



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

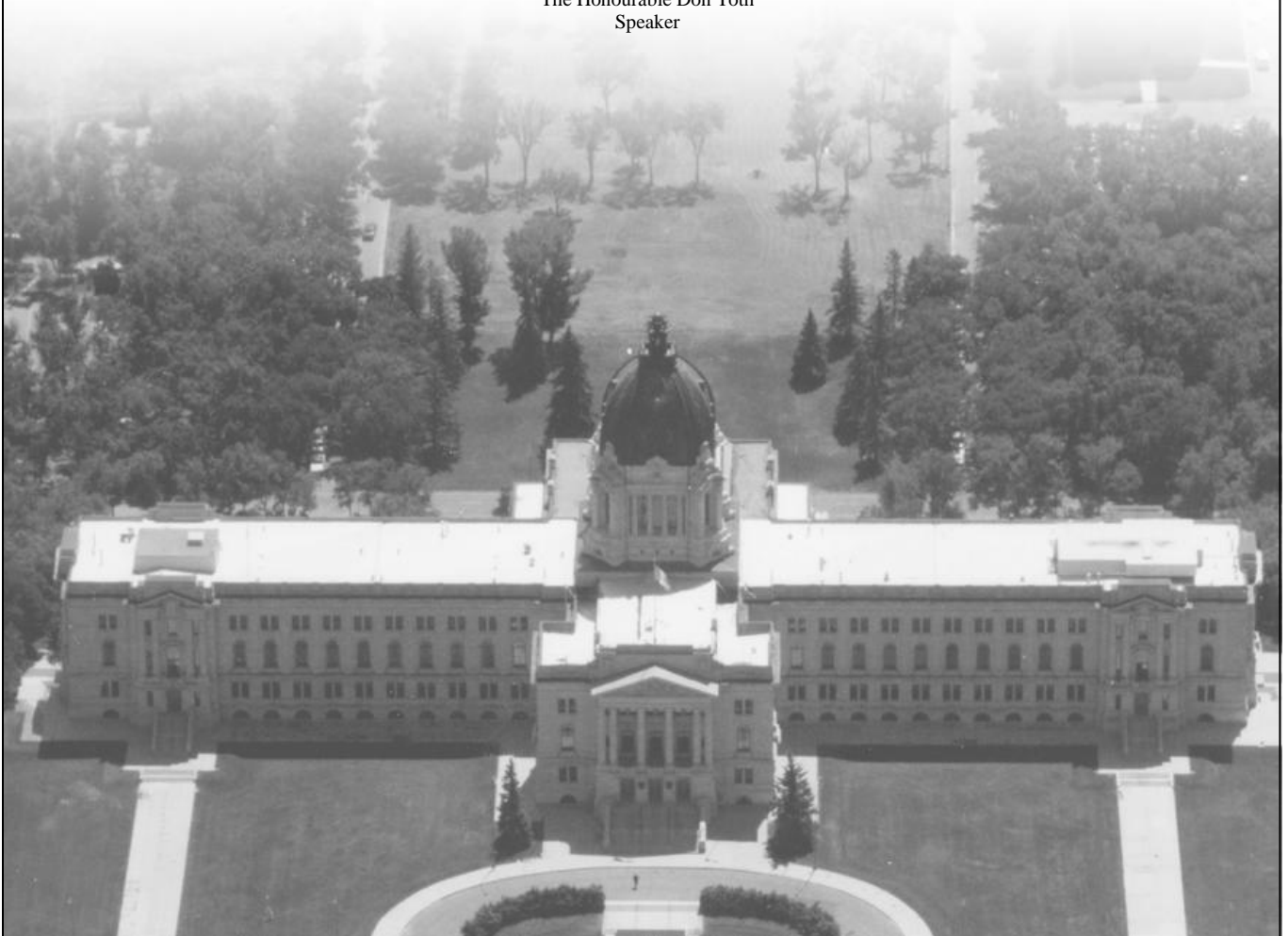
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Don Toth  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

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

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
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 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Mr. Chisholm:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the Assembly, in your gallery, it is my pleasure to introduce Mr. Brian Hesje. Brian is the chairman of the board of directors of Fountain Tire, a tire-automotive services company with more than 140 branches across Western Canada and a company that is recognized as one of Canada's 50 best-managed companies. There are three stores here in the Queen City.

