has assumed. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 901, The Briercrest College and Seminary Amendment Act be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from Moose Jaw North that Bill No. 901, The Briercrest College and Seminary Amendment Act be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Private Bills. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading and referral to the committee.

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

Mr. Chisholm: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Leave to introduce a guest.

The Speaker: — The member has asked for leave to introduce a guest. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. I recognize the member Cut Knife-Turtleford.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Chisholm: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, it's my pleasure and honour to introduce in your gallery a visitor from Weatherford, Texas. Mr. Speaker, my brother Ian is a well-respected individual in the cutting horse industry. He is a breeder, a trainer, a competitor, and a judge.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that we welcome the winningest Saskatchewan-born-and-raised cutting horse competitor to our legislature.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Meadow Lake.

Saskatchewan's Uranium Industry

Mr. Harrison: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today to speak on a motion which I will be moving at the end of the period of debate, a motion respecting the uranium industry in this province, Mr. Speaker, which of course is an incredibly important industry to our province and an industry which offers a great potential going forward.

At the beginning of my remarks I'd like to make clear that our government is committed to looking at all aspects of the uranium and nuclear cycle, short of storage. I mean that's obviously at odds, although we don't quite know where the NDP [New Democratic Party] stands on this issue. But I want to make that clear, Mr. Speaker.

We're committed to seeing development in this industry, an industry which is so important and which offers such incredible potential. And I would like to just kind of go through some of the facts with respect to the industry, Mr. Speaker.

You know, there currently are four producing uranium mines in this province and two mines in pre-construction and project development. The number of people employed at uranium mine sites in 2007 was 2,167 — a very, very important source of employment, particularly in northern Saskatchewan where northern residents make up approximately 53 per cent of those employed in the uranium operations in northern Saskatchewan; approximately 1,155 individuals employed in the industry.

The uranium industry has invested more than \$3.9 billion between 1980 and 2006, and we of course foresee this number, this investment growing into the future because of the commitment that our government has to seeing this industry develop.

The uranium industry generated revenues of \$1.2 billion in 2007, with 24.4 million in royalties coming to the province. Of course this is a very important source of revenue for the General Revenue Fund and we again see this number increasing as we move forward because of the commitment our government has

to developing this industry.

Cigar Lake, which is a project that's currently under development, is the second largest known high-grade uranium deposit in the world — an incredible, an incredible find being developed by Cameco and partners. And the project will provide 300 long-term jobs to the province, not to mention the jobs that have been created in the context of the construction of that facility.

The Midwest project will commence construction in 2008, 2009, and will employ another 100 people when functioning, not to mention the jobs and economic activity created by the construction of that facility.

Saskatchewan's the only uranium producing jurisdiction in Canada and the world leader at 26 per cent of international production, Mr. Speaker. We are the Saudi Arabia of uranium — an incredibly important thing. And we see this as being incredibly important to the future of our province and to the future of northern Saskatchewan more specifically, Mr. Speaker.

[11:00]

In 2006 industry spent \$130 million in exploration — up from 15.4 million in 2002 — largely in response to the increased market demand, increased production in other countries around the world. And as I said, we are the biggest producer in the world and much of the industry focused right here in Saskatchewan. A forecasted large future supply gap of uranium coupled with international desire for emissions-free sources of electricity will increase demand for production.

I think it's important to note, Mr. Speaker, that nuclear power is clean power. There are no greenhouse gas emissions in the production of nuclear power, which is one of the reasons why I find it so surprising the opposition of the party opposite to the further development of the uranium and nuclear cycle in this province.

Long-term demand forecasts suggest the need for 80 to 100 million pounds of production. This is the equivalent of five new mines the size of McArthur River. And McArthur River of course is a very substantial operation in northern Saskatchewan, which I've had the pleasure of visiting, Mr. Speaker, which is a top-class facility operated in an incredibly professional manner and one of the richest deposits in the entire world.

Saskatchewan is the place to mine uranium because we have large, high-grade ore bodies, existing infrastructure, a skilled workforce, a supportive and stable government. And I think that's much more true today than it was on November 6, 2007, with our government who are very committed to working with the industry, to providing assistance in developing the industry. We want to see a vibrant uranium and nuclear industry in this province.

Conversion facilities around the world are aging and being replaced with new technology — and we see that in China and Europe and potentially in the United States as well, Mr. Speaker — and Saskatchewan's been cited as a good location for a new facility. And that's something that our government is very

interested in seeing. We would like to see more development of the industry in this province. We know the party opposite doesn't agree with that position, but we think that there's incredible potential for this province moving forward. Obviously such a facility would attract highly skilled employment opportunities and significant capital investment, Mr. Speaker. We know that it definitely would.

We're committed to providing 22 million over four years to create a global institute for energy, the environment, and natural resources, in partnership with post-secondary institutions and industry, to develop Saskatchewan's research capacity in uranium and energy resources and build a skilled workforce in these important sectors of the economy.

We're also committed to exploring and identifying uranium value-added opportunities to ensure that the people of Saskatchewan can realize the full benefits of our vast resources by embarking on a constructive and respectful relationship with the federal government, which was something we most definitely did not see from the party opposite. The Government of Saskatchewan is exploring opportunities to partner in the field of expanding our participation in the nuclear cycle.

As Saskatchewan continues to develop our resource potential, we're committed to sustainable practice and broadly based consultation with all stakeholders. And we know that there are many stakeholders in northern Saskatchewan who have been impacted and involved with the uranium industry in northern Saskatchewan and we're committed to working with them, Mr. Speaker. And we have worked with them as a government and will continue to do that into the future.

You know, one of the questions we have here, Mr. Speaker, though, is, where does the NDP stand on this whole question? And we've seen some mixed messages here and it reminds me quite frankly of the oil sands debate that we've had. You know we have had the Leader of the Opposition protesting with radical leftists, standing behind a sign saying, shut down the oil sands. I mean, Mr. Speaker, we know that we have tremendous potential in the oil sands industry but we've seen these mixed messages.

This group that the Leader of the Opposition was standing with, this fossil fuel fools group, that same day they were responsible for numerous criminal acts around the world. Yet we have the Leader of the Opposition standing with them, supporting their endeavours, standing behind the sign saying, shut down the oil sands. You know frankly, Mr. Speaker, I think it's irresponsible.

The party opposite has formed government in this province in the past. They aspire to do so again in the future and industry is watching, Mr. Speaker. They're watching. They're saying, what are we going to be? If we're going to be investing billions of dollars going down into the future and we have an opposition party that's standing with groups that are resorting to criminal activities to shut down oil sands operations . . . I think it's really, really irresponsible on the part of the Leader of the Opposition, the Environment critic, a number of other NDP MLAs who attended this protest. Yet we have this mixed message from the party opposite.

You know, there was a motion at the NDP convention, Mr. Speaker, which maybe I'll read to the members opposite that . . . I'll read it here.

Whereas oil and gas are finite and non-renewable resources with a value that will increase as they are depleted;

Whereas our oil and gas revenues contribute to all aspects of life in this province including the delivery of public health and education;

Whereas much of our oil and gas revenues are currently clawed back by a faulty equalization formula;

Be it resolved that Saskatchewan New Democrats support an increase in oil and gas royalties so that we maximize our oil and gas revenue.

This motion was not defeated, Mr. Speaker. This was discussed at the NDP convention and not defeated. I think it's very irresponsible on the part of the members opposite, very irresponsible on the part of the Leader of the Opposition to be putting these messages out there.

