



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

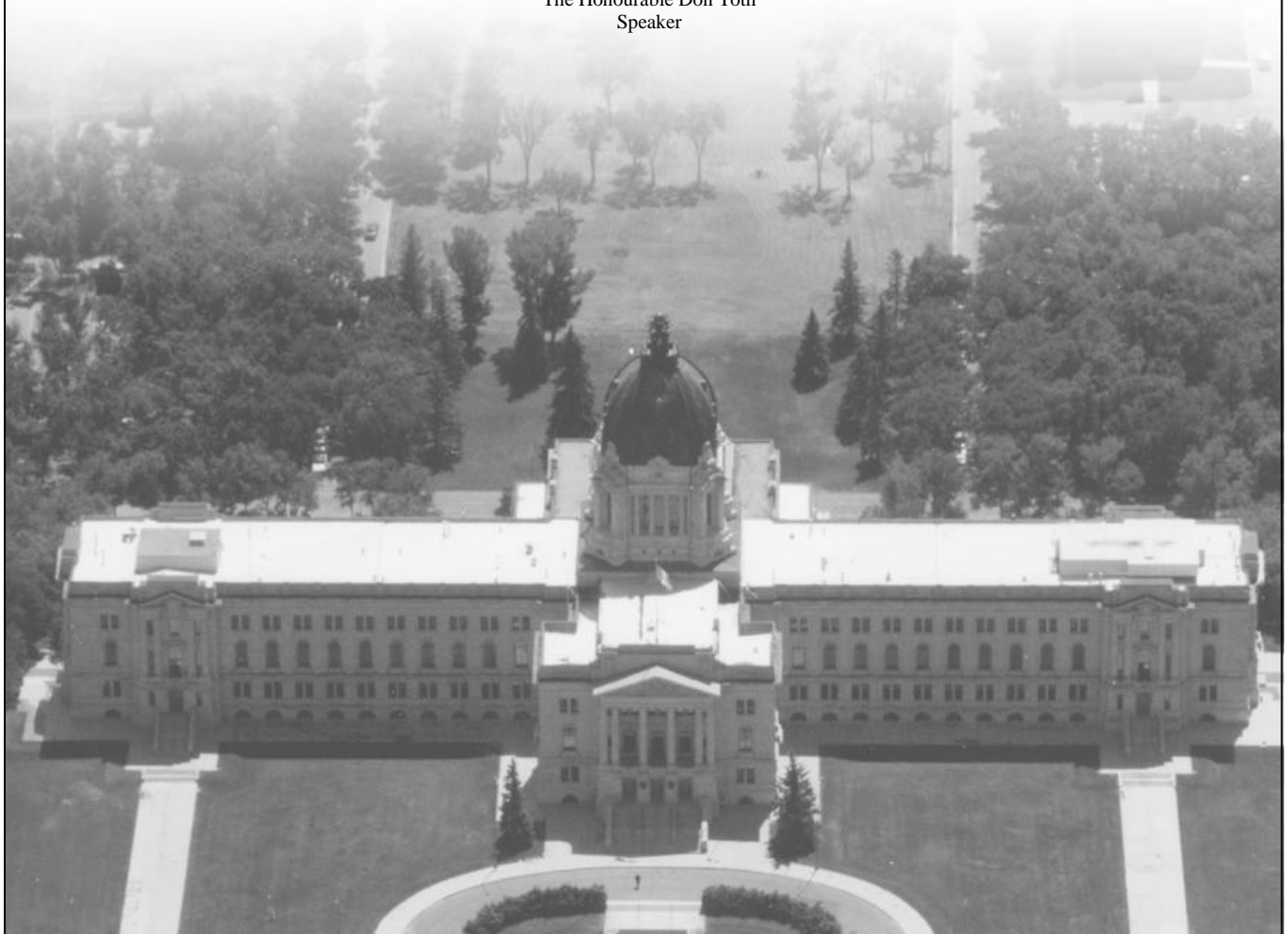
of the

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
Ottobreit, 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
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for First Nations and Métis Relations.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to welcome to the legislature two special people from my constituency — Nicholas and his mother, Denise Redman. Nicholas goes to school in Invermay and this fall Nicholas, one of 15 students from Canada, 28 from the world, went on a Cape Farewell expedition which raised awareness of environmental concerns in the Arctic.

He spent two weeks on the ship. And Nicholas told me that the trip was a life-changing experience with the wildlife that he saw, the friends he made, and the landscape he travelled over. May I ask everyone in the Assembly to help me welcome Nicholas and his mom to their Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all the members of the Assembly, in your gallery is my wife, Leone. She's come and spent the week up here with me. She very seldom spends a lot of time as she wouldn't see me very often anyway. And she's come to take me home, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege for me to be able to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly, seated in your gallery, some very special guests who have come a very long way — come from the United Kingdom in fact — partially I think to visit their daughter, Sarah Mills, but probably mostly just to see question period here in the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Brian and Eileen Mills have joined us here today. I think this is about now 30 years of their visiting our country and specifically our province, especially since their daughter who is a member obviously of the Saskatchewan legislative press gallery, especially since she moved here in 2003. I believe it was Brian's brother, John, the late John Mills, who was a principal, a very, very well regarded and highly respected principal at Preeceville and was known to people close to those of us on the government benches.

And, Mr. Speaker, so the Mills family has contributed greatly to the province of Saskatchewan already through John and his family at Preeceville, and now Sarah. And we're also welcoming the tourism and the commerce of Sarah's folks, Brian and Eileen, as they visit again. So we want to welcome

them to the Assembly and wish them a very merry Saskatchewan Christmas.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I would like to introduce to this Assembly my son Morgan who is in your west gallery. Now Morgan actually works in the building here, but very seldom he comes down to watch the proceedings. And I would like to tell you that he's a bit of a chip off the old block — at 24 years old, he's already going bald. So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce him to his Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Members, it's my pleasure this morning, members, to introduce to . . . Order. I'd like to ask for members' indulgence to also recognize a gentleman who's joined us this morning, served a long time in this Legislative Assembly, long-time Hansard employee, will be retiring this Friday — Mr. Keith Foster. He's retiring after 27 years of faithful service.

He joined the Hansard team on January 23, 1982, way back when editors used electronic typewriters and audio was recorded on large reel-to-reel tapes. In almost 27 years at Hansard, Keith has seen many changes; however, the qualities of a good Hansard editor remain the same and Keith embodies them all. He has been a significant contributor to the Hansard team, bringing his love of language, his attention to detail, his conscientious editing. Most significantly, Keith has always taken pleasure in working for the Assembly and helping his colleagues in meeting their deadlines while getting the words right.

Keith's enthusiasm for Hansard and for the Assembly has made him a valuable colleague and his fellow Hansardians will miss him.

Keith has many interests. He is a published poet and a short story writer as well as a stamp and photography enthusiast. He is looking forward to retirement so that he can spend more time on these passions. We all wish Keith well and that he will have a happy retirement.

I ask Keith to stand and be acknowledged. And he also has some of his colleagues who have joined him this morning. And I ask members to welcome Keith Foster to the Assembly today and congratulate him upon his retirement.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise

today to present a petition concerning the need to maintain quality health care services in our province, and issues dealing with quality health care services which include recruitment and retention, ensuring adequate staffing, adequate funding, and most importantly to many, collective bargaining in good faith. And, Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to maintaining quality health care services and job security for all public health care providers.

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

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed from citizens from Herbert, Gouldtown, Hodgeville, Morse, Kindersley — a number of pages — Swift Current, Shaunavon, Regina, Willow Bunch, Assiniboia, Mossbank, Moose Jaw, Rockglen, Flintoft, Limerick, Cardross, and Viceroy. Mr. Speaker, I so present on behalf of Saskatchewan citizens.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I present a petition in support of indexing the minimum wage. Mr. Speaker, the minimum wage increases are often sporadic and do not always reflect the rising costs faced by minimum wage earners. Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to indexing Saskatchewan minimum wage to ensure that the standard of living of minimum wage earners is maintained in the face of cost of living increases.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petitions are signed by residents of Moose Jaw, Regina, Saskatoon, Coronach, Weyburn, Midale, Estevan, Aberdeen, and Arcola. I so present, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to rise again today and present a petition in support of affordable housing for Saskatchewan seniors. I'd like to read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to act as quickly as possible to expand affordable housing options for Saskatchewan's senior citizens.