Brian joined the company in 1984 and served as vice-president, president, CEO [chief executive officer] of Fountain Tire, and in 2005 resigned to focus on his duties as chairman of the board.

Brian earned a Bachelor of Education in history and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Alberta and the designation of chartered accountant in 1976. He was also a lecturer with the faculty of business at the U of A [University of Alberta], and in 2000 was awarded the U of A Alumni Honour Award.

Brian is actually returning today to his legislature. As a grade 12 student from Birch Hills, he visited the legislature as part of their school program, and this was just a couple years ago. Brian has a keen interest in the history of Western Canada, and in particular the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta, and is in the process of collecting information on the similarities and differences in these provinces and how that has played out in the social and economic realities of the day.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that we all welcome back Mr. Brian Hesje, our family friend and a friend of Saskatchewan.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize ... Pardon me. Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Chisholm:** — Mr. Speaker, while I am on my feet, I'm also pleased to reintroduce to this legislature my wife, Heather.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, seated in your gallery, it's my pleasure to introduce guests from Mr. Glasspell's grade 8 class from Regina Christian School here in Regina. It was very nice to have a chance to meet with these students prior to session here today.

And they posed many very thoughtful questions to us which we've certainly appreciated. I was impressed by the students' critical thought, Mr. Speaker. And I look forward to what each of these young individuals will contribute over their lifetimes, and hopefully Saskatchewan will be the benefactors.

I'd also like to welcome Mr. Glasspell, who's no stranger to this Assembly, who attended your institute just a little while back. And I'd like to thank him for teaching democracy and parliamentary democracy within his classroom. And I'm also aware that Mr. Glasspell is one heck of a basketball coach. So I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in extending welcome.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to introduce to you and through you the Regina Christian School grade 8 classroom. We had a wonderful opportunity. There was numerous MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] that met with them over the lunch hour. And they had some very poignant and interesting questions.

So again I'd like to welcome them to our House and introduce again their teacher, Geoff Glasspell, and also the assistant teacher, Larissa Munchinsky. Thank you very much, and welcome to your House.

**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 introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly 36 students from Johnson Collegiate in my constituency. These grade 12 students are here today to see the proceedings of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, to watch question period, and I'm sure to ask some very difficult questions at the conclusion later this afternoon.

They are accompanied today by two of their teachers, Heather Findlay and Tammy Patterson. Ms. Patterson was also a member of the Social Sciences Teachers' Institute earlier this year and it's very good to see teachers bringing their classes to this Assembly so that they can see first-hand the operation of our democracy and have the opportunity to ask questions. So thank you very much for coming and I'll see you all a little later on this afternoon. Take care.

**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 today to present a petition on behalf of Moose

Jaw, and this petition speaks to improving health care delivery and reduced wait times for surgery in a plea for support for our expansion.

And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to provide funding for the expansion and renovation of the Moose Jaw Union Hospital.

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

Mr. Speaker, I present this not only on behalf of my constituents of Moose Jaw Wakamow, but also all constituents in Moose Jaw. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I stand today to present a petition concerning the Sask Party's decision to axe funding for Station 20 West. The petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners 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.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals that signed this petition, some are from my constituency, from streets like Howell and Milton. There are also signatures from outside my constituency, from streets like Avenue N, Wiggins, Colony, Coy Avenue, Avenue R, Cairns, Avenue I South, Avenue 1 North, so from throughout Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, both sides of the river. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I present petitions today in opposition to government's Bill 5, The Public Service Essential Services Act, and Bill 6, An Act to amend The Trade Union Act and the prayer reads as follows:

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.

And as duty bound, your petitioners ever pray.

And the petitions are signed by the people from Big River, Debden, Prince Albert, Buchanan, and Canora.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

### National Nursing Week

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May 12 to 18 is national nurses' week and this week gives us the opportunity to recognize the many and varied ways that registered nurses, registered psychiatric nurses, nurse practitioners, licensed practical nurses, and shortly nurse midwives contribute to our health and well-being day in and day out, 24/7 and 365.

Each one of us has had an experience either personally or with someone close to us with a nurse. The care that a nurse provides touches our lives in profound ways. As an obstetrical nurse I still meet people who remember me at the birth of their children, now most of them in their late teens.