Our government's been very clear we are not going to be raising oil and gas royalties, and frankly, Mr. Speaker, that has resulted in incredible benefit to our province. The last land sale was \$265 million, more than we had ever seen, ever seen in the past. More than we have ever seen in an entire year in the past. Why did this happen, Mr. Speaker? Because of the confidence that the people of Saskatchewan and the oil and gas industry have in this government. In this government. The opposition cannot take credit for this, Mr. Speaker. The last two land sales have been because of confidence in our government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Harrison: — And you know, Mr. Speaker, the NDP record is quite shameful with respect to the uranium industry. There was a motion actually brought forward by the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow that said at the NDP convention that they would not consider refining uranium, Mr. Speaker. We just take it out of the ground, ship it to Ontario, ship it around the world. No value added to it, no benefits for the people of Saskatchewan, no benefits for the people of northern Saskatchewan. Take it out of the ground and ship it to Ontario. So the member for . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. It is totally inappropriate for members to be shouting across the floor. If you've got something to discuss, there's lots of room in the other areas of this building. I recognize the member from Meadow Lake.

Mr. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I can understand why the opposition are so defensive about their . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I just want to remind members that when the Speaker calls the House to order, members are not to comment on the Speaker's ruling. I recognize the member from Meadow Lake.

Mr. Harrison: — Right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, the NDP record on uranium really is horrendous. We saw the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow bring forward a motion that would preclude any further development of the industry in Saskatchewan. We had a former member of this legislature and a former minister of the Crown in the previous government, Peter Prebble, who was incredibly opposed to any further development of the industry, a position we obviously don't agree with.

We had NDP platforms actually, Mr. Speaker, in previous elections that called for the phasing out of mining of uranium. I mean these are, these are radical leftist positions, Mr. Speaker. I think it's unfortunate that the people of Saskatchewan would be, would be . . . lose the benefits of our incredible natural resources because of the radical leftist ideology of the party opposite. And you know, we've seen evidence of that in other industries, the oil and gas industry as well, Mr. Speaker.

And I mean . . . I like that comment as well, you know. The party opposite say that they're not the same party as that led by their leader, the member for Toronto-Danforth, and you know frankly, Mr. Speaker, that's just not supported by the facts.

I could quote, I have copies of both the constitution of the Saskatchewan New Democratic Party, or the Saskatchewan section of the New Democratic Party and also the federal New Democratic Party. And you know, frankly, Mr. Speaker, you join one party, you join both; there's only one membership.

They say they aren't the federal party, that the member for Toronto-Danforth doesn't speak for them. But we've seen the positions of the member for Toronto-Danforth who wants to shut down the oil sands industry, who wants to shut down nuclear reactors in this country and presumably around the world, who wants to shut down the uranium mining operations around the country and particularly in northern Saskatchewan. And obviously these positions are reflected in the 11 per cent of the vote that the NDP candidate got in the by-election, but they say they're not the same party. That they're not the party that wants to put more money into the gun registry, but frankly, Mr. Speaker, that's just not supported by the facts.

This party opposite have been captured by the radical left. The Leader of the Opposition, or the real leader of that party, the member for Saskatoon Nutana, obviously want to go even further in that direction, and we think that's a dreadful mistake, Mr. Speaker.

We think that there is huge potential for our industry, for the uranium industry for further development, short of storage as I made clear at the beginning of my remarks. And we think that it's really unfortunate that members opposite would take those positions.

You know, the member for Athabasca said that the people of Meadow Lake made a terrible choice, Mr. Speaker. That's what the member for Athabasca had said earlier. And you know frankly, I think that's, I think that's disrespectful to the people of Meadow Lake, Mr. Speaker, who did make a choice. It's very disrespectful for the people of Meadow Lake, but we've seen that before, Mr. Speaker.

We saw the Leader of the Opposition put out a press release, November 6, 2007, that basically accused the people of Meadow Lake of racism. It was unbelievable — proved to be completely fallacious, completely made up — but people of Meadow Lake have not received an apology from that Leader of the Opposition. We think that's incredibly unfortunate. But, Mr. Speaker, I . . .

The Speaker: — The member's time has elapsed, but we do need a motion on the floor. It's the member from who moved it first.

Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan supports the enhancement of uranium value-added opportunities in Saskatchewan and recognizes the benefit it provides to the growth and prosperity of the people of our province.

I so move.

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

Mr. Taylor: — To enter debate, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — First of all, I just want to remind members that we have precedence to allow the motion. But secondly, it's also important for members to be aware of the time and to have the motion in place before their time elapse.

Moved by the member from Meadow Lake:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan supports the enhancement of uranium value-added opportunities in Saskatchewan and recognizes the benefit it provides to the growth and prosperity of the people of the province.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to enter this debate this afternoon. I think this is an important subject, and I'm glad the members opposite raised this subject for our consideration today.

My only regret, Mr. Speaker, is that I had to listen to the comments made by the member opposite in introducing the debate. He reminds me very much of an editor of a paper that I used to work for, Mr. Speaker. I remember one day when I was watching the editor of the paper go into his office, crank out on his old typewriter an editorial and take it into the composing room, and I was thinking that I'd noticed this on several days previous, several occasions previous to that, Mr. Speaker.

And so I asked the publisher, the editor of the paper, I said to him, how is it that you can churn out these editorials so quickly? Why is it that you don't spend a lot of time doing research and talking to people and gathering information? And he said, he said to me, Mr. Speaker, and he said it very, very clearly and with a smile on his face, Mr. Speaker, he said, you do not need to have facts, Mr. Speaker, just an opinion to write

the editorial.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[11:15]

Mr. Taylor: — Now, Mr. Speaker, every word that the member spoke is all opinion, Mr. Speaker. He's professing, professing to know what goes on at a New Democratic Party convention, Mr. Speaker. He's never even been close to the room. He's never talked to an individual, Mr. Speaker. He's never talked to a New Democrat, Mr. Speaker, about these issues.

Mr. Speaker, this is absolutely incredible to have the member opposite not talking about his own party but talking about discussions that take place in another party, Mr. Speaker, when he should be telling us what the motions were at the Sask Party convention, what the policy discussions have been at the Sask Party convention, Mr. Speaker. He should be telling us what's the rationale behind the position that he's arguing because that's what the public wants to know, Mr. Speaker.

And before I conclude my remarks, I do want to talk about the planning process. And the member opposite I think has an obligation, in fact the right, to say to the people of Saskatchewan from his place what the process has been that got them to where they are today and what process they're going to use to take Saskatchewan forward on this important issue.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we do have a history on this file, and we're very proud of that history on this file. And the members opposite acknowledge that the uranium sector is a world leader in Canada, Mr. Speaker. And we didn't get there, Mr. Speaker, by ignoring the mineral in the ground, by ignoring the industry that wants to remove that mineral, or ignoring, Mr. Speaker, the activities that take place surrounding that.

So, Mr. Speaker, we can review the history of uranium in Saskatchewan. There isn't a lot of time to do that, but I just want to put on the record. In the 1940s, Mr. Speaker, under the members opposite's favourite premier, Tommy Douglas, the uranium companies were invited into Saskatchewan to do business. Then in the 1970s, Mr. Speaker, under the administration of another great premier in this province, Premier Allan Blakeney, the uranium industry grew with the expansion at Rabbit Lake, Cluff Lake, and Key Lake. And, Mr. Speaker, in just the last few years under the administration that many of us have sat with, Mr. Speaker, we've seen a second generation of mining development in places like McArthur River and McClean Lake.

Mr. Speaker, I've toured those projects, and I feel that those projects are contributing to the region, to the province, to the country, and to the world. And, Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of the association and the affiliation that we've had. Now, Mr. Speaker, obviously what I'm trying to say is that over the years that New Democrats have been in government here, our record as far as the uranium industry goes is a very positive one. And it's reflected, Mr. Speaker, by the fact that the uranium industry itself has indicated to government, both directly and indirectly through other means, that in fact they have found the regulatory regime and the negotiations and work with government to be first-rate, Mr. Speaker.

We can spell that out by simply looking at a study released a couple of years ago by the members opposite's favourite research group, the Fraser Institute, Mr. Speaker. The Fraser Institute surveyed mining all across Canada, Mr. Speaker, and they concluded Saskatchewan was the best place to be involved in mining of all the provinces in Canada. A survey of all mining regimes, Mr. Speaker, and the Fraser Institute said mining in Saskatchewan best place to be.