I do so present. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to present a petition concerning the high cost of post-secondary education. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to increase funding for post-secondary students and help to alleviate the large financial burden placed on students who are pursuing a post-secondary education at a Saskatchewan institution.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition was circulated by the Canadian Federation of Students, the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union, the University of Regina Students' Union, and the First Nations University of Canada Students' Association. I so present.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 1991 parliament proclaimed December 6 as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. This day is a time to recall the tragic deaths of 14 promising young engineering students killed at École Polytechnique in Montreal on December 6, 1989. This infamous day is a horrific example of the all-too-familiar reality for many Canadian women who suffer at the hands of others.

Each of us has the power and responsibility to speak out against violence and help to create a world where people can build their lives without the threat of violence.

The YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] of Canada is one organization working to fight violence with the Rose Button campaign, reminding us that violence against women is a social issue that impacts us all. The White Ribbon campaign is another way that the men in our lives can show their participation in the fight to eliminate violence against women.

I ask that you join me in taking the time to think about the women who have died or gone missing, and of those who live daily with the spectre of violence hanging over them. I ask that we all work towards the day when the Rose Button and White Ribbon campaigns are no longer necessary, when no woman has to fear. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Questions from Students

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, during Education Week I was invited to participate as a guest reader in Ms. Elsbeth Dormuth's grades 5 to 7 Read to Succeed class at Confederation Park Community School. After reading to the class, I asked the students what they were presently working on, and they told me they were studying politics in Canada and the provinces.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday, November 21, the class put in writing their personal interests, future aspirations, their thoughts, ideas, and questions, and forwarded this in a letter to my constituency office. Mr. Speaker, the students are glued to the TV in their classroom this morning watching the Assembly, and I want to tell you that I have been assigned some homework. The homework comes in the form of some questions which they want answered and which I will now share with the Assembly.

From Seabaschien: what is the job of the Premier? Kyle: how come Saskatchewan is the richest province today? Bryce: who chooses when and how to fix our roads? Kyla: why does the Queen decide who the Lieutenant Governor is? Austin: why should I stay in Saskatchewan when I get older? Leah: why does the Prime Minister ride in a limousine? And finally, Ms. Dormuth: where does the province get money from to run hospitals and schools?

The letter ends by telling me that "As we read and research more about Canada and its levels of governments, we will write and ask you more questions. We're looking forward to seeing you again." Signed, Kyerra, Sierra, Josh, Cassie, Leah, Theresa, Kyla, Bryce, Austin, Seabaschien, Ayasha, Kyle, Ms. Dormuth, Ms. Beckstrand, and Mr. R.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in wishing these students the best in their futures, and again thanking Ms. Dormuth and her class for their enthusiasm and interest in our country and our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

Wendel Clark Honoured

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In many Prairie towns, hockey continues to be the number one winter sporting activity. My home town of Kelvington is no exception. In fact this community of just 800 people proudly proclaims five native sons who have become NHL [National Hockey League] hockey players. One of them, Wendel Clark, was recently honoured by the Toronto Maple Leafs when his number 17 was raised to the rafters at the Air Canada Centre.

Wendel was a defenceman with the WHL [Western Hockey League] Saskatoon Blades who converted to forward after his first-place pick in the 1985 NHL draft pick. He had three different stints with the Maple Leafs and is currently employed

by the team as a community ambassador.

Wendel captained the team from 1991 to 1994. During this time he was often referred to as Captain Crunch, not just because of his moustache, but also because of his very physical and intense style of hockey.

At this special event at the Air Canada Centre, Wendel was quoted as saying that the two proudest moments of his hockey career was when he was drafted first overall by the Toronto Maple Leafs and, second, the day he was named captain. He sees this latest honour as his official hat trick.

Mr. Speaker, Wendel has not only made a name for himself in the hockey world, he is fondly remembered by his home community. Wendel has never forgotten his grassroots and the people that encouraged him in his hockey career. For years he coached at the summer hockey school in Kelvington. He signed jerseys, and they've been favourites at many auction sales, raising hundreds of dollars for the community facilities, organizations, and families.

The community of Kelvington is proud of their hockey son, and we congratulate Wendel on his new honour.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:15]

Support for Women Victims of Violence

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, at this time of year when everyone is busier because of the season, there are people and organizations who still dedicate themselves to making Regina a safer and compassionate community. One such initiative is the Leader-Post Christmas Cheer Fund. For the 16th consecutive year, every penny donated will provide much needed funds for four Regina shelters — Transition House, the YWCA's Isabel Johnson Shelter, Wish House, and Sofia House. To date, \$1.1 million has been raised.

Mr. Speaker, violence against women is a sad reality that far too many are dealing with. Too often children are witnesses to the violence. It was only last Friday that a female friend of mine appeared bruised and battered on the left side of her face, and that was only what was visible. The psychological impact is much more severe. She is fortunate in that she has had many offers of shelter and assistance; however, others require the services that our Regina shelters provide. It is essential that the shelters have the means to be able to accept the women and children when they require assistance.

December 6 also marks another solemn occasion when a lone gunman entered École Polytechnique and told the women to leave and then shot the remaining women. In the end he killed 14 women simply because they were women.

As a society we have much work to do in raising awareness about violence against women and finding better methods to protect them when there is a risk of harm. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to commend the dedication of the Leader-Post Christmas Cheer Fund and also those who make contributions and assist women and children when they have the courage to

escape an environment of violence.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Kindersley Wins Seat Belt Challenge

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the residents of Kindersley have been rewarded for buckling up. As part of its commitment to reduce deaths and injuries on Saskatchewan roads, SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] ran the seat belt challenge in the Heartland Health Region.

The challenge is a community-driven project designed to improve seat belt use in the province, which includes roadside activities and community-based events. In April, students' groups conducted roadside observation surveys in each of the communities to measure seat belt usage rates at the beginning of the challenge and did the same again in September. The survey results were very positive, with all communities participating achieving an increase in seat belt usage over the months of the challenge.

I am pleased to say that Kindersley is being presented with \$50,000 first place award from SGI for increasing their seat belt usage by an amazing 14 per cent. It's now up to Kindersley Town Council to decide which roadside safety improvements will receive priority for this funding. With the success of the Heartland project, SGI plans to continue the seat belt challenge in 2009.

I'd like to congratulate the people of Kindersley for keeping their safety top of mind, and urge all people of the province to follow their lead and buckle up.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Christmas Greetings

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we prepare for the holiday season, a season of peace, of hope, and of time with those we hold most dear, it is important to remind ourselves of the spirit of the holidays. Though our nation is facing an economic crisis that has affected many across the globe, we are still very fortunate as Canadians. Many of us enjoy peace and comfort while other nations are ravaged by war, hunger, and disease. Many in this world live in lands where the threat of political violence is constant or where hostility is continuous.

But, Mr. Speaker, these are not circumstances that we are powerless to change. T.C. Douglas once said that:

The shepherds who heard the message of 'Peace on Earth' did not consider that to be a description of things as they were, but a vision of what they might be if we could learn to live together in a spirit of mutual goodwill and better understanding . . .

Mr. Speaker, Christmas is a glimpse; a glimpse of what the world can be. And for this reason it is important to gather together with loved ones and to observe the season in whatever our custom, to renew the pledge of goodwill to all. Mr. Speaker, to you and to all members, happy holidays.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. LeClerc: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During this time when we celebrate the birth of Christ with family and friends and remember those who are no longer with us, I would like to acknowledge some of the blessings that we have received this past year.

Saskatchewan has been blessed with financial prosperity and resources. At a time of year when many people are surrounded by an abundance of food and gifts, our government has made many announcements in the past several months that ensures that seniors and vulnerable families and individuals share in this prosperity and are not forgotten. It is both an honour and a privilege to work with and for the people of Saskatchewan during my first year as an elected member of this Assembly. Together we can build a strong and stable province with a life that is better for everyone.

Novelist Oren Arnold once suggested that some of the best Christmas gifts are forgiveness for an enemy, tolerance for an opponent, an open heart to a friend, setting a good example for children, treating yourself with respect, service to the public, and charity to all.