As nurses we carry not only the responsibility of a patient's well-being, but the broader responsibility to make our health care system stronger, a better place to work in, better able to serve the public, and to be better prepared to meet the future. Nurses take this responsibility very seriously and can be heard in many ways and places advocating for these issues. This week highlights nurses and nursing, but every day of every week a nurse is at work for you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on May 12 to 18 is National Nursing Week, a time we set aside to recognize the tremendous contributions that nurses make to the health of Canadians. Last Wednesday, Mr. Speaker, I had the honour of attending the Saskatchewan registered nursing association's member recognition awards banquet, an event that truly celebrates those that are leaders among registered nurses.

In Saskatchewan we are fortunate to have highly skilled nurses committed to providing the best possible care to their patients. Therefore keeping and attracting nurses is a top priority for this government. In fact in February we signed a partnership agreement with the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses, looking for more ways to recruit and retain nurses. And we've committed over 60 million to support it.

**An Hon. Member:** — How much?

**Ms. Ross:** — Sixty. We've also invested 20.7 million this year in a number of ways of helping to attract nurses to Saskatchewan and keep them here. Mr. Speaker, this government's promise to hire 800 additional nurses within its first term of office has already had a tremendous start as we soon will be welcoming 300 nurses recruited this year from the Philippines.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in extending a heartfelt welcome to nurses welcoming to Saskatchewan — as well as the new Saskatchewan nursing grads — along with our

appreciation for those nurses who have already dedicated years of service.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### **SMARTRISK Program**

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today it's my pleasure to share with you a bit of information about the SMARTRISK program. The SMARTRISK program is a national, non-profit organization which has become one of the leading injury prevention groups in Canada. In 1992, pediatric surgeon, Dr. Robert Conn, realized that more lives can be saved through prevention than through surgery and started the SMARTRISK program.

In my community of Moose Jaw, the program operates in participation with the high schools, where students run a peer-led injury prevention group. Presentations are given with the goal of teaching students to recognize that injuries are predictable and preventable. Some of the most important things taught to the participants are to buckle up, look first, wear the right gear, drive sober, and also lessons about fire protection. The overall message of the program is that taking a risk is acting before thinking, while taking a smart risk is simply looking at your choices before facing a risk.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important venture and builds a very good base for young people before they move on to the workplace or into careers of their choice. And I would ask that all members join me in congratulating all involved with the SMARTRISK program. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### **Humboldt Broncos Win National Championship**

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago it was my honour to acknowledge the accomplishments of the Humboldt Broncos who had just captured the SJHL [Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League] championship. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Broncos' season didn't end that day, and I am very pleased to rise today to continue the story of the Broncos' season.

Following the capture of the SJHL championship, the Humboldt Broncos played Portage of the Manitoba league for the Anavet Cup. Not only did they win, Mr. Speaker, but they swept their opponents from Portage 4 to 0, winning the fifth Anavet title in the team's history. From there they went on to Cornwall to play for the RBC [Royal Bank of Canada] Royal Bank Cup — Canada's Junior A national championship.

I am thrilled, Mr. Speaker, to announce that yesterday the Broncos did indeed win the national championship with a 1 to 0 victory over Camrose in the final. This victory is Humboldt's second national championship and their second in the past six years. Also of note, Mr. Speaker, is that a team from

Saskatchewan has been in the final six of the last eight years.

[13:45]

Mr. Speaker, these young men, their coaches, support staff, and the fans have represented Humboldt and the entire province very well. We are very proud of what they have accomplished and the way that they did it — with hard work, determination, and perseverance. Those are all strong Saskatchewan traits.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to please join me in congratulating the Humboldt Broncos on their season and their capturing of the title of national Junior A championship.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### **Broadway Art Encounter**

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, a creative partnership is being developed in the Broadway business district in the constituency of Saskatoon Nutana. On June 6 and 7, residents and visitors to Saskatoon can enjoy Broadway Art Encounter, an event evolving from the partnership formed between the Broadway area businesses and local artists.

This event provides an excellent opportunity for artists to unveil the creative excellence so prevalent in our community. For two days, local jewellery, painting, sculpture, stonemasonry, and other artworks will be showcased for the benefit of artists, businesses, customers, and patrons. The attractive display of creative work draws the interest of business patrons and prospective art buyers and creates an enjoyable atmosphere in which to shop, visit, and do business.