Under what government, Mr. Speaker? Not one that ignores the industry or the sector, not one that doesn't care about where the future of this is, Mr. Speaker. A New Democratic Party government that believes in planning, that believes in an understanding of environmental activity, that believes in an understanding of job creation and regional activity.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when I toured the McClean Lake and the McArthur River projects, I was really proud to learn that a lot of the technology that's being used on those mine sites has been manufactured in Saskatchewan. The companies, Mr. Speaker, have worked very closely with the manufacturing sector in Saskatchewan to build a secondary industry that creates jobs in Saskatoon and Regina, Mr. Speaker. And the mining sector also has taken advantage of communities that are nearby for job creations. Whether it's Prince Albert or Meadow Lake, they are accessing supply points for various other things, including food services, Mr. Speaker. New Democrats believe in the planning process and bringing all the pieces together.

Let's not forget also that in our centennial year the premier of our province at that time called a centennial summit, a business summit. One of the main speakers at that business summit was Jerry Grandey — Jerry Grandey from the uranium sector, Mr. Speaker, and someone that the members opposite sometimes quote as well. What did Jerry Grandey say at the centennial summit? "Make Saskatchewan tax friendly and your investment will pay . . . dividends."

Mr. Speaker, the government immediately went back, listened carefully to the advice given by the mining sector and, Mr. Speaker, in the budget that followed that Centennial Summit, brought forward initiatives that have increased investment in this province because, Mr. Speaker, we paid attention to the tax regime that these companies were talking about.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have a friendly working relationship with the industry and a commitment to ensure that environmental issues are dealt with and a regulatory regime that does that, a regime that takes a look at job creation in the North and, Mr. Speaker, deals with secondary industries.

What record can the member opposite point to that the Sask Party has in dealing with industry, Mr. Speaker? A record that shows that there's no planning involved in this stuff. Just let things happen. Domtar, Mr. Speaker. Do I have to say more? Domtar, Prince Albert. Cancel a deal 18 months in the making. Cancel the deal, Mr. Speaker, saying there's a plan for the industry, the forest sector. And here we are six months later — no plan, no jobs, no work, no prospects, Mr. Speaker. Is that the plan for the uranium sector, the mining sector, potash, diamonds, others? The forestry sector proves, Mr. Speaker, no plan, no activity, nothing to proceed with.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they also talk an awful lot across the way about the next stages including they like to talk about we need a nuclear power plant, a generator in the province. But, Mr. Speaker, I want all the members opposite to know that the Minister of Energy made some commitments to the municipal sector at the SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] convention.

One of the things he said, that a number of things that we need to consider before we go into discussion of the next generation, we currently don't have the demand, Mr. Speaker. He acknowledges in Saskatchewan we do not have the demand for additional power generation. So it's not economic at this point, he said to the municipal leaders. Therefore we have to work on export — exporting power from the province of Saskatchewan.

So that means some planning, doesn't it, Mr. Speaker? Who are the buyers of that product? What negotiations are taking place? How do you move that product from one part of the country to another? You've got to be a part of the national grid. The Minister of Energy, speaking to municipal delegates, committed himself to dealing with the national grid.

So, Mr. Speaker, we haven't heard any of that. We need to see the plan. New Democrats have had a plan, respected plan. The members opposite need to present the plan. They did not do so today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to speak on this motion put forward today because I feel that this single issue is probably a very defining issue between our party and the party opposite. It really clarifies, you know, where we stand and where they stand.

Now the NDP have been clear in the past that they don't want uranium. They're looking clearly in the rear-view mirror at what happened in the past. They're not looking for growth into the future. This Saskatchewan Party, we're looking for growth. We're looking for initiatives that solve problems. Our party is providing solutions today that's going to pay off for our children and our grandchildren. We're not scared. We're not spreading fear, Mr. Speaker.

Now the NDP, they've put forward for the last 16 years their opinions on uranium. They've sent out the message subtly and not so subtly that they don't want anything to do with it, Mr. Speaker. In the '80s even, they were campaigning on the promise of phasing out exploration, not just that they didn't want to produce or value add. They didn't even want to explore for it or produce it. Now, Mr. Speaker, looking back, hindsight would show us that that would be a very, very poor decision, and I'm glad that they weren't in power in those years to do that damage, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, their leader called uranium and nuclear energy the dirtiest fuel for what comes out the tailpipe. Now when the leader, the premier of the province, is telling an industry that they have the dirtiest fuel, what does that say to potential investors? It says don't come here. That says we don't even

really want to sell you the product, but we'll hold our nose, and we'll take your money. Now, Mr. Speaker, that's no way for a premier to speak nor a government to govern, and I'm very heartened that they no longer govern and he's no longer the premier.

Now another issue, Mr. Speaker. They often wrap themselves in the cloak of being the green party, to be the one, the protector of nature. But when something positive comes up like a clean coal announcement, they are the first people to jump up and say no, we don't want clean coal. We don't want that initiative in our province.

You know, Mr. Speaker, just the other night in committee one of their members said that, we understand our commitment to the world and we understand that, you know, an investment must be made. But when it comes down to our government doing something positive and a new initiative for our province . . . They have brought it up in question period. They've brought it up again and again that they would not make an investment in our future in clean coal. So if clean coal's off the table, does that mean that solar is off the table because it too is more expensive than burning coal and putting the fumes out into the atmosphere?

As well as wind power — wind power is more expensive than burning diesel fuel to create electricity. So that party is clearly on the record that they don't want to put their money where their mouth is. They want to burn fossil fuels till the end of time. Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm certain that they wouldn't put forward the idea of tidal energy. I think that they do have enough researchers that would tell them that that's probably not a viable option here in Saskatchewan. But you never know.

Now maybe, Mr. Speaker, their idea was to cut down on consumption, but in their time in office consumption went up. In fact when we took over from them, Saskatchewan had the second worst per capita carbon emissions in the country — second worst. Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that they speak the same language as they act, Mr. Speaker.

You know, they weren't afraid of spending money on the environment though, Mr. Speaker. I will give them that. They spent \$125,000 to bring Al Gore in to talk about the environment. Now you know, Mr. Speaker, if we did the math on the carbon they used to fly his jet in, I don't know if the hot air that Lorne Calvert said in his introduction was enough to help with global warning.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if we want to talk about global warming and future issues as far as carbon and that, Ian Hore-Lacy, a spokesman for the World Nuclear Association said nuclear is the only game in town if you are serious about cutting greenhouse gases. Now, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the members opposite would be aware that this greenhouse gases are an issue and that nuclear has absolutely zero emissions for producing power as far as greenhouse gases — zero . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I will say it again and I will say it slowly. Nuclear energy has zero greenhouse gas emissions, Mr. Speaker.

But maybe, Mr. Speaker, their concern is about the safety of nuclear power. Maybe it's about the radiation. Well I've got a

couple statistics here about radiation, Mr. Speaker. If you live next door to a nuclear reactor, you might get a little more radiation than the normal person. Now if you were to quantify the amount of extra radiation that person would get, it would be equal to eating 30 bananas a year — because there's radiation in wood, in everything. Radiation is a natural component of our universe. Now you could live next door to a nuclear reactor and the extra radiation you would get would be equivalent to drinking 35 cups of milk a year. Now I drink a lot of milk. I don't think that I have too much to worry about.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, we have been producing nuclear power in Canada for about 40 years. Not a single death has come from it. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, another issue that they may want to bring forward for why they're so negative and so against nuclear power is the waste, the output. Now, Mr. Speaker, in 40 years of production in Canada the entire amount of waste, you couldn't fill five hockey arenas up to the boards — after 40 years.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, Ontario is a real leader in this. It isn't that we haven't been producing nuclear power. Our largest province has been using nuclear power for over 50 per cent of its power needs. Now, Mr. Speaker, they made a large investment, and they are reaping the rewards from this. They are our most populous province, and yet they feel it is safe enough to use nuclear power for 50 per cent of their production.