I believe that it is these gifts combined with the gifts of strong relationship with family and friends that are true blessings in our lives. These blessings not only serve us now but throughout the entire year. We would like to wish all of the people in our province our very best wishes for the holiday season, and safe travels into the new year. May peace, fellowship, and blessings be with you all.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Support for Livestock Producers

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. During a CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] interview yesterday, the president of the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association said cattle numbers in the past year have dropped dramatically, and he's worried that the decline in numbers is far from over.

Cattle numbers are declining significantly under this government, and they're refusing to provide any assistance. So to the Minister of Agriculture: the minister is sitting on \$2 billion in surplus. He's had an opportunity to help those producers, and he's done nothing. Why is this minister and his

government turning their backs on the livestock industry in our province?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, being the last day of session, I'd like to remind the member of a number of things this party has done in one short year compared to the record of their record for 16: Mr. Speaker, crop insurance review, we're improving crop insurance; AgriStability administration coming home to Saskatchewan; farm and ranch water program infrastructure; gopher rebate program; fully funding AgriStability; hog TAP [targeted advance payment] 2007-2008 program; hog and cattle loan, \$90 million. Now we've deferred the principle on those loans for one year. We're improving extension services, increasing revenue sharing to RMs [rural municipality], increased oil and gas compensation, and a Crown land sale program, Mr. Speaker.

In one year we've done more than that opposition party did in 16 years of government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, livestock producers in this province are desperate. The bills are coming in and credit is tight. Many producers advise us that they won't be able to meet their commitments. The programs that the minister refers to will be of no use to livestock producers who have been backed into a corner and forced to sell out because of that government's lack of action.

Livestock producers don't need more debt, and they certainly don't want the minister giving them more speeches on what he hasn't done for them. They need an immediate cash injection. Will the minister finally take some action and provide for livestock producers that cash assistance that they need before it's too late?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Well, Mr. Speaker, for the member's information, if she checks cattle prices from last fall, when they just finished government and we just came in, the cattle prices today, actually some of the cattle prices are higher today than they were a year ago. Did I notice in their campaign literature last fall anything for the livestock sector? No, we didn't. And, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to education tax rebate, they absolutely didn't even include it for livestock producers in this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, that member's been on the record a number of occasions saying have you called your federal counterpart, have you talked to him. Well, Mr. Speaker, that NDP [New Democratic Party] opposition is propping up a coalition that is

going to do absolutely nothing — nothing, Mr. Speaker. What does she think they'll do next week if the federal government changes? I'll get on the phone, I'll call Ottawa, and I'll ask for Jack and Gilles. Do you think they'll have much sympathy for the livestock producers in Saskatchewan? I don't think so, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday a 73-year-old rancher contacted me. That rancher has spent \$250,000 out of his AgriInvest fund, and he's spent over \$550,000 of his life savings. He's lost \$800,000 in equity. I can tell the member, that rancher could care less about what's happening in Ottawa. He wants some help now because he can't pay his bills.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Atkinson: — This government has the financial resources to stop this downhill spiral. What is that minister waiting for? What is that minister scared of? Why is he prepared to let the cattle industry and that 70-year-old rancher go down the tubes with his life savings? When is that minister going to do something on behalf of those livestock producers?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Well, Mr. Speaker, that member can get on her high horse and say why aren't we bailing out the livestock industry. But think for a minute what their record was. How quickly she forgets that rural Saskatchewan was totally ignored by that . . .

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

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Speaker, and the member says that producers in this province don't care what happens with the federal government. I take exception to that. I think they really care what happens in Ottawa because we need our federal government to also come to the plate and help cattle producers in this province.

We've put that ask in, Mr. Speaker. The federal Conservatives are talking about what they could do to help the industry. And the uncertainty that they're helping prop up does not do one thing for the cattle industry or rural Saskatchewan, for that matter, by propping up a coalition government in Ottawa.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Government's Performance

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the more sensible things this government has done with the surplus left to them by the former New Democratic Party

government was to implement some tax cuts. But the problem, Mr. Speaker, the problem, Mr. Speaker, with the government's tax cut is that tax cut won't arrive till next April when income tax returns are filed.

The fact of the matter is — and I think we all felt it yesterday — the wind chill was up, the temperature is down, and overnight furnaces in Saskatchewan have been running at full speed.

Mr. Speaker, this government sits on a huge surplus that's been provided by energy resources. My question to the Premier today: why is it that the Sask Party government has missed the opportunity to help Saskatchewan families with high energy costs — energy costs which they raised 20 per cent — why have they missed this opportunity, with the resources they have, to help Saskatchewan families, seniors, low-income families, all families in Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. I'd point out though that if he left behind the \$3 billion surplus as he just claimed, then why didn't that government do anything for the cattle producers that the member for Nutana was just talking about? That would be an interesting answer to that question.

Mr. Speaker, our government is working very hard together with the people of this province to take the opportunities that have been presented to us in an unprecedented way in Saskatchewan.

People in this province have told this government they want us to take the opportunity of a surplus to cut taxes. We've done that. They've said take this opportunity to pay down debt; 40 per cent will be reduced off the debt in our first budget year, Mr. Speaker. They've said take the opportunity to invest in infrastructure. They've said take the opportunity to share it through the employment supplement, we did it six months ago. They said take the opportunity to increase rental supplements for Saskatchewan people, we did that six months ago, Mr. Speaker. They said, fix *The Residential Tenancies Act*; that was introduced this session.

Mr. Speaker, there's more work to be done, but this government is taking every single opportunity to work for and on behalf of the people of the province to create a stronger Saskatchewan and a better life.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, when the livestock industry was hit with the BSE [bovine spongiform encephalopathy] crisis in this province, we responded immediately with \$55 million, Mr. Speaker. And when the cost of energy skyrocketed, we responded immediately to provide relief to Saskatchewan families.

Mr. Speaker, right next door in Alberta — a province that the Premier has much admiration for, and its government — right next door in Alberta, families in Alberta are receiving support from their Conservative government in terms of energy costs. As the member from Meewasin pointed out, families in Alberta are saving \$27 a month because of the interest and the support of the Alberta government.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has an opportunity here today to reduce home heating costs right now for Saskatchewan families, not with benefits that may appear next April. My question again is to the Premier: will he today, as we now meet the onset of winter, will he provide SaskEnergy customers — both families, businesses, and communities — with a rebate like previous governments have done in this province and like the Government of Alberta is doing today?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, this government of the province of Saskatchewan and the people of Saskatchewan are not simply going to be satisfied with just trying to keep up with another province. They believe that it is Saskatchewan's turn to lead. They believe that Saskatchewan can do even a little bit better than the province next door. And that's why they support, Mr. Speaker, this government's move to reduce taxes after the changes are implemented, Mr. Speaker, and after they're approved by members of this House. And I hope that member will vote for those tax changes.

Here is the fact of the matter: a family of four in the province of Saskatchewan will pay no provincial income tax until they make \$41,300. How does that compare with Alberta? Well they start paying taxes at \$36,325.

When it comes to sharing prosperity with Saskatchewan people, we're not going to be number two. We're going to be number one. When it comes to the economic growth that we want for Saskatchewan, we're not going to be settling for number two. We want to be number one, Mr. Speaker. That's the vision of this government, and we invite, we invite the members opposite to join us and the people of the province in this new vision for the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, having passed and received Royal Assent to the Premier's tax cuts yesterday, today is a chance for the Premier to show some leadership. Let's show a little leadership for support for our livestock industry. Let's show a little leadership to providing relief to Saskatchewan families with their energy costs.

Now it may not be surprising, Mr. Speaker, that this government wants to raise the SaskEnergy rates and feels nervous about providing any support for energy in this province, given their Sask-first policy for the Crown

corporations — which policy, Mr. Speaker, is to sell off those profitable revenue centres of our Crowns, thereby transferring that source of revenue to the consumer in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They say, Mr. Speaker, for example, they're going to sell Heritage Gas which returns revenues from natural gas outside of the province to the people of Saskatchewan. They say they're going to do that under this Sask-first policy.