The Broadway Business Improvement District is coordinating this event and suggesting appropriate partnerships between businesses and displaying artists and is working on suitable spaces available for the great variety of artworks. Businesses are also approaching particular artists to feature their chosen work. The Broadway Business Improvement District coordinators are preparing a program to advertise participating merchants and artists.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this is a wonderful example of linking communities to the mutual benefit of Broadway businesses, artists, and all of Saskatoon citizens.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### **Severance for Former Caucus Employee**

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Mr. Speaker, the NDP [New Democratic Party] have now turned their \$6,000 fraud scandal and cover-up into a \$131,000 bill to Saskatchewan taxpayers. And they keep changing their story about Jim Fodey's departure. Last May the NDP member for Coronation Park told reporters over and over again that Mr. Fodey had resigned. But now in order to justify the severance payment, the new NDP caucus Chair is saying

that it was an involuntary resignation. The problem is that doesn't quite cut it either. In order to trigger a severance payment from the Legislative Assembly Office, the NDP must have sent a letter saying Mr. Fodey was dismissed without cause.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's now three different stories. The NDP told reporters Mr. Fodey resigned voluntarily. A year later the NDP told reporters Mr. Fodey resigned involuntarily. And the NDP apparently told the Legislative Assembly Office that he was dismissed without cause. Which one is it?

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition needs to explain. He needs to explain why Mr. Fodey is entitled to \$131,000 severance package if he resigned. He needs to explain why the NDP keep changing their story and he needs to explain what they told the Legislative Assembly.

Today I'm calling on him to table the letter the NDP sent to the Legislative Assembly Office authorizing this \$131,000 severance payment, so everyone can see if what the NDP is saying publicly squares what they're saying privately.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Saskatchewan Film to Debut at Cannes Film Festival

**Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's film, television, and new media sector is one of Saskatchewan's fastest growing industries and has become one of this province's most important resources for promoting our cultural identity. Pioneers of the moving image here in the province include documentary filmmaker, Dick Bird; director, writer, and producer, Evelyn Spice Cherry; and her cinematographer husband, Lawrence Cherry.

Others have since followed their footsteps and Saskatchewan is now home to a diverse group of award-winning practitioners working across the documentary, art and experimental, feature fiction, and new media forms. I'm pleased to say that among that talented group of filmmakers is a constituent of mine, Stephen Onda, who has been an independent producer, director, and writer working in Western Canada since 1984.

Today I want to congratulate him on achieving a Saskatchewan film first. His film *Surveillance*, a German-Canada co-production primarily shot here in the province using Saskatchewan film crews, will be making its premiere this month at the Cannes film festival, perhaps the most prestigious film festival in the world. It will be screened in the Un Certain Regard category, a section of the festival for films that are not part of the main competition but are considered to have artistic merit worthy of attention.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Stephen Onda in having this film invited to open at Cannes and in wishing him continued success in all his future endeavours. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### QUESTION PERIOD

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

#### Prince Albert Pulp Mill

**Mr. Furber:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister said that we would have conclusion to the deal with Domtar several weeks ago, but it hasn't happened. On July 10 of last year, the Sask Party struck a task force to examine the forestry industry in Saskatchewan. When I asked about the task force findings, the minister responsible could only say and I'll quote:

I'm not familiar with the report or even if there was a report generated . . . I'm not familiar with any kind of recommendations.

To the minister: why should the people of Saskatchewan have any faith in a minister that can't even get details of his own party's review of forestry in our province?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Executive Council and the minister, I'll take notice of that question.

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

**Mr. Furber:** — He's taking notice on why people should have faith in their government. That's an interesting concept, Mr. Speaker.

During the election the current Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing campaigned on the slogan, I'll quote, "a vote for Darryl is a vote for the mill open and people working." Now that the election's over we see that the Saskatchewan Party has little interest in getting that P.A. [Prince Albert] mill running.

The same member claimed that tearing up an MOU [memorandum of understanding] with Domtar was actually in the best interests of the people in Saskatchewan, effectively running from his campaign promise. The people of Prince Albert are wondering, was it all campaign rhetoric? Does that member put party politics ahead of his own constituents?