Now, Mr. Speaker, talking about our environment, talking about what we could do to do it better, the nuclear power that we have consumed in the last 40 years has gone a long way to reducing our greenhouse gasses. In fact in the last year the nuclear power we used, had we used carbon fuels, we would have contributed an extra 90 million tonnes of greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere. That is the equivalent of 18 million cars or trucks.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if we took it a broader range, the nuclear energy produced from the uranium mine in Saskatchewan, worldwide, has saved the world 300 million tonnes of CO₂. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a substantial amount, and I think it is something that this province should really look at.

Now, Mr. Speaker, a little bit about the industry here in Saskatchewan. We have a terrific mining potential. We are mining now. It is terrific. In fact two of our mines, McArthur and Cigar Lake, have some of the richest deposits in the world. They are 100 times richer than the average uranium deposits worldwide. Now it's 100 times, 100 times more potent than the average mine worldwide . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the amount of uranium that is in our known mines right now is equivalent of 18 billion barrels of oil — 18 billion barrels — or 5 billion tonnes of coal. Now the amount of greenhouse gasses that would be produced by burning 5 billion tonnes of coal . . . Mr. Speaker, I have children and I hope they have children. I don't want them to be living in a world where 5 billion tonnes of coal is burned.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. McMillan: — And, Mr. Speaker, for far too long we have

taken this uranium out of the ground; we've put it in a truck, and we've sent it out of province. And that government held their nose, and they did that so they could collect the royalties.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's look at the bigger picture. Let's look at Saskatchewan as a potential . . . Let's talk about the Saskatchewan advantage. In fact why doesn't our universities take a leadership role? Why doesn't our universities say, we have a natural advantage in uranium; let's look at it from a positive point of view and do something better. Let's look at taking our raw product, adding value, and maybe utilizing that in this province and exporting that added value out of province. We're talking about good jobs for our people. We're talking about training our people in our universities, exporting them around the world. Let's become a world leader about this, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Speaker, I would just like to talk about my children for a second. They're growing up in a time with global warming is every year more and more and more prevalent. If we don't take the leadership role, if we don't stand up for what's right . . . I don't care what the lobby groups that are against nuclear power . . . like if they have valid concerns, let's listen to them. But let's look at the broader picture. Let's do what's right for my children, for the children of everyone here, and for our grandchildren, Mr. Speaker.

There is so many positive things that we can do with uranium, but holding our nose isn't going to do us any good. Let's be proactive. Let's look at the decisions we've made, and let's make the right decisions from this point forward. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity, and I look forward to voting on the motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, it was with interest that I listened to some of the speeches opposite, and I don't want to re-quote the facts that they used, but they spoke about the strong industry. They talked about the number of jobs that the industry itself has presented to northern people. They spoke about the development and the many mines that are certainly on line, the fact that they have all this great amount of effort being undertaken in Saskatchewan and how great the industry is.

And to the people that are watching and paying attention to this, you know, then they turn around and say, but the NDP and that former government didn't support it. Well, Mr. Speaker, if that was the case, we wouldn't have the industry that we have in Saskatchewan today if there was no support for it to begin with. And the last time I checked, there's never been in the history of Saskatchewan, a Sask Party government — save the Tories in the early '80s — but there's never been a history of that party ever leading Saskatchewan and talking about what they ought to do for the uranium industry.

So all the stats that they have expressed to the people of Saskatchewan and have expressed through their speeches, it

was thanks to this particular government, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the industry itself for putting in those particular investments to show that indeed Saskatchewan is the largest producer of uranium. And we have a good partnership, and we have a long history, not only as a party, but as a government in ensuring that we have good, orderly development of our resources, and that includes uranium development as well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that the quote itself or the motion itself, Mr. Speaker, what I would say is I want to take the role, just for role-playing for a minute. If I was a mining company executive, suppose for a second I was a uranium mining company executive, and I'd seen this motion come forward from the member from Meadow Lake, seconded by the minister of Lloydminster. And I would say to myself as a northern mining executive, I would say, why would they bring this motion forward? Why would they bring this motion forward? If it's just a political ploy, if it's just a political ploy, they're doing more damage than good when you start playing politics with uranium development overall, Mr. Speaker. And that's the danger here.

The danger is when you begin to politicize the uranium development of Saskatchewan for cheap theatrics. You are doing a great disservice to the uranium mining industry, and what you're trying to do is to drive a wedge between industry and the people of the North. And that is not very helpful, Mr. Speaker.

You're driving a wedge because obviously when you talk about mining it, we do that in Saskatchewan. When you talk about milling it, we do that in Saskatchewan. Now we start talking about value adding. We start talking about a nuclear reactor. We start talking about all these other things, and then the member from Meadow Lake gets up and says, oh, short of having this become a nuclear waste dump. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is part of the package, and for the member to say, we're going to take all these good things and not the waste, what he's doing is he's creating more division within the industry, Mr. Speaker.

If you want to do a service, a service to Saskatchewan, if you want to do a service to the uranium industry, you don't pick and choose what particular aspect that you want of the uranium industry. You got to deal with the whole package, Mr. Speaker, and that's why, if I was a mining company executive that worked for a uranium company, I would be absolutely upset at that member from Meadow Lake. And I would be upset at the statements coming across the way, trying to create division within the community of Saskatchewan based on pure politics, based on pure petty politics, and trying to score some political points. At what? At the expense of northerners and at the expense of the uranium industry.

They should leave it alone because northern Saskatchewan people in due time, in due time will work with the uranium industry as they have done historically, Mr. Speaker. They have had a good relationship with the uranium industry. Things are moving forward. We have record number of people of the North working. And quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the uranium industries ought to be commended for some of their work that they have done in northern Saskatchewan.

But hold it, hold it, we want to politicize the process. So here's

a motion made by the member for Meadow Lake to talk about uranium development. And, Mr. Speaker, oh we're not going to talk about some of the other issues attached to uranium development such as nuclear waste, Mr. Speaker.

The industry wants that issue resolved. Industry wants that issue resolved, and what does that member say? Oh we're not going to talk about that. We're not going to talk about that, Mr. Speaker. We're going to talk about what the NDP didn't do. But oh by the way, here's all these wonderful stats about the uranium industry. Those stats were compliments of the uranium industry themselves, working in close concert with the NDP government, Mr. Speaker, to Premier Blakeney, and of course to Premier Romanow and Calvert. Never in the history of Saskatchewan have we had a Sask Party government, so we don't even know their history, Mr. Speaker.

Let's go back to the point of what the member from Meadow Lake was trying to do. He was trying to drive a wedge. He was trying to drive a wedge between northern people, between the environmental movement and between the uranium industry. And that's exactly what the uranium industry does not want to do. So why do you put this issue up for public debate? For cheap politics, for cheap politics at the expense of such a great industry that you profess to support. That is doing a great disservice, Mr. Speaker, not only to the uranium industry but to the northern people as well, Mr. Speaker.

And what the member ought to know as well when you start talking about considering value adding to the uranium chain — which I'm assuming he's talking about a nuclear reactor— Mr. Speaker, for security reasons the United States' position is that no country, including Canada, that is not already enriched in uranium be allowed to do so. It would require the approval of G8 [Group of Eight] group of nations before Canada, and then Saskatchewan could become home to an enrichment facility — very simple. You have to go to the G8 to ask permission to enrich uranium here in Saskatchewan. Did that member from Meadow Lake even think about that? Oh no. No, no. This is all about cheap theatrics and politics.

And you know the industry is saying to people out there, look let's not politicize the uranium industry. And the question I have with the member from Lloydminster or the member from Meadow Lake or any member across the way, if we have a nuclear facility, where's it going to go? On Lake Diefenbaker? Is it going to go to Lloydminster? Is it going to go to Meadow Lake? Is it going to go to northern Saskatchewan? Where's it going to go? Where's your proposal? Where's the location?