So my question to the Premier today is, why is this Sask Party government undermining the ability of our Crown utilities to provide reasonable rates, affordable rates to the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, well I thank the hon. member for the question. The answer in terms of this government's attention around the Saskatchewan-first policy for Crowns, I think, was provided with great clarity in an announcement that was made just last week when this government pointed out that because of that Saskatchewan-first policy, there would be \$120 million-plus investment in SaskTel. To do what, Mr. Speaker? To provide 100 per cent high-speed coverage for the province of Saskatchewan and 98 per cent coverage for cellphone coverage in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That is the net result. That is the objective of the government with respect to Sask-first.

But we didn't stop there this session, Mr. Speaker. We were busy in this session cutting taxes and reducing debt and fixing highways and expanding technology and improving the graduate retention program and helping renters, Mr. Speaker. We were busy this session fighting crime. We were busy ensuring, Mr. Speaker, that the people of the province, that the people of the province could enjoy a selection of better wine which stands in great contrast to the whine we get from the other side, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Before I recognize the next speaker for the question, I just want to remind members that while we're winding down the fall session, I think it's still appropriate to recognize the fact that the member placing the question and the minister responding do have the right to be heard and to listen to. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Calvert: — Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. If this government's handling of the . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, thank you again. If this government's handling of the corrections system is an example of how they intend to deal with crime in the province, we have some things to be worried about, Mr. Speaker.

Now I was asking the Premier about his policy on the sell-off of the Crown assets. He indicates the policy is clear. Well it is clear at least to the editorial board of the Saskatoon *StarPhoenix* when they wrote of this Sask-first policy quote, it is: “. . . like

ordering Crown executive to employ meat tenderizer mallets on the companies until they are soft enough to be sold.”

Mr. Speaker, that's what we think is happening. They're going to soften up our Crown corporations by selling off the profitable pieces one by one, and they hope that this will soften up the Saskatchewan . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I'll ask the Leader of the Opposition to be given the opportunity to place his question.

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you again. Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Order. The Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Calvert: — And for the fourth time, thank you again, Mr. Speaker. If this Sask policy, if the Sask-first policy which is putting privatization first and Saskatchewan families last, if the Premier is arguing this is not the precursor to the privatization of our Crowns, then simply will he explain to the people of Saskatchewan why in the world would you sell off your profitable enterprises that are bringing revenues to the people of Saskatchewan, keeping our rates low and affordable, enabling a government in Saskatchewan to provide to its people the lowest cost bundle of utilities in Canada? Why is he doing it?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I think it was the previous government of the province that that member led, that pointed out when they announced the sale of the upgrader asset that belonged to the people of the province, when they privatized the upgrader, they said there are certain times when it is in the interests of the Government of Saskatchewan and taxpayers to move an asset to the private sector.

The Sask-first policy means for the people of rural Saskatchewan that they're going to have 98 per cent coverage on their cellphones. The Sask-first policy, Mr. Speaker, means for the people of rural and urban and northern and southern Saskatchewan, they're going to have 100 per cent coverage with respect to the Internet, Mr. Speaker.

That's what the policy means. That's the manifestation of it. And I dare say those people who are tired of dropped calls, who are tired of dial-up Internet are saying thank goodness for this policy. Thank goodness that this government is investing right here in the province of Saskatchewan, in addition to cutting taxes, reducing debt, investing in infrastructure, and ensuring there's an insurance policy that will stand this province in good stead for years to come, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Calvert: — Well, Mr. Speaker, another good example in the very press conference and scrum which followed the conference announcing the expansion in SaskTel of high-speed, the Premier himself and the minister indicated clearly this was

but a continuation of the program and policy of the former New Democratic Party government. And we have supported them in the continuation and the building of that policy with, of course, financial resources left behind by the New Democratic Party government.

Mr. Speaker, in the course of this session, we've had some discussion about the process leading to a decision on the feasibility or unfeasibility of a private sector nuclear reactor in the province. Having reviewed some of these discussions, Mr. Speaker, I note that on June 17 — June 17, the day I believe this government announced the Bruce Power feasibility study — the Minister of Enterprise and Innovation said in no uncertain terms quote:

This is not going to be built with taxpayer dollars or SaskPower fees. This is going to be built with private funds.

Well how times have changed, Mr. Speaker. Just yesterday when they asked about the potential of taxpayer dollars . . .

The Speaker: — I'd ask the Leader of the Opposition to place his question.

Mr. Calvert: — Well we all know now, Mr. Speaker, that the government is quite willing to put taxpayer dollars into this project, so my question to the Premier is: what has changed? In five months, what has changed?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I want to just say this with respect to the SaskTel announcement. What I said that morning at the press conference was that I gave the government, the previous government, credit for having made some investment with respect to mobility coverage in our province. And I gave them credit for making an investment with respect to Internet investment in Saskatchewan. But the point was that the job was left undone, Mr. Speaker, that coverage was not universal in the province, and that it was our vision for complete connectivity. And so, Mr. Speaker, our government has undertaken to finish that job.

There were many, many jobs that we inherited undone by the previous government. Roads that needed to be fixed, we are completing that job, Mr. Speaker. Taxes that needed to be cut, prosperity that needed to be shared — we are also completing that undone job, Mr. Speaker. Debt that needs to be reduced in the province. We're fixing up what was left behind by that previous government, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that those most vulnerable, those who are disabled, who wait on wait-lists, those who are seniors who've been waiting for an increase in their low-income tax benefit — Mr. Speaker, all those jobs left undone. There's more work to do, Mr. Speaker, but here's the good news. This work is getting done. Saskatchewan is stronger, and we have a better life in the province for it.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, if I recall my question had to do of this Premier and this government's policy in terms of the financing of a nuclear reactor in the private sector. Unless I misheard the Premier, I don't believe that was anywhere in his answer. So perhaps I'll try again because we know, Mr. Speaker, we know by experience that there can be significant cost overruns in the building of a reactor. There can be significant refurbishing costs along the way. We know there are issues of waste disposal. We know there will be future costs for decommissioning.

Back in June the minister responsible was indicating that there would not be a chance of public dollars going into the private sector reactor. This week, as recently as yesterday, the government seems to be wide open now to all of the options which clearly include a significant investment by the taxpayer of Saskatchewan.

So my question to the Premier again is what has changed in those five months from when the feasibility study was announced by the minister and a very clear position was stated, to what we're hearing today from this government?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question. You know, he was quoting from an earlier Saskatoon *StarPhoenix* editorial. There's one in today's paper, and the editorial board of *The StarPhoenix* today is quite critical, I think, of what we've heard from members opposite and specifically the member that was just on his feet asking the question.

I think there's an understanding in this province that, with 26 per cent of the world's uranium production, we ought to be exploring uranium value-added opportunities. We ought to be very aggressively looking at opportunities for nuclear power because we know, Mr. Speaker, that in terms of CO₂, it's a much more sustainable source of power than others dependent on fossil fuels.

We'll have a long-term due diligence process, a chance for people to participate. This is a debate that is long overdue in the province and, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage members opposite to try to come to a position on energy issues. They've got two positions with respect to oil sands — stop them; no, go ahead. They've got two positions on nuclear power — stop it; no, go ahead. They've had two positions on the Sask-first Crown policy, Mr. Speaker.

As much as I think Saskatchewan people are marking this session of progress in the Legislative Assembly, I wonder if they're asking themselves if the opposition over there can come to a conclusion, actually a position on important issues in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Before I recognize the next question, I would also like to remind ministers that responses closer to the question would be greatly appreciated. I recognize the Leader of

the Opposition.

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well let me try and get a clear position from the Premier and the Sask Party government whose responsibility it is to have clear positions. I want to know why the double standard, Mr. Speaker. We've got a double standard here.

We've got a government that says we will not invest Crown assets or energy resources in providing a rebate for families and people. We've got a government that says we will not invest in the agricultural sector, in the cattle and livestock sector, even though we're seeing this dramatic drop of the herd in our province. We've got a government that says unequivocally they will not invest in the forestry sector even though we've seen now eight closures in that sector and hundreds of families out of their livelihoods.