My question to the minister: is the member from Prince Albert Carlton a representative of Prince Albert to the government or representative of that government to Prince Albert?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, in order to

allow the negotiations to continue between Domtar and government, I'll take notice of that question.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from P.A. Northcote.

**Mr. Furber:** — Now he's taking notice on credibility.

Mr. Speaker, their handling of the Domtar deal can only be described as incompetent. First their candidate promised to reopen the mill if elected when clearly they had no plan of their own to get that mill running. The minister responsible claimed to have had discussions with Domtar when clearly no discussions had taken place according to Domtar themselves. He's had meetings that were not reported publicly until uncovered in this legislature. He's apparently been sitting on a counter-offer from Domtar since March.

To the minister: why is it that we've had to drag him kicking and screaming every step of the way on this file? When will he take his responsibility to the people of Prince Albert seriously? Will he stop bungling and grandstanding in his place and finally get the job done?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll take notice of that question as well.

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

### Accountability

**Mr. Quennell:** — I'll try another tack, Mr. Speaker. As you know we've raised other questions about Bill 31, the government's unaccountability Act. On each occasion, the government said they appreciated our concerns and would seek the opinion of the Provincial Auditor on the Bill. We expected that . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. I would ask the two members from Prince Albert to come to order. Saskatoon Meewasin.

**Mr. Quennell:** — We expected that with the government's alleged commitment to accountability and transparency they would do so in a timely manner. Last week we had a chance to ask the Provincial Auditor if the Bill had been referred to him. His answer, quote, "Not at this time." To the government: when do they plan on keeping their commitment?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the House Leader, I'll be pleased to answer the question. Mr. Speaker, when it was brought to our attention that there were these difficulties with the way the Bill was worded, we agreed immediately to seek the advice of the Provincial Auditor. That

letter has gone out, and the Provincial Auditor, when he was testifying in front of the House Services Committee, indicated that he would be reviewing the request in the letter and would be getting back to us at the earliest possible moment that he could and that we will look at that at the time.

In the meantime, the Bill will stay on the order paper exactly where it is, and we will make a decision as to either bring this current Bill forward or replace it with a Bill based on the Provincial Auditor's recommendations for fall.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker, I guess it's in the mail. I'm glad the Premier has come to his senses and went back to the status quo instead of upping the threshold for oversight in government spending. Once caught, he did the right thing and agreed to change back all 15 instances where he tried to undermine accountability and transparency.

But the Premier's unaccountability Act just keeps getting stranger and stranger. Aside from changing public scrutiny on spending in Bill 31, the Bill gives some interesting new powers to the Premier and his cabinet. To the Premier: can he tell us why he's adding a section called awards of achievement to the communities development Act.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I suspect that it isn't good enough for the opposition to be satisfied with the fact that the Provincial Auditor is going to advise us and he's certainly going to advise us on accountability. Perhaps we should send him another letter asking him to advise us about the accountability of that former government when they gave \$131,000 to Mr. Fodey and aren't able to get their story straight in terms of what the reason for it is.

If they want accountability, if the opposition wants accountability, I'll ask them a simple question. Will you table the correspondence you had with the Clerks in order to make sure that we understand what the real reason is for Mr. Fodey's severance from this government?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Just a reminder to members to address their comments to the Chair. Thank you. Member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The change being proposed by the Premier we see as section 14.5 added to the Act which will mean the minister is responsible for the legislation, may make grants or awards to any group, municipality, or person who, quote, ". . . record of achievement in the promotion

of economic and social development is of outstanding significance.”

Well, Mr. Speaker, with such clear and specific parameters, I can't think of how such a provision could possibly be used or abused. Mr. Speaker, we've seen the members opposite reward their friends with massive pay hikes, and it seems the trough just got bigger. To the Premier: can he please tell us why he's introduced legislation that gives the minister carte blanche to give taxpayers' dollars to whoever they think is doing a really good job of whatever, and why anyone would believe this isn't just one more way they plan to reward their friends?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this administration is very interested in transparency and accountability. We're also interested in making sure that the decision-making process is effective and efficient, and to that end we recognize that it was a good suggestion for us to seek the advice of the Provincial Auditor.