And if you're going to build it, who's going to pay for it? Is it going to be the corporations? Is it going to be Saskatchewan government? Who's it going to be, Mr. Speaker?

All these questions and they refuse to give answers. If you want it in Lloydminster, get up and say so if you want to support the industry. Don't just take the cheap way and say, oh we need to support them. We've got some hard questions for them, Mr. Speaker. So you want to start a debate on this? You start it; we'll finish it, Mr. Speaker.

So the bottom line again, if I'm a uranium mining executive, I'm going to tell the Saskatchewan Party guys, you stop playing

politics with uranium, Mr. Speaker. That's what I'd say to them. You leave us alone. You leave it alone because the bottom line is we want to drive the agenda with the northern people. We're going to make sure that we fight the fight on the environmental front.

And, Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure our investment is safe and secure. And when you have theatrics like this today, talking about the silly notion of trying to drive a wedge between the people and the uranium industry of the North, what's going to happen, Mr. Speaker, is you're going to do a greater disservice.

Now the questions are going to fly. Now the questions are going to fly. And we've got a question we're going to ask. You want a nuclear facility. Where's it going to go? If you think you can just choose a nuclear facility and not the nuclear waste dump, well guess again because industry's going to tell you we need both. We need both.

That member from Meadow Lake just started talking about this stuff. MLTC, the Meadow Lake Tribal Council, are doing studies, Mr. Speaker, about a nuclear waste site. There's a lot of people talking about this right now.

So what happens? Along they come with no history on the file, no history on the file — well no history in government. They talk about all the glowing stats about the industry themselves, and some government had to work with the industry to make it happen. And guess what, Mr. Speaker? Not one day with the Saskatchewan Party did industry ever negotiate the uranium development in the North. And, Mr. Speaker, all the glowing praise, it's deserved of this government and industry, Mr. Speaker, over the past number of years in developing that industry and ensuring that northern people got their benefits, Mr. Speaker.

It's still not fair. We still believe in northern Saskatchewan. We need more. We need more, Mr. Speaker. So it's still not fair. We're still fighting. But guess what? The fight is on. The demand is on, and all these questions need to be asked. And the member from Meadow Lake and Lloydminster gets up and they say, oh do you guys support the uranium industry? And what they do, all that is is cheap theatrics and grandstanding. And I can see in the background, Mr. Speaker, I can see in the background, the background of their caucus chambers saying, let's do this for politics. And guess what? It doesn't work. It doesn't work, Mr. Speaker.

So the only point I would make, Mr. Speaker, it's going to have a profound effect. And a profound statement that I want to make today and to make sure I challenge to that member from Meadow Lake and Lloydminster, the question is this, Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — The member's time has elapsed. I recognize the member from Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well it's very interesting listening to the member from Athabasca when he talks about the cheap theatrics and the grandstanding and the politicizing of issues, because that member cannot get up on his feet without cheap theatrics, grandstanding, or politicizing issues. What I'd like to do . . . And he's talking in hypothetical

issues which is very, very common for him to talk about. He talked about which part of the cycle that we would leave out. And yet he is sitting with a government that has been very, very content over all of these years to just use the ostrich theory — we'll mine it, we'll collect the royalties, then we'll put our head in the sand and not worry about anything else about it. The head-in-the-sand theory has been very, very prevalent with the NDP.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to talk about another aspect of the nuclear industry that could have been. That particular party when they were in government just were really against anything in the nuclear cycle other than the mining — and even in fact they were against the mining of uranium. And we've heard from my colleagues about some of the resolutions put forward, that they wanted to stop uranium mining altogether. And how did they convince their people of this? And, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that it was fear. And we know how the NDP operate with fear. That's the modus operandi of a socialist government and a socialist system, is you get into the heads of people and that's how you control them.

[11:45]

Well in the nuclear industry this was very, very prevalent. The current Leader of the Opposition and Peter Prebble were ones that were protesting against the nuclear industry back in the '80s. In fact they voted against Cameco coming into the province. They voted against it, Mr. Speaker. And how did they do that? It was strictly on fear.

I would like to talk a little bit more about the fear because I've had the opportunity to speak on the nuclear cycle on numerous occasions. And I ask people in the audience right off the top, say when I'm going to talk about the nuclear industry, what's the first thing that comes to your mind? Is it weapons, is it Chernobyl, is it Three Mile Island? And invariably the answer to all of those is yes. And then I ask them, I say, how many people do you know that have been saved by the nuclear industry? And there's blank looks. There's total blank looks. And so then I enlighten them somewhat and I talk about chemotherapy. And say oh, does that come from the nuclear cycle? And the answer is yes. That is one part of it that's never mentioned by the members on the other side of the House.

The public in Canada are starting to get a little bit more knowledge about this because of the incident that happened in Ontario where we were short of isotopes for some of the medical procedures. And I think it's more aware now with a lot of the people in the country and I think that's why you're seeing an awful advancement of people's opinion about the nuclear cycle and it should be advanced.

The fear, Mr. Speaker — and my colleague from Lloydminster talked about parts of it — you could be near a nuclear plant and the same radiation, I think he said, was eating a dozen bananas or something like that. Well I'm kind of sorry that he brought that up because now the NDP are probably going to have a resolution that we should stop importing bananas into this country because you might get radiation from it.

In the Three Mile Island incident that happened, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity of flying an air show at Harrisburg. And I

purposely flew over the Three Mile Island facility at low level. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? That night I did not glow in the dark. I may have been a shining light, but I did not glow in the dark. I did not even have the luminous dial on my watch light up. So here again, fear played such an important aspect of the people's minds in this province and around the country because oh, we're going to glow in the dark if we have any nuclear issues such as that.

Mr. Speaker, I talked with one of the company representatives a couple of years ago when the NDP were in power. And it was at a public meeting. And one of the guests at the meeting said to the then president, said, why don't you educate the people of the province about all of the benefits of the nuclear cycle — all of the benefits? And the president got up and he said, we do that. We will spend millions of dollars on educating the people of the province, and he said, the then premier or Peter Prebble can get up and destroy that in about a 30-second clip on the national or the provincial news. And that was the NDP's modus operandi. They wanted to destroy that and keep the fear going amongst people.

Now we've talked about the value of the nuclear cycle. And we know of what happened. They were very much against any processing plants in the province, as we've talked about, being totally against it. And you have to wonder why. Why would the NDP be against enhanced businesses in this province? Why would they?

Well I think that they'd look at it from a political perspective — which they look at everything through political eyes. And if you enhance businesses in this province you get people moving in that are business friendly. I really don't think they're going to vote NDP. And that is why they're against businesses coming into this province — because business people, entrepreneurs, are definitely not left wing socialists.

And now even getting businesses to come into the province, Mr. Speaker, when you have something like a Bill that nationalizes industries — such as the potash — still on the books, if you were a business wanting to come in and spend multi, multi millions of dollars, would you want to come in and invest that sort of money when there's a Bill on the books that still will nationalize it? I don't think so, Mr. Speaker.

We heard from the member from North Battleford, and he was talking, he was going on about, where's our plan? Where's the plan for this? He mentioned Domtar. Well there's the difference between that group of men and women than us.

He talked Domtar, which is a very good topic for them to talk about, which is also very good for us to talk about because they wanted to put \$100 million of taxpayers' money into another business. We were totally against that, but that's the NDP way. They want to have equity investment to control. They want to control.

And all we have to do is look at an equity investment. Let's look at SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company]. I think we've heard that word once or twice before in this Chamber. SPUDCO. They wanted to enhance the business of potatoes, and they put money in in a private-public partnership, which was wrong. We know that the people of this

province were misled on the public-private partnership because there was no private partnership. It was all public money and, Mr. Speaker, that fiasco cost taxpayers \$35 million. That's more of how the NDP want to be in business to control. We think that the government should not be in the business of being in business. We should let business people be in business.