But we will invest, they say, we're quite, quite willing to invest in a private sector nuclear reactor. So my question to the Premier is why the contradiction? Why the double standard?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[10:45]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I can understand perhaps why members opposite do not want to review this session. I think that perhaps some were expecting the Leader of the Opposition and the NDP would want to review the session. Maybe it's understandable that they don't want to do that because much progress was made, and I think the session exposed the fact that they have some major splits over there on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

But I would say to the hon. member, he asked this question two days ago. I'll answer it again. Our government, our government, and even in opposition, certainly never opposed the fact that the then government would have some wholly-owned, government-owned generation capacity, and that in some cases, as they did with wind power, that they would work with the private sector, Mr. Speaker. That's the position they held. It's the position we have, Mr. Speaker. We're going to do what's right for the province in terms of affordable energy that's environmentally sustainable, and that will help continue to grow this very dynamic economy.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier invites me to review this session. I'm more than pleased to do so. Every sensible thing, every sensible thing this government has done within the course of this session has either been done on New Democratic policies or programs in place, with money left behind by the New Democratic Party government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Calvert: — Now what we have seen, Mr. Speaker, is a

session of two things — missed opportunities and messes being created in this province. They have missed an opportunity to provide support for families through their energy costs. They have missed an opportunity to support the forestry sector. They have missed an opportunity to support the livestock sector. They have missed an opportunity, by the way, to preserve protected lands in this province.

And what they've been about, Mr. Speaker, well it's a mess after a mess. We've got a mess in the health care negotiations. We've got health care workers coming to this legislature. Why? Because of their ill-advised, their ill-advised essential services legislation. We've got a mess in the corrections system. It can only be described as a mess.

The Speaker: — I call members to order and ask the member to place his question.

Mr. Calvert: — It can only be said they've got a mess in the corrections system.

Mr. Speaker, I will place my question. I will place my question. First of all I want to wish a very Merry Christmas to the Premier and to all members opposite. But my wish even more, Mr. Speaker, my wish even more is that he would take this coalition government of his, of liberals and conservatives and reformers, I wish he would take this Conservative government a little Christmas holiday and figure out before we come back here in the spring, one, how they are going to seize some of the opportunities they have; and number two, how they're going to start cleaning up the messes that they're making.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well let me say to my hon. friend, thanks for the most roundabout Christmas wishes that I've ever received. But I reciprocate and wish him and all of his members a very Merry Christmas. And when we return, Mr. Speaker, in the spring, I know the debate will continue. But as for this session, Mr. Speaker, I guess we're going to agree to disagree because I think much progress has been made.

Mr. Speaker, this session saw the most single-year, historic tax cut in the history of the province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, this session saw the largest reduction in debt in the history of the province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — It has seen, now two times already, the largest infrastructure investment in the history of the province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Wall: — It has seen, Mr. Speaker, one of the largest single increases for those who need employment supplements in this province, six months ago, Mr. Speaker. We've increased rental housing, Mr. Speaker. We've added new police to the

streets of our province. There's help for renters in terms of *The Residential Tenancies Act*.

Mr. Speaker, we moving in terms of exploring nuclear power. We're leading the nation in economic growth. We're the talk of *Fortune* magazine and *The Wall Street Journal*, Mr. Speaker. But more importantly, we're the talk of main street right here in our province as people are proud of the province and looking forward to a bright future ahead.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 604 — *The Professional Public Service Employees Protection Act*

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

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 604, *The Professional Public Service Employees Protection Act* now be introduced and read a first time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Dewdney has moved that Bill No. 604, *The Professional Public Service Employees Protection Act* be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Clerk: — First reading of this Bill.

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

Mr. Yates: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — Earlier this day I laid on the Table the 2008 volume 3 *Report of the Provincial Auditor*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Order for return.

The Speaker: — Question 183 ordered for return.

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Disappointment in Government

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well it's a real pleasure to enter into this 75-minute debate where we call on the Assembly to express its profound disappointment in the Sask Party government for their complete lack of vision for the forestry sector, and for breaking their promises to rural Saskatchewan in terms of keeping rural schools open . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. It's been brought to my attention that notice came in the name of the member from The Battlefords, so the member from Nutana, I understand, would have to ask leave to speak ahead of the . . .

Ms. Atkinson: — I would ask leave to speak.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. The member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well I'm pleased that in the Christmas spirit, the members opposite are prepared to let me speak. So, Mr. Speaker, what this motion expresses is the profound disappointment for the breaking of the Sask Party's promises to rural Saskatchewan, particularly when it comes to small-school closures, payments to farmers living in the southwest part of our province to deal with drought, and also support for the hog and livestock industry.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's no question that the crisis in livestock has hit our province hard. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I were at the APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan] reception last night. And what were people talking about at that reception? They were talking about the crises in the livestock industry, Mr. Speaker. My colleagues and I were at a reception of the cattle industry last Thursday night at Agribition, and what were the livestock people talking about? They were talking about the crises in the livestock industry.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government, which has \$2 billion in its insurance fund, as they're calling it, is not prepared to provide any kind of emergency cash payments. Mr. Speaker, people in the livestock industry that are represented by Sask Party MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] are contacting my office and the Leader of the Opposition's office and they're telling us that without some form of immediate relief that there will be bankruptcies across Saskatchewan, and there will be a serious decline in our herds, Mr. Speaker. Without immediate, emergency assistance and direct aid, this is a sector that will basically reduce itself in our province.

The Alberta government has provided assistance to their producers with cash support. And in fact the cattle industry in our province has asked for similar support, and they've indicated in a letter to all Sask Party MLAs that without similar and immediate support for Saskatchewan cattle producers, we will see a significant reduction in forage acreage and cattle numbers within the province will occur, Mr. Speaker. In this letter, they ask for an immediate, a direct assistance of \$148 million in order that people in our province can have parity with

their neighbours in Alberta.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture has indicated a number of changes that have been made by this government. I have to tell the minister and his colleagues that those changes, while welcomed by producers across the province, do nothing for those people who are in the livestock and hog industry.

Mr. Speaker, people in the livestock and hog industry want something more than deferrals of principal payments on loans. They want a direct payment by the province of Saskatchewan in order to support their industry.

The minister, with some fanfare, in his newsletter in February of last year, indicated that there was a new agreement with the federal government when it comes to AgriStability. Well, Mr. Speaker, that agreement is not working for people in the livestock industry, and it's not working because in order for people to be eligible for any kind of payment under AgriStability, you have to have two positive margins, Mr. Speaker. And I can tell you that the livestock industry, that the people who have contacted our offices have clearly indicated that they're not in a position where they have two positive margins in the last five years. Consequently, Mr. Speaker, they're eligible for nothing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are very, very touchy about this subject because I know that the people that are contacting my office and my colleague's office, they're also contacting the members opposite. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, the man that contacted me yesterday — indicating that his AgriInvest fund of \$250,000 is gone and that he has, in addition to that, depleted \$550,000 in equity, in investments in his operation, is gone — he contacted that minister's office yesterday, Mr. Speaker.

So people are not only contacting us, but they're also contacting the members opposite. So they're hearing from livestock producers that they want some action on behalf of themselves by the members, Mr. Speaker, that for the most part these ranchers and farmers voted for.

An Hon. Member: — You better check your numbers, Pat.

Ms. Atkinson: — Oh, I am. I am checking my numbers.

Mr. Speaker, what is happening is that your loans come due and you have to pay. And when you don't have anything to pay, Mr. Speaker, you start to deplete your equity. And, Mr. Speaker, those livestock producers are now selling off their herds. And that minister has heard that. That minister must know that the numbers of cattle in our province are declining and they've declined significantly in the last year. Now the minister will say, the minister will say . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I would ask members to allow the member who's been recognized to make her comments. Other members will have the opportunity in a few short minutes to enter the debate. Member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Now that member will say, well 16 years. Well, Mr. Speaker, what is interesting when you have a journalist, a consultant such as Kevin Hursh respond to what's

happening in the cattle industry, he's saying — it's not me; it's not the member opposite — he's saying that the NDP did more for the livestock and hog industry than the members opposite.

And, Mr. Speaker, those livestock producers know that because they expected something from this government, that's the disappointment. They expected some . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well you say they didn't expect much from my government. They expected something from you and they have gotten absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker. Nothing. And that government is sitting on \$2 billion — \$2 billion in cash — and they have done nothing, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely nothing.

Now they can have platitudes. They could be the good old boys that go out and shake hands and go to receptions and give little speeches. But, Mr. Speaker, that is not cutting it. And it's not cutting it because people can't pay their bills. They have . . .