The Provincial Auditor has assured us that he will review this issue with some thoroughness and also with a view of what is happening in other jurisdictions across Canada, and he will get back to us in a very timely fashion. We will look at that information from the Provincial Auditor and make whatever decisions are necessary, either to bring this legislation that's currently on the books forward in the fall, as the new rules permit, or indeed to propose and draft a new legislation that'll be more appropriate to the recommendations given by the Provincial Auditor.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, is the minister promising to have this matter of the grants reviewed as well by the Provincial Auditor, since that's the last answer to his last question?

Mr. Speaker, legislation doesn't happen by accident. It is designed with purpose and intent. It's designed with a goal in mind. The public wants to know what the Premier has in mind for this legislation. They want to know why the Premier believes his ministers need legislation that allows them to decide to give to money to anyone they see fit. Just like we needed to know what the government was planning to cover up by changing its spending thresholds, we now need to know who they are planning to reward with this change. To the Premier: who is he hoping to benefit with this change of legislation?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the government is seeking to have advice from the Provincial Auditor on this whole matter in its broad sense, and we believe that that's appropriate. The Provincial Auditor has indicated that he would seek the advice and what the precedents are and the practices are that are in other jurisdictions in Canada. So I think that that is appropriate and it'll be very good.

[14:00]

But perhaps if the opposition would really like, you would like us to include the circumstances surrounding Mr. Fodey's dismissal. And was he indeed fired? Well did he resign? Or was he fired with cause? Or was he indeed dismissed with cause? We can include that as well if the member opposite would like.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Nurses' Contract Negotiations

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I noted before earlier, it's Nursing Week in Saskatchewan. Last Thursday the Minister of Health seemed pretty confident that, despite a strike vote, SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses] and SAHO [Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations] could reach a deal before any job action occurred. Yet we've learned that the government is rushing out polling to measure public opinion on the nursing situation.

To the minister: was the confidence false bravado? If he truly believes the deal is imminent, why the panic polling?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said last week, I'm very confident that the two groups are back to the table today. They'll be . . . in fact their bargaining started earlier this afternoon. I think that you'll see movement on both sides. You'll definitely see movement on SAHO's side, with a press release that was just recently released just after lunch talking about some movement.

I said all along that I think there's common ground. They need to get back to the bargaining table. And I'm proud to report they're there today.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate we've gotten to this point. The minister has boasted that his MOU has helped the bargaining process, yet nurses are saying his good-cop, bad-cop approach is part of the problem. The minister says



again that he's confident agreement can be reached. But he's the same minister who told us his MOU is an asset to the bargaining process, and we know that hasn't worked for him so far.

To the minister: the people of Saskatchewan want to know if he's got it right this time. What gives him confidence that a negotiated settlement can be reached before job action occurs?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm very confident that a negotiated settlement will be found. Certainly they didn't spend much time at the bargaining table when they first exchanged proposals, only roughly 10 to 15 minutes. I think certainly the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses weren't very happy with the SAHO proposal. They've had time to reflect on those proposals. There has been some time where SUN has then taken a strike vote at 77 per cent. That's well within their rights — absolutely, Mr. Speaker. I think that you're going to see movement at the bargaining table starting today. And I think that we're going to see a negotiated settlement.

But one thing I'll also say, Mr. Speaker, I'm quite frankly satisfied and glad — and so is this government — that if things aren't negotiated into a contract, there is a partnership agreement that talks can still happen around those issues, something that never would have happened under that former government.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister admitted in committee that the relationship with the ministry and SAHO is very close. In fact there's an ADM [assistant deputy minister] at the table and now the acting deputy minister. So anything that comes to the table through SAHO has come with the minister's approval.

And here's what an RN [registered nurse] in the Cypress Health Region has to say to the Health minister, quote, "Please treat us the respect we deserve and ensure that a contract offered is meaningful, attracts and retains new and experienced nurses, and is reflective of the valuable service provided by SUN nurses to the residents of Saskatchewan." Many other comments refer to the contract offered as degrading, regressive, and disrespectful, and as one nurse puts it, nurses are, quote, "disappointed and expected more from the new government."

To the minister: what does he say to the many nurses he has let down? What will he do moving forward to make sure Saskatchewan nurses can stay on the job to provide health care to Saskatchewan families?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, the question is really quite interesting coming from that member who of course was the president of the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses. I would think that she would understand bargaining a little bit better than what she's displayed here today.