Mr. Speaker, again I want to look at what the NDP have done in the past, and it leads as to why industry has not been moving rapidly into this province until November 7. When you start looking at competing with private industry, dot-coms are an example. Now what would ever possess a government to get involved in dot-coms? Why would they? Why would they?

And what was the result of getting into the dot-coms — \$124 million lost. That's NDP business; \$124 million they lost on dot-coms. And yet at the same time they would inhibit growth within the nuclear cycle.

Mr. Speaker, we can look at other investments that this government has made that really turned sour. Wanting to get into the bingo business, run bingo. And here we're talking about how we can expand an industry in this province, the nuclear industry, and here what they're looking at is running bingos. And lo and behold they lost another \$8 million. \$8 million lost of taxpayers' money because they thought they knew business better than business people.

Yes, it's a shame. And of course the photo ops that they like too. They wanted to get into the ethanol business with Broe industries, and I believe that was just another case of SPUDCO too, that it was a private-public partnership with no . . .

The Speaker: — Member's time has elapsed. I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the chance to talk about the uranium industry in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, it's almost 30 years ago that I first was involved with uranium in Saskatchewan. I started working at a law firm here in Regina in September 1978, and almost one of the first tasks that I had was to fly to Germany to the head office of a uranium company with the Government of Saskatchewan's contract with the company to build the Key Lake road. So, Mr. Speaker, over the last 30 years I have followed with great interest the tasks that have happened and the things that have happened with the uranium industry.

If you remember, in the late '70s when Premier Blakeney was here, there was quite a bit of discussion about the development of the uranium mining industry. And there obviously were hearings and discussions and many people involved to look at, well what kinds of things could be done in Saskatchewan to encourage the development of the industry. This is interesting because it built on the fact that Premier Douglas back in the '40s and '50s invited uranium companies to come to Saskatchewan to look at the possibilities that were here.

But one of the results of the work in the '70s and that into the early '80s was that a number of commitments were made to develop the uranium industry. Clearly, Cluff Lake and Key Lake were the first ones, and those were part of that discussion that Premier Blakeney and that government took place. Now

what happened in the early '80s was quite difficult for the uranium industry as a whole in that a lot of the pricing worldwide collapsed in such a way that it made very difficult to proceed as everybody had anticipated in the late '70s. But it was quite clear that the policies and the hospitality — if I could put it that way — of Saskatchewan people was there.

Also if you remember into the early '90s or I guess in the middle '90s, my former colleague, Mr. Keith Goulet, was minister involved and a member involved representing Cumberland. And he, working together with the uranium companies and with the people across the North, was able to develop, I think, a worldwide first in how to share the jobs and the economic activity around the mining industry.

We know that the types of agreements that were reached in that period are now the model for economic activity in all of the earth because what they did was try to . . . and accomplished getting many of the local people involved in more and more of the technical jobs that are involved in the uranium mining industry and the refineries and things that are up there now.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward, we end up with the uranium industry. It has to be something that's done in consultation with them. And I know that a number of my former colleagues over the last number of years, but especially Mr. Cline in the work that he did looking at all of the things that the uranium and the mining industry required, he spent a great deal of time talking with people. We had the officials in the government working with the industry to look at what options are there.

As well as former minister responsible for SaskPower, both in the '90s and just in the last couple of years, nuclear energy was always something that was being examined in a whole array of energy sources. And that work I'm hoping will continue because what happens is we need to be able to provide energy and the assurance that the lights are going to work in Saskatchewan or that industry will have the power they need to run all of their equipment in manufacturing and other places on a consistent long-term basis.

And so, Mr. Speaker, it's clearly my hope and my colleagues' hope that all of that good work that's happened over the last decades will continue in a reasoned, rational way working with the industry. Now that was always how our NDP government worked, was to say these are the things that we hear that are there. These are the concerns that we have.

One of the interesting issues always comes with the full use of uranium. And it's always an interesting task because uranium has a value right through the whole life of that particular product.

Some people have argued, and I'm not sure I have time enough to talk about all the different options, but some people have argued that you would never, ever sell uranium, that you would only lease it. People would use it for energy, but it would always be owned and the responsibility would be there in the community to deal with the long-term effects of what's left after it's used for energy.

[12:00]

Mr. Speaker, those issues around that particular use and then the long-term consequences are exactly where the nuclear industry as a whole knows that they have lots of work to do. The only way that we'll be able to solve and deal with some of these problems is if we end up working together with them. When you have the issue being used in a way to try to put some divisions within the community, that's not helpful for the industry. It's not helpful for our province.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I think that the NDP governments over five or six decades have shown that they are able to work with the people in the uranium industry, and they're willing to work and move forward in the long term with what's right for Saskatchewan, but more importantly as stewards of this valuable commodity that has a lot of downsides.

Mr. Speaker, the task for the next number of years is to see what kinds of possible positive things can come from the use of that working together with the industry, but also to be very clear and assist them in dealing with many of the negative long-term issues that are there. I know that the industry's quite interested in doing that. I'm hoping that this government deals with this in a rational basis rather than some of the things that we've heard today because it's crucial for not just the future of Saskatchewan or of Canada, but the earth, that we get it right when we're using this type of a product. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed on the 65-minute debate. We now move into the 10-minute question period. I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is in regards to climate change. I will start my question by putting to the members opposite that I would expect that they recognize the premise of climate change and would agree with it as a philosophy. And if they don't, please stand in their place and tell us that they don't believe that climate change is happening. And at that point I won't expect them to answer that question.

But, Mr. Speaker, with that in mind, those members opposite have come out strongly against the clean coal announcement because they don't feel that putting a little more into our environment is good for it. What did they suggest? My question is, what would they do? Would they spend extra money on solar, on wind? Or do they have some technology to harness their own self-satisfaction that we don't know about on this side of the House?

So to the member from The Battlefords, I ask him: is he in favour of the clean coal announcement?

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a very good question. One of the things that is involved with the budget that we're dealing with in this House right now is the fact that you have to change the legislation to allow for the money from the sale of the upgrader which has been designated to deal with the climate change issues within the Crowns.

You have taken that money and moved it across — once you passed the law to make that legal — to spend it on highways and some other places. Now, Mr. Speaker, the issue here is, yes climate change is a clear issue. Nuclear power is one of them. So, Mr. Speaker, I think that we're in a situation where it's very clear what our plan was. I know that we're all watching very carefully to see what the government actually does.

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

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and to the member from Lloydminster who just posed a question and I apologize; I didn't hear the end of his question. He seemed to have directed it at me. I appreciate my colleague answering that question. When he first rose to pose his question, Mr. Speaker, he of course said, and I address my question to the members opposite. So we made an assumption it could be any one of us to answer. When he addressed it directly to me, I didn't hear that.

But my question to the member from Lloydminster is in relation to what appears to be his strong support for a nuclear reactor, power generation in the province.

We all know that the planning process around the nuclear generation includes location. Can the member from Lloydminster tell us, tell the House, tell the people of Saskatchewan if he has a preferred location for the nuclear generation facility that he is supportive of?

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Mr. McMillan: — I thank the member for his question. He's making the assumption that I am for a reactor. I will make the statement; I am not against it. The messages that they put out for 16 years is, we don't want business. We don't want upgrading of our raw materials.

Now this side of the House, we don't send out the message that we don't want to value add. Now at what point it's economical or at what point it's the right thing for Saskatchewan, that's a decision to be made. However if you're talking about what do the people of Saskatchewan think of nuclear reactors, I can speak for myself. As I said living next door to a nuclear reactor is the equivalent radiation of eating 30 bananas a year or drinking 45 cups of milk. Now like I say, I drink a lot milk so on the radiation issue, it wouldn't be a problem for me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Meadow Lake.