The Speaker: — Order. It's becoming difficult to hear what the member from Saskatoon Nutana is bringing to the debate and I ask the members to respect the right of a member to speak. The member from Saskatoon Nutana.

[11:00]

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, they came to government a year ago and, with much fanfare, they announced loans for the hog and livestock industry. That's what they announced. Well what people are saying now is, we need more than loans. Loans aren't good enough. We need cash because we can't pay our bills.

Mr. Speaker, I was speaking to a man, an older gentleman, who helped his son and daughter get into the industry, and what he tells me is that he can't pay his bill. If nothing happens by the middle of January, he can't pay his bills and he's in trouble, Mr. Speaker. He's in trouble.

Last night I spoke to a young guy who's from the southwest part of the province. He was at APAS. He came back from Alberta; he came with some cash. And what has happened to him? He's lost \$250,000 in equity. And he's a cow-calf operator, Mr. Speaker. He wants something to be done and he wants something to be done by the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, these people represent these producers. I understand there's over 10,000 farmers in the province and ranchers in the province that have cattle. They want something done by this government. And they are incredibly disappointed that somehow they have been able to implement tax reductions for all of us; they've been able to implement a change when it comes to the guaranteed income supplement, the Saskatchewan income plan for seniors; they've done something for people with disabilities; they've done something for CBOs [community-based organization]. They have not been able to do anything for their base, Mr. Speaker — the people that got them elected, Mr. Speaker. They have done absolutely nothing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they did announce that there will be a one-year deferral of the principal payments owing from these cattle and hog short-term loan programs. Well big deal, Mr. Speaker. All this does is prolong the start date of the repayments. The producers still have to repay those loans, and

they're struggling today. They need some sort of direct support now, Mr. Speaker.

Now the members opposite have had one year. They've had a year. They've got, with their friends, to do something about changes to the AgriStability program. Has that minister indicated to the public that he is lobbying hard to change AgriStability to get rid of those two positive margins? In fact he signed on to it. Not at all, Mr. Speaker. Has he indicated to them, I am going to do what I can with my agricultural colleagues across the country and with the present Minister of Agriculture to change AgriStability so it works for the livestock and hog industry? Not at all, Mr. Speaker.

The federal Throne Speech came down. Did they have any reference to the livestock industry and the hog industry in that federal Throne Speech? Not at all. The word is that when it comes to the livestock and hog industry, the Conservatives in this country are nowhere to be found. They can't be found here in the province of Saskatchewan, and they can't be found in Ottawa.

Now the minister has said that he spoke to Mr. Ritz a couple of times. He hasn't been able to tell us whether or not Mr. Ritz is prepared to work hard to change the program. We know that the minister and Mr. Ritz have provided absolutely no guarantees of any kind of aid. The minister could, if he wanted to, provide some aid to the people of our province, particularly those in the livestock and hog industry.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister has said that Mr. Ritz was totally non-committal in that area right now, but at least we have it on the table. Well what do we have on the table? Do we have changes to AgriStability? What kind of changes? What kind of changes? Are they the kind of changes that are going to help those people in the livestock and hog industry to get some help? I don't know that, Mr. Speaker, because that minister has not been forthcoming. Do they have on the table that there is going to be a direct payment to those people in the livestock industry now or shortly after Christmas, Mr. Speaker? Because the bills are coming due.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know that, I know that the federal government is somewhat of a bully. We've all seen that in the last several days. We know that that has been the history of that federal government, particularly Mr. Harper and Mr. Ritz, but maybe, Mr. Speaker, it takes that government to stand up to those bullies on behalf of livestock and hog producers in our province. But we've seen nothing of that. We have seen no response from the Sask Party. They have refused to provide producers with any kind of immediate payment. They're completely ineffective when raising this issue in Ottawa, and obviously the Prime Minister, he won't listen to the members of parliament, but he's obviously not listening to the Premier of our province.

Now these people said they wanted to give peace a chance. Well we've had a year to give peace a chance. We have nothing in the Throne Speech. We have nothing in the way of direct aid from Ottawa, and we have no changes to the AgriStability program, which these folks over there signed on to, in terms of changing, in terms of changing the positive margins. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's not working for the livestock industry. It's simply

not working, and when you have a program that doesn't work, it means you need to go back to the table and renegotiate those terms.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is also, this is also a government that promised rural Saskatchewan . . . They brought people in from all over rural Saskatchewan. They were in these galleries in order to keep rural school closures from happening. Well, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of rural schools that are on the chopping block as we speak, including the school that I went to as a young child. Those members opposite promised those rural people that they were going to save, they were going to save those rural schools.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they haven't saved those rural schools. They got some sort of little program that they're calling schools of opportunity, but they're not saving those rural schools from closure, Mr. Speaker. And they promised the people that they brought into this gallery that they would do so.

So, Mr. Speaker, these people pretend to represent rural Saskatchewan. But if you look at what they've done in this session of the legislature, they did nothing when it comes to rural school closures, not a thing. They did nothing for the livestock industry. They did nothing for the hog industry and the forestry industry. There are people that live in rural Saskatchewan that are attached to the forestry industry, and they have done nothing.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to move this motion:

That this Assembly expresses its profound disappointment in the Sask Party government for their complete lack of vision for the forestry sector and for breaking their other promises to rural Saskatchewan, for example to keep small schools open, pay drought payments to farmers in southwest Saskatchewan, and fix producers' support programs for the hog and livestock industries.

I so move.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved:

That this Assembly expresses its profound disappointment in the Saskatchewan Party for the complete lack of vision for the forestry sector and for breaking their other promises to rural Saskatchewan, for example to keep small schools open, pay drought payments to farmers in southwest Saskatchewan, and fix producers' support programs for the hog and livestock industries.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to rise in this House today and oppose this motion. Mr. Speaker, I'm from the forestry end of the province, being from Carrot River and having Hudson Bay also in our constituency. And to have a motion like this, it's kind of a, well basically a convoluted motion as it is. It takes in quite a few different things. But I

guess that's what we expect out of the opposition.

Mr. Speaker, I think that we all realize that there is a big problem within the forest industry, and much as I would love to see it growing because, of course, Carrot River being the town that I am from and having Hudson Bay within our constituency, I would dearly love to see the forest industry going.

But unfortunately, unfortunately it just doesn't make any economic sense at this present time. We are not the only ones, we are not the only ones who are suffering due to the downturn in the lumber industry. From January 1 from 2003 to June 1, 2008, there's been 38,428 layoffs within the forest industry across Canada — 207 mill closures. Now we've seen eight mill closures within Saskatchewan. And I'll tell you what: that probably doesn't even count all of them because there's also lots of small little operations.

The economics just are not there. You know, I was very, very happy when the Carrot River mill was changed over to a stud mill because I said, you know, that's one thing that this country will always need are studs. And unfortunately even that, even that didn't work.

When you go to the likes of Hudson Bay, the plant at Hudson Bay can produce enough OSB [oriented strand board] to make 5,800 houses per year. And that's just a small plant, and it can make 5,800 houses a year — produces that much. That market at the end just isn't there. And I'm sorry, we cannot see why would we put money into a market that just isn't there.

When you go back, the previous administration promised \$100 million to Domtar only a little over a year ago. Where would that money be? That was taxpayers' money. It was ludicrous to offer Domtar money like that which would have been long gone, and you would have just kept on putting money into basically a dead horse. I believe there's going to be a forest industry within this province. It will come back at some time. But why spend hard-earned taxpayers' money on stuff like that that just flat out doesn't make any economic sense?

Now I can see why the NDP would want to do it. Like I mean, they've done it with SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company], they did it with Navigata, they did it with a pile of other things. But this government on this side wants to be more prudent. After all, this is taxpayers' money, and we speak for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

They did have some reports. They had a report that was done in 2006, and in this report it had participation from industry, from labour, from environment groups. What did they do with it, Mr. Speaker? They put it on the shelf and did nothing with it. And then they turned around and criticize us for not having due diligence within the forestry sector. I'm sorry. We do have due diligence, and that is, we are not going to waste the government's money on just handing it out. We certainly would like to help on the infrastructure end of it when things get rolling again.