You know that proposals are put in from both sides, and there could be extremes in those proposals. And certainly that may have been the case that was looked upon by many of the nurses — that SAHO's proposal was extreme. But we needed to get back to the bargaining table so that those proposals could be refined, so that common ground could be found, and so agreement can be found, Mr. Speaker. That is the way the bargaining process works.

Yes, maybe they were too extreme. Maybe they were too extreme on both sides. But if anybody in this House should know how a bargaining process should work, it should be that member. This is how the process works. I think an agreement will be found relatively soon.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister is right. I do understand bargaining. That's why I know that when he signed the MOU, he put himself at the bargaining table. You can't distance yourself from SAHO as the minister. You are giving direction to SAHO. So the contract negotiations, the package that came to the table was with that minister's knowledge, and it offended SUN and goaded SUN into getting a strike vote. So why did he go there? I mean what's the point?

Anyways my next question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. He was at the Saskatchewan Medical Association this weekend. According to news reports, the minister was asked about public-private partnerships within the public system, and he told delegates that there could be more in the future. To the minister: can he clarify what he means when he says he's open to the idea of expanding the role of private health care within our system? What particular areas does he see as needing more private sector involvement?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, I would challenge that member to table any sort of evidence that I said that I was in favour in forwarding private health care into this province. I spoke at the SMA [Saskatchewan Medical Association] convention, absolutely, and the question came up about public-private partnerships, public-private partnerships. And I said at that time that our government is looking at those, exploring those. They are done in other provinces, and certainly we need to see if that would benefit our province.

We know that there is an absolute deficit left by that former government when it comes to capital projects, whether it's in education or whether it's in health care. We started to address that issue, Mr. Speaker, but we're certainly open to the opportunities that have been used in other provinces regarding public-private partnerships, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that member to do a little more research before she stands in the House.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Salaries Paid to Executive Council Staff

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one has to wonder what the government has to hide when they refuse to answer some simple questions about salaries the Premier pays to Executive Council. The Finance minister just spoke about accountability and transparency, but last week we posed a series of written questions to the government on the mean and median salaries of men and women working for Executive Council.

Mr. Speaker, why has the Premier refused to answer the questions, and what exactly is he hiding?

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have answered a tremendous amount of questions in this session, and we certainly are continuing to answer questions. We simply were unable to get all the information that was required of the questions that were asked, and so we ordered the answers to those questions. And as soon as we have them available — not the full 180 days that's provided for — but as soon as we have them available we'll be providing them to the opposition.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Higgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, we have a series of questions about how men and women are being paid by the Premier in Executive Council, questions that reflect broader concerns about the government's attitudes towards women. While we would like to be debating the current numbers, we are left to look at numbers from January which are still quite telling.

The list shows that the average salary of men working for the Premier is just over \$170,000 while the average salary of women working for the Premier is just over \$62,000. That's a whopping difference of \$55,000 per year. When we look at the median salaries of men and women, the gap increases to 66,000.

To the Premier: can he confirm or deny there is a significant wage gap between men and women working in Executive

Council? And what does he have to say for this shocking disparity?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the members opposite in my previous answer, we are working on the exact answers to those questions that will be provided to the opposition in very good due course.

And I think that's important to provide those answers, and statistically they are always information that is valuable to help all forms of government and all parts of government to make good decisions in terms of hiring practice. We will have that information to the opposition as soon as it's compiled, and I'm sure that the opposition will find the information factual and useful.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I need to correct. I think I said 170,000 for average, and it's 107,000. But the \$55,000 difference still stands.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to see how men and women fare at both the top and bottom of Executive Council pay scale. Mr. Speaker, 62 per cent of men working in Exec Council make over \$100,000 compared to 15 per cent of women. And when we look at the bottom pay scale, we see that while only 1 per cent of men make under \$50,000, over 50 per cent of women make less than \$50,000.

Mr. Speaker, women in this province are outraged at this flagrant disregard for wage parity and a poor example that's being set by the Premier. To the Premier: how can he defend this unacceptable level of wage disparity in Executive Council?

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you know, the House Leader has tried to respond to the member opposite by indicating that we will provide each individual request that has been given.

I do want to provide some information to that member right now. The fact is that in April 2008 in Executive Council there were 69 staff. In ministerial assistant level, there were 84 staff for a total of 153. In the NDP government, Mr. Speaker, on November 2007, there were 180, Mr. Speaker — 27 less people that are working within this government, Mr. Speaker.