Mr. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the member from Athabasca. That member claimed that the party opposite somehow had a good record on uranium, Mr. Speaker. You know the facts are that that party opposite voted against the creation of Cameco. They voted against it. They brought forward a motion at their convention to shut down any future value-added possibility for the uranium industry. They did that, Mr. Speaker. How do they square that?

I mean the industry have told me that the NDP tolerated them because they were contributing money in royalties. Not that they liked them, not that they liked working with them, but the

NDP tolerated them simply because of the revenues that were generated which they could then spend on SPUDCO and whatnot. So you know, Mr. Speaker, my question is how the member squares that record, and also I would like to ask the member to apologize to the people of Meadow Lake for insulting them, insulting them by saying they made the wrong . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to point out that under the vast NDP governments, whether it's Romanow, Blakeney, or Calvert, Mr. Speaker, we built the uranium industry. And that's why I can't figure out and I can't square that particular circle over there as to why they bring the debate forward because the Saskatchewan Party has never had a record of governing, aside from their early '80s cousins. They've never had a record of making decisions when it comes to the uranium industry. It was the provincial government of the day which was primarily NDP government that really helped build this economy and that finally that they're enjoying today. They simply inherited this, Mr. Speaker, and part of the fund that we handed over to them includes uranium development.

Mr. Speaker, history will show — I'm not going to debate all day with the member from Meadow Lake as to the history — history will show and dictate the success that this government — the previous government had — when talking about developing uranium in Saskatchewan. Those guys don't even have a history, Mr. Speaker, so how could they challenge history? And finally . . .

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed. Just to remind members and the member from Athabasca, while you referred to former premiers and you referred to their first names, you must also remember to refer to members currently sitting by their responsibility or their constituency. Thank you.

Order. Time has elapsed on the response to the question. I was just going to try and do it between. I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to ask another question to the member from Meadow Lake who was listening to my remarks earlier. And I talked about the planning process. I'd like to ask the member from Meadow Lake to equate the planning process that he sees the Sask Party would take on the mining sector to the planning process that he's so knowledgeable about in the forestry sector. How the planning in the forestry sector that he's aware of — whether it's around Meadow Lake, Prince Albert, Big River, or Hudson Bay — is of any benefit to us in understanding the planning process for the uranium sector.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Meadow Lake.

Mr. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for his question. You know I think the real, the real issue here, Mr. Speaker, is, how are they going to vote on this motion? We've been clear. Our government supports looking into . . . We're open to any value added in the uranium industry. We still don't know how they're going to

vote on this motion. They haven't made clear in the context of this debate how they're going to vote.

But I would like to note too, Mr. Speaker, the member for Athabasca had an opportunity to apologize to the people of Meadow Lake who he insulted, much like the Leader of the Opposition insulted in a press release he put out on November 6, 2007, accusing them of something that never happened, which they later were forced to acknowledge — in the context of a legal proceeding — never happened. That member has still not apologized much like that member has not apologized. He had the opportunity. The people of Meadow Lake recognize the disrespect that that party opposite is showing to them and they don't appreciate it.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will clearly state that this question is for the member from The Battlefords.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the pre-election fire sale, that member's government devoted \$300 million towards a, quote, "green fund" of questionable direction. Now, Mr. Speaker, our government reinvested that money where it was needed for the people of the Saskatchewan in infrastructure, and we negotiated without stomping out of the room or throwing a tantrum \$240 million from the federal government to go into green energy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, will that member recognize that 300 million into a questionable fund or 400 direct from the federal government . . . [inaudible] . . . Will he support the clean coal initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course we support a clean coal initiative. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we were promoting the clean coal initiative in this province long before some of those members even chose to seek a nomination to seek a seat in this House. Mr. Speaker, we're firmly on record in that regard.

But let's not forget the NewGrade upgrader piece, Mr. Speaker. \$350 million from the sale of that upgrader were being devoted — being devoted — dedicated by members on this side to green initiatives, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite have diverted them to roads and highways and other things, Mr. Speaker. When they brought that money into the General Revenue Fund, they created a \$250 million . . .

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 1 — Non-Partisan Civil Service and Crown Corporations

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

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

Mr. Trew: — I thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure today or my job today — maybe it'd be a better way of putting it — to rise and speak on motion 1. I'll get to why it's my job today not my pleasure so much, in a few minutes. But just to refresh everyone's memory, motion 1 moved by the hon. member for Regina Dewdney is:

That this Assembly calls on the government to refrain from the political destruction of both the civil service and Crown corporations and, in doing so, keep the civil service and Crown corporations professional and non-partisan.

Now why it's a job is, I don't believe that I should have to stand and even speak to such a thing. I think that administrations or governments should just believe in a professional civil service and a professional Crown corporation management and operations staff.

And I say shame on this administration, the Sask Party government for moving in exactly the opposite direction, shame on them for the chilling effect that their firings have had on career civil servants. You know, it's one thing to have some movement in minister's offices or in directly political jobs, but this new government, this Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker, terminated career civil servants, some with more than 30 years experience, and more than 30 years of honourable service to the people of Saskatchewan. And the reason that was given was that they somehow didn't pass the blood test. Well, Mr. Speaker, I say shame on that, because Saskatchewan has a long and generally pretty good history, a long and pretty good history of working, various administrations trying to work towards the development of an ever more professional civil service.

[12:15]

I'm choosing to start with, in the 1940s when Tommy Shoyama headed the civil service. And Tommy was directed to professionalize the Saskatchewan civil service in a way that it had not happened to that point in history. And I'm attaching no blame. Things should progress, and governments should learn from the past and should look for ever better ways of serving the Saskatchewan public.

And so Tommy Douglas recruited or his government recruited Tommy Shoyama to professionalize the civil service. And Tommy Shoyama recruited people like Art Wakabayashi who is known for having gone on to Ottawa in the 1960s. The Lester Pearson Liberal government recruited Art Wakabayashi, Mr. Wakabayashi, down to Ottawa.

And what was smilingly referred to as the Saskatchewan mafia really was a powerhouse in the professional civil service of the national Government of Canada. And it's a real credit to a

relatively small, by population, province like Saskatchewan that we could wield such incredible power from such a distance, if I can describe it that way. We could actually offer much to the nation in terms of how to professionalize a career civil service.

I know that recruitment took place through the '40s, '50s, '60s, and beyond. And there was always a view that there should be an ability for people to move up from within the civil service. Always that was an important feature of our professional civil service because all of us want an opportunity to progress. All of us want to get to ever more responsibility through our working careers. We want to feel good about what we're doing. And certainly civil servants want to be utilized to the best of their natural ability.

They also though . . . You can't simply recruit from within. There has to be some external recruitment, Mr. Speaker, and that has happened. We've recruited, I think it's . . . In my experience I've seen, for instance, deputy ministers come from other jurisdictions. They've developed some skills, skill sets, something that they have to offer, and they're ready to move up but perhaps there's a blockage in their province. There's no opportunity for them to become for instance a deputy minister.

And Saskatchewan actively recruits. Other provinces actively recruit our deputy ministers. I don't mean to leave the impression it's a one-way street, and it's as it should be. You move people around. You can't simply hire deputy ministers from other provinces either. I'm not suggesting that. You recruit many, develop many from within Saskatchewan.

Over time Saskatchewan's civil service and Crown corporation employees, I'll describe it that way, professional Crown corporation staff have been treated with respect and treated with fairness. And in exchange what's happened is governments of various stripes tend to ask for good advice, good policy, and good delivery of service. And I think that's an important feature of a professional public service.

The problem I have, Mr. Speaker, is today I'm standing speaking to a motion that urges the government not to do what the government has been doing so far. It's urging the government to stop the wholesale firing, stop spreading fear in the civil service and throughout the Crown corporations. We're saying it's not acceptable to say out with the professionals and in with people that simply pass the blood test, because that's not a good way to recruit. It's not a good way to establish a professional civil service.