Mr. Speaker, they talk about doing different things, but when you go right back — I've just got to take a look at my note here — on April 2, 2008 the MLA from Prince Albert Northcote was asked by the media, and I quote, “Weyerhaeuser said there is

really nothing that any government could do to help the Hudson Bay OSB plant stay open.” And his reply was, and I quote, “Well I guess that is true.”

And again, Mr. Speaker, when the member from P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote was asked if there was anything to keep the mill in Hudson Bay from closing, what did he say? He said, and I quote, “It's tough to say.” So, Mr. Speaker, much as we would love to see some of these things going forward, it's just not going to happen.

And in this long motion, it also was brought out, Mr. Speaker, about the closure of schools. Well our Minister of Education has put down a very good program for schools of opportunities, the schools of opportunities within this province, and this province is growing. And this is a great thing to have because now when you have places that are growing within this province, these schools can actually go back and apply, and apply to have and bring forward a reason why they're going to have new students coming into these schools.

Unfortunately the previous administration were always prepared for a downturn, and they kept on . . . They never had, they never had the vision to see this province moving forward. Therefore when we have our schools of opportunity, this lets the people in those communities that have the vision, that have the vision and see this province going forward, those schools will not be closed. That is there, Mr. Speaker. That is there for the people of this province, for the rural people of this province, and this is a great initiative.

[11:15]

And while I'm speaking of that, Mr. Speaker, you want to talk about the previous administration on closing things such as schools, etc., I can talk about our area. My home town of Arborfield back in the '90s had their hospital closed, and they went and they moved it. They told the people in Arborfield, don't worry, Carrot River's only 15 miles away. Carrot River had a school that was built by the Grant Devine administration, or excuse me, a hospital. So it was a fairly new hospital. Four years later after they closed the Arborfield hospital, they closed down the hospital in Carrot River. That is the foresight that that previous administration had. They had the foresight that we weren't going to have any more people coming into this province, and we weren't going to grow this province.

Mr. Speaker, we are growing this province. We're growing this province very well — 17,000 more people year to year. So that brings us back to the point that yes, we have these schools of opportunities. We have the schools of opportunities where we have a community, a community that feels that they're going to be growing, they're going to get people there.

And I can guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, I'm probably the only one in this House that's ever worked within the forest industry. My dad ran a lumber mill, and I have hauled logs into Weyerhaeuser, so I know what the forest industry is like. Even the people at home, even the people in Carrot River admit that there is nothing that the government can do to help out the forest industry until things actually turn around, until we have what is the worst housing crisis in the US [United States] move forward. And then we will actually be able to move forward on

the forest industry.

In saying all of this, Mr. Speaker, this is a long and, like I said, convoluted motion. Mr. Speaker, I am against this motion. I would vote against this motion for the simple reason that it doesn't really make any sense. It just doesn't make sense for what we have, what we have in this province.

We will see this province grow. We will also see it grow in the ag end. And up in our area unfortunately we don't have many ranchers, so I can't talk to that end. But I can tell you one thing — all the farmers in our area are sure happy about the tax cuts that we've done on the rural land which that administration never did a thing for.

My time has come to an end, Mr. Speaker, so I thank you for listening to my rant and rave.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter the debate here in the Assembly here today, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly support the motion that's been put forward. And I'll expand on some other areas as well that aren't even mentioned in this motion.

But the thrust or the gist of this motion is just the real failing of the Saskatchewan Party to represent rural Saskatchewan with strong leadership and to address the needs that they have. The motion that I am supporting that has been moved today reads as follows:

That this Assembly expresses its profound disappointment in the Saskatchewan Party government for their lack of vision for the forestry sector and for breaking their other promises to rural Saskatchewan, for example to keep small schools open, to pay drought payments to farmers in southwest Saskatchewan, and to fix producer support programs for the hog and livestock industries.

So, Mr. Speaker, I certainly support this motion, and I think many people within Saskatchewan support this motion. I know that there's a lot of concern in rural Saskatchewan, and the reason it's important for us to speak to this, Mr. Speaker, is that in our House, in our Assembly we have on the other side of the House predominantly rural representation, predominantly rural MLAs.

When we look at rural constituencies and who's bringing their voice to this Assembly, it's supposed to be the members opposite. And that's not happening, Mr. Speaker. And so what we find is we're getting more and more and more calls through our offices and more individuals who are really concerned and want to meet with us and want us to bring their voices that aren't being brought by the members opposite to light.

And so in the end we have the members opposite who said anything to get to elected, and they made promises all over rural Saskatchewan. And here they are today really, really failing to follow through on those many broken promises. They're missing in action in their own constituencies, and they're missing in action in bringing those concerns and those

opportunities from their own constituencies to the Assembly. I guess they're missing in bringing it possibly to their caucus table, certainly to the cabinet table. And it's a shame, Mr. Speaker, that the betrayal that we're seeing is occurring, and it comes down to a question of integrity and being able to follow through with one's promises.

I'm going to speak today specifically to education, but I do want to highlight some of the other concerns that we're hearing on a regular basis from rural Saskatchewan. In fact, I only have 10 minutes, Mr. Speaker, and that certainly won't allow me to get into the kind of breadth and depth that is needed.

But what's something that's a real concern is when we're looking at our ag producers, and specifically our livestock industry right now.

Members opposite always like to talk about 16 years, or what we did or what we didn't do, and they like to talk about records. Well it's of huge concern, Mr. Speaker, that when we look at the cattle herd in Saskatchewan that in one year — one year, Mr. Speaker — has been decimated, has been actually decimated without any response and any action from the members opposite. We've gone from 1.5 million head to 1 million, Mr. Speaker, as an approximation. That's a third loss of our herd here in Saskatchewan, a third of the herd lost here in Saskatchewan this year.

The broken promises to respond extend themselves into areas such as the property tax. And we've seen this government, that opposition, make all sorts of promises on property taxes. Now they're elected and they're not coming through with it. And we're talking about constituencies in rural Saskatchewan that have some of the highest mill rates, some of the highest assessments in our province, and it's a shame.

We've seen some movement on agriculture, which is important — we continue to urge this government — but nothing for commercial, nothing on the residential side. And I certainly look forward to the much heralded report and action that's going to be coming, and I know rural taxpayers are certainly looking for this as well.

I go into other examples. I mean our RMs have concerns. Through our compounding and investment we're seeing roads that are being pounded, infrastructure being pounded at new rates. And then they need some support to make sure that that enforcement of heavy-haul routes and that making sure that that infrastructure is able to be maintained and not depleted with the resources coming from certain parts of the province that make our entire provincial treasuries flush.

We look at our towns, and there's such needs with water and waste water, roads and hospitals and schools. We need support to open lots from housing.

And then we see some real critical errors of this government, and one I'll cite. For example, when we have a government minister, the member from Cannington, who's called to a community meeting down at Oxbow, Saskatchewan, and the reason he's called, Mr. Speaker, is because their hospital has been reduced to half-time, Mr. Speaker, and the community's outraged and they're concerned.

And what they're saying is that the government's talking all about all this nursing recruitment, but it's not hitting the mark. So they bring the member from Cannington, and what does the member from Cannington do with a full house, a full house in Oxbow, a packed auditorium? Well he throws down the gauntlet to Oxbow, Mr. Speaker. He chastises Oxbow residents for not doing enough, not doing enough to bring nurses to their community. And he pits Oxbow against all the communities of Saskatchewan. He has no solutions for the community of Oxbow, Mr. Speaker.

People come back up . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I sure have been to Oxbow. The member asks. I sure have. You bet. I was actually down there not too long ago here. And, Mr. Speaker, when we have a member step forward to a community who's saying, we'll do anything we can to bring nurses to our community, and the member stands on his feet and chastises them for not doing enough and pits them against each other, and finally he offers his wisdom.

His wisdom is this, Mr. Speaker. He said, if each of you would go home and phone your nursing relatives in England and tell them to move to Oxbow, we could solve this solution. This is the kind of grand vision and wisdom we're getting from the members opposite. It's an absolute shame, Mr. Speaker — absolute shame.

The deputy minister is saying he's going to deal with his member. The Deputy Premier's saying that he's going to deal with his member. I sure as heck hope he will. If he'd like to see statements and videotape of this chastising of rural Saskatchewan, and Oxbow specifically, we can certainly prepare that for him as well. And I hope as the Deputy Premier he wouldn't stand for that kind of action.