We're going to be delivering exactly what that member wants. But, Mr. Speaker, I do also want to remind the member that last year, when the then premier wanted to have an official take care

of the problem at Fishing Lake, he hired a gentleman by the name of Bernie Churko — term of contract, April 30 to November 23, just under 7 months, Mr. Speaker; amount paid, \$217,000, Mr. Speaker, for seven months' worth of work. I think that they need to review their numbers, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to re-emphasize how disheartening it is to see this kind of wage inequity among the Premier's Executive Council employees. It has nothing to do with individual contracts. It has to do with the overview of Executive Council and where the wages are paid. Women have worked long and hard to prove . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Member from Moose Jaw Wakamow has the right to be heard as she places her question. Member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, women have worked long and hard to prove themselves in all aspects of society. We have proved ourselves to be capable and . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, women have proved themselves to be capable and . . .

**The Speaker:** — Member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

**Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, women have worked long and hard to prove themselves in all aspects of society. We have proved ourselves to be capable and talented political advisers, capable of providing sound advice and strong leadership. The Premier needs to explain why the wages in Executive Council do not reflect this reality.

To the Premier: how does the Premier explain a consistent undervaluing of women's work by his administration? And please tell the people of Saskatchewan what he plans to do about it.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that NDP opposition has to explain a number of things, a couple of things when they were in government. I just mention the name Bernie Churko and why you would initiate a contract through Executive Council at \$30,000 a month, Mr. Speaker. That's what that gentleman was paid. Also when they were in government, Mr. Speaker, a name comes to mind — Murdoch Carriere receiving \$275,000, Mr. Speaker, while women who were harassed by that gentleman received \$15,000. That's the kind of administration there is over there, Mr. Speaker.

And I also want to add, Mr. Speaker, that today we learned that Jim Fodey has received over a \$100,000 for . . . is it resignation with cause? Without cause? Is it termination? Is it dismissal? They've changed their minds so many times over there; they don't even know why he's been given \$130,000.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, when the member wanders off talking about specific severance packages or contracts that are there to deal with certain issues, I can understand why he's having difficulty dealing with a topic as important to Saskatchewan women as pay equity and equality. Mr. Speaker, all we have to do is look at the wages that are being paid. We don't have to go median or mean. We can look at the percentage of women that are in the top echelons of Executive Council, and you can't tell me there isn't women in this province not capable of doing the jobs.

And, Mr. Speaker, a plain example: why is there women civil servants that were terminated without cause, having to take this government to court? It's a pattern that's being set, Mr. Speaker, and this government needs to answer for it.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

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

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, isn't it ironic how times change? On Christmas Eve in 1991, that former government dismissed an individual, a single mother, on Christmas Eve, Mr. Speaker. Now she has the gall to stand in this Assembly and say we've somehow mistreated women that have been let go.

Mr. Speaker, what we have done, and I've already indicated in this House, we have 27 fewer political staff, which is 15 per cent less than what the NDP had, Mr. Speaker. That's factual.

We will provide the information in terms of the salaries identified to ensure that they are able to compare, Mr. Speaker, equals to equals. They need to compare the NDP salaries that were in place last year, which would have received a 4 per cent wage increase this year. They need to take that into account, Mr. Speaker, when they compare those salaries to the salaries that we will provide them through the written information that has been asked for.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Members will come to order.

**PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING  
AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Chair of the Committee on the Economy.

### Standing Committee on the Economy

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 2, The Enterprise Saskatchewan Act without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — Thank you. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill and that the Bill be now read the third time.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has asked for leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 2 — The Enterprise Saskatchewan Act

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this Bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that Bill No. 2, The Enterprise Saskatchewan Act, be now read the third time and passed under its title.

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.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — All those in favour say aye.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Aye.

**The Speaker:** — All those opposed say no.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — I believe the ayes have it.

**Some Hon. Members:** — On division.

**The Speaker:** — On division. Carried.

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — Third reading of this Bill.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure on behalf of the government to table answers to questions 650 to 660.

**The Speaker:** — Questions 650 to 660 tabled. I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Gantefoer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to have the work of committees proceed, I would move that this House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — In order for the committee work to proceed, the Government House Leader has moved adjournment of the Assembly. 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:** — This Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:19.]

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Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Crop  
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