A meritorious and professional civil service should be capable of serving the public interest competently and effectively. These are some of the hallmarks. Their recruitment procedures need to be based on merit and the professional qualities that the applicant has, and not on their personal or political allegiances. It should be based on merit and what they have to bring to the job.

It goes without saying, Mr. Speaker, that if you can do that when you're hiring people, surely, surely you should be doing that at the other end of a person's career. Surely you don't simply throw out 30-year career civil servants because you think — you think — they might not be giving you the political advice or the advice that you want to hear. That's a dangerous

precedent, and that's unfortunately what we've seen too much of.

I want to refer to a January 25, 2008, article in the *Saskatoon StarPhoenix*, and it says that the purge of the Saskatchewan civil service is harmful according to a political scientist. And I'm referring here to Ken Rasmussen who's the director of the Johnson-Shoyama graduate school of political policy at the University of Regina. And I'm going to use one quote from Mr. Rasmussen, and it's simply to show that the 30-year career civil servants that were fired in January, in December and January — December last year, January this year — it's wrong. The quote that I'm going to use from Mr. Rasmussen is, quote:

This government hasn't done anything yet. How would you know what kind of advice they're getting from the public service?

And he goes on and of course talks about that being "destructive political culture."

The point that is made, and I should refer . . . Mr. Rasmussen says, shame on New Democrats for trying to raise this because, you know, it is a situation that should be above all of the politics. And I'm just acknowledging that Mr. Rasmussen has said that, but I think his words are profoundly important. And I know that some hon. members opposite will say shame to me for using this.

But I raise this simply in the context of a defence of a professional civil service, Mr. Speaker, and professional Crown corporation employees. Shame on any government for firing people without giving them the opportunity to at least give some advice.

I feel compelled, Mr. Speaker, to remind myself and others that in 1991 when we formed government, there was many people, many people that complained to me directly — and I passed the complaints on — that we weren't cleaning house. Then Premier Romanow, the new Premier Romanow wasn't cleaning house to an acceptable level. Many people complained. I admit I passed those complaints on. Remember now, Premier Romanow had won a massive, massive, decisive electoral victory, had lots and lots of seats, had the clear majority of the Saskatchewan votes. And he had all of that going, but unlike 2007-2008, unlike this period, Premier Romanow largely resisted, largely resisted. He told us, it's enough; we've gotten what has to happen. He resisted because he was determined, Mr. Speaker, not to put a chill on the professional civil service. He was determined that civil servants should feel that they could provide advice to the best of their ability to the, in that case, it was the new government of the day.

But civil servants, career civil servants have a fiduciary duty, have an obligation to provide the best advice that they possibly can within their professional understanding. And we have an obligation, in opposition and in government, to support that notion.

Mr. Speaker, we've had a situation not only of civil servants being terminated, but we've had the spectacle of officials, ministry officials, being blamed — in the case of Social Services — for not getting the budget right. And we saw a flip,

a change in actions in that, and it was department officials that were officially blamed. And then lately, more recently, just a couple of days ago, we see the minister for Saskatoon Silver Springs, the Minister Responsible for the Crowns, now overruling SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], now saying that SGI has to limit and restrict its activities, its attempts to earn, to diversify its book of business outside of Saskatchewan. It has to restrict that.

And I point out that something like 25 per cent of the surplus that SGI enjoyed, the profit that they enjoyed in the past year, came from out-of-province business. And why I make anything of that is twofold. Of course the first thing is for today's purpose, Mr. Speaker. We have a situation of a government minister telling the Crown corporation, you can't do what you've been doing. You cannot continue to expand your book of business outside. The minister's saying, I know best. I know best. That's what we have.

And the other thing I want to point out why it's important for SGI to be able to do business outside of Saskatchewan and it's simply this. We can have and we've had major storms in our major cities. We can have them anywhere. But it's particularly devastating for an insurance company if you have a lot of residential insurance policies and a major flood or some other natural disaster comes along, and all of a sudden the insurance company is on the hook for tens of millions of dollars of damage, where if you spread the geographical risk then if you have a major storm in one area, you haven't lost half of your business, so to speak. You haven't unduly harmed yourself. The whole nature of insurance is of course that you provide insurance services and the insurance company pays when there is a reason to do so. So it's a matter of the minister saying, we know best. And that's always a dangerous precedent to have.

The other thing before I leave the Crown corporations, I want to express my distress at the firings that took place in the Crown corporations. Our Crowns in Saskatchewan are broadly supported by the people of Saskatchewan. We've enjoyed three years of the lowest-cost utility bundle in all of Canada despite the fact that we generate a fair amount of coal-driven electricity. And coal is more expensive than, for instance, Manitoba's hydro or British Columbia's hydro.

We have relatively expensive electricity compared to some of our neighbours but we enjoy the lowest auto insurance premiums in all of Canada — I think in all of North America, but certainly in all of Canada. And it's no mistake. We've enjoyed that year after year after year after year after year, decade after decade, and that has to do with SGI being a very, very well run Crown corporation. It has to do with the Auto Fund and the way that has been set up to serve the people of Saskatchewan.

The Crowns enjoy huge support from Saskatchewan people. But what we have, Mr. Speaker, is a situation where we have a new government that has campaigned, campaigned — they made their bread and butter campaigning — that they're opposed to government being in business. In other words they're opposed to Crown corporations.

[12:30]

Well they won the election. Absolutely. Won the election. Then what did they do? They fire professionals within the Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, fire professionals within the Crown corporations. The very professionals, the very professionals that were delivering very, very, very good service to the people of Saskatchewan.

And who did they replace them with, Mr. Speaker? People that pass a political litmus test. And to pass the political litmus test, I want to point out, it would simply be if you don't believe . . . This government has said they don't believe that government should be in business. People who have that same belief are now in charge, now being increasingly put into the Crown corporations. And that sends a chill to the women and men that deliver the goods so to speak, all of the services — whether it's telephone services, SGI, power, energy, bus services, and/or many others, Mr. Speaker. It sends a chill to those people because they're not quite certain which way we're going.

I think that we now have a risk, a very real risk, of Crowns being privatized by this government. And I know they'll say, no. I know they'll say oh, no, no, no. Trust us. But it's interesting because they're going about — as in the case of SGI that I spoke about just minutes ago — they're going about starving Crowns by telling Crowns, you cannot do what you do best. They're hampering and interfering with the management and the running of these very Crown corporations.

And then, then — mark my words — they're going to act surprised when there's a problem. They're going to act surprised when they have some economic reason to perhaps hive off part of a Crown corporation. Perhaps it will be the generation part of Power or perhaps it will be the delivery lines, the power lines, or perhaps it's going to be something else, Mr. Speaker.

But I'm concerned about what I see happening in the civil service and in the Crown corporations. Mr. Speaker, I clearly support this motion no. 1:

That this Assembly calls on the government to refrain from the political destruction of both the civil service and Crown corporations and in doing so keep the civil service and Crown corporations professional and non-partisan.

It is not too late. I think that the government can, by its actions from today forward, can show that they genuinely have a belief in a professional civil service and in our Crown corporations. My hope is that the government will in fact do that, will in fact support a professional Crown corporations and civil service.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on. Many people, I know, think I already have. I don't know how better to make my point. I'm very concerned for Saskatchewan's civil service, for Crown corporation employees. I'm very concerned for our future. This government has the opportunity — has clearly got the ability and the opportunity — to make good things happen in the future on this front. I sincerely hope that it does so.

It has been my task today to bring this to the best of my ability. It's always an honour to speak up on behalf of my constituency and the good people of Saskatchewan. So with that, I will take my place.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy House Leader.

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

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved that this Assembly do now adjourn. Is it the . . . Question on the motion? I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Speaker, I apologize. I wanted to adjourn the debate on this motion and I inadvertently neglected to do so. With your permission, I move that this debate be adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has made a motion to adjourn debate. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Agreed. I recognize the Deputy House Leader.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And once again I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Motion is agreed. This Assembly now stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:35.]

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