You know, this government, they're just offside in certain areas too. They're offside with increasing utility rates and power rates and energy rates for rural Saskatchewan, who are so dependent on that power in many ways. They're large consumers to bring their livelihood, Mr. Speaker. And they're eroding the base of our Crowns that provide that competitive cost, that lowest cost, and we're seeing a huge abandonment right there.

And then we see the government excess. It's just offside with rural Saskatchewan. These members opposite go out and buy themselves lavish SUVs [sport-utility vehicle] to cruise around about the province. And, Mr. Speaker, this isn't the reality of Saskatchewan people. And, you know, I have relatives all across this province and lived in rural environments, and we've got a lot of, you know, two-wheel drive vehicles driving around out there, getting around just fine. But the members opposite think they need these lavish, expensive SUVs. It's a shame.

I don't have enough time here, Mr. Speaker, but I do want to get to the fact that the broken promises around education. These guys criss-crossed the province and said, school closures are going to be a problem of the past when we're elected. In fact they made promises that schools that had been closed would be reopened. They made promises that dollars that were going to be made available by phony-baloney programs that they touted and made a big deal of, would be paid back retroactively.

All of these promises have failed miserably. All of these

promises have now become broken promises, Mr. Speaker.

And the people of rural Saskatchewan are incredibly angry, Mr. Speaker, with . . . You know, we see the Minister of Education who shouted out and he said, what, do you think my handbook's nothing, I believe was the quote that he shouted across here. Well the people of rural Saskatchewan certainly don't think that handbook's a whole heck of a lot.

And I know that the Minister of Enterprise doesn't think that handbook's a whole heck of a lot, because he's trying to rewrite policy himself. He's offered a plan forward that he . . . And I know it's probably a bit of a wrestling match in that caucus over there, in that cabinet over there, and I guess the Minister of Education won this one. I don't think they leg wrestled. I don't know how they made this decision or however it occurred. But the Minister of Enterprise didn't win that debate and I know he brought forward a different plan for school closures. And I know the Minister of Enterprise certainly doesn't think the Minister of Education's handbook is very much, nor do the communities of Saskatchewan whose schools are being reviewed for closure here this year.

Now we've got this new, convoluted process put forward by the Minister of Education, this schools of opportunity process that's an energy-draining, resource-draining activity that's placed on to communities, that has to run at the same time as school boards are doing their thoughtful review of communities. And in the best case scenario, we're providing potentially stopgap funding that isn't allocated into where it really should be. And that's how we bring education to our students in rural Saskatchewan.

This minister's failed. This government's failed. They've broken promises across rural Saskatchewan. They're missing in action . . .

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before I begin I must comment on the tie I'm wearing. I've got a lot of comments today because it's a loud tie, but this is my July 1 Canada Day celebration tie, is when I wear it. But today I'm wearing it and asking everyone to let's pray for Canada unity today. That's what's first of importance.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to get into this debate. The one on the other side, the opposition keep talking about agriculture, forestry. Where were they when we brought forward the best budget, the best budget this province has ever seen? It did more for the people of Saskatchewan than any other budget in history, and they stood there, picked their political side, and not looked at what's good for Saskatchewan. They just picked what their party did and they voted against the best budget this party has ever seen. And then they get upset when we mention the 16 years.

In the five years that I've been here, all I heard from that other side was Grant Devine, Grant Devine, Grant Devine. Now all of

a sudden they don't want us to talk about their record, their 16 years, their pathetic 16 years. For 16 years they stood there and they didn't even know what rural Saskatchewan was. They had built their socialist castles in Regina and Saskatoon, and from there they figured they could rule the world.

[11:30]

Well, Mr. Speaker, that came to an end. We even wonder if they can pronounce the word rural without having a bad taste in their mouth. They say they know agriculture. They know agriculture because grandpa had a farm or uncle had a farm. Mr. Speaker, they don't know it until they've been there. They've never had the dirt under their nails. They've never stood with a farmer after he's had his crop wiped out by hail.

Mr. Speaker, I've got a member yelling over there, nonsense. I'd like to come and see him follow the plow once. He talks about it, but he's never really done it. Have you ever stood by a farmer when he stands by his hailed-out field and watch him . . .

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Mr. Speaker, he mentions talking about reality. This is reality. Have you ever stood beside a farmer whose crop has been totally wiped out by hail and watch a grown man cry because his whole future has just disappeared before his eyes, or when he's hit by an early frost? Go out there and feel what these people have been feeling. Or stand by a cattleman who's just had a lightning strike and six head of cattle are laying there dead. The old adage, don't judge a man till you've walked a mile in his shoes, fits here. They have not been there. They just think they've been there.

They accomplished 16 years of nothing for agriculture. Not a thing for agriculture, and now they say that they care. You can't feel the joy or the pain unless you've been part of it. The opposition has no idea, no comprehension. It's just lip service.

I have a neighbour who grew up his whole life in our community, and his father joined the CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] Party when it started and CCF was a rural party. And his son grew up, and he also joined the CCF and when it became the NDP, was a card-carrying member. When I stood my name up for election, he came over and said, the Sask Party, the Sask Party is the last hope for agriculture in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kirsch: — Now the NDP talked about we should throw a whole bunch of money into agriculture. Well we have to be very careful because of the problems we're having with countervail measures by the United States. We have to be very, very careful. And our minister is working on it, and we're putting in a lot of hours. And we're doing more than just lip service — 60 million available for cattle and 30 million was available for hogs, low interest rate at 2 per cent, one-year-optional deferral on principal, Mr. Speaker — and we're going to bring ag stability home to Saskatchewan. This has been commented on by farmers. And one of the biggest comments, and I quote, is from Jack Hextall, Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association president:

One of the first things that cattle industry representatives requested from the newly elected provincial government last November was to bring the administration of AgriStability home to Saskatchewan . . . And we applaud Minister Bjornerud on his response to this request.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP increased taxes, but we are . . . ag land rebate from 38 per cent to 47 per cent this year. We have promised 80 per cent rebate by the fourth year on ag land. And the NDP, what did they do? Mr. Speaker, they downloaded and downloaded and downloaded on the producers and RMs. Nothing new for ag land in their 2007 campaign. They did not even mention livestock in their campaign.

The NDP's record, they closed 31 rural extension offices. That was to help agriculture. They closed the extension service branch. That also was to help agriculture. They eliminated, eliminated the GRIP [gross revenue insurance program] program, they said, to help agriculture. Livestock feed insurance program was cut from 2001 to 2006. With their control of crop insurance, the premiums skyrocketed and the coverages dropped and dropped. Cut spot loss hail from crop insurance. And then they closed the largest number of rural hospitals and schools ever. They left rural highways in the biggest ruin in history; and they spent money on ridiculous agriculture programs.

And of course the shining star from over there is that great SPUDCO disaster. One of the biggest fiascos in agricultural history was caused by a government. They ignored the drought in the Southwest. They would not commit to fully funding CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization], and the grazing of pasture technology program was cut. That's your record. We have been government for one year, and we have done more than you in 16. And you say we're ignoring agriculture? All I can do is look with disgust at your record.

Mr. Speaker, I must yet touch on forestry. We understand that it is a very, very difficult time for forestry. The forestry sector has been besieged, besieged, not just here, but world wide. The US housing market, which is where we sell our lumber into, is almost non-existent. There isn't a forest company in the world that is managing right now. So the former government would have put in \$100 million to keep Weyerhaeuser here, and today what would be happening with that 100 million? They'd be coming and wanting more. It would be a similar program like we saw up north where they put almost \$1 billion into a pulp mill to try and make it survive.

It's a tough situation in forestry. Our government is working hard. Our ministers are trying to work out solutions, and it's not going to be easy. But our ministers and our team are there. We are looking at solutions for the forest industry, and we are looking at long-term solutions because immediate solutions are just totally tied to what is happening to the forest industry.

The member from Carrot River Valley gave a bunch of quotes about the member from P.A. Northcote on his comment on the industry. This shows where they are at. They don't understand forestry. They just don't have a clue of what's happening, similar as into agriculture. So, Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the motion, and I thank you very much for the time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to definitely speak in favour of the motion that's been presented to the House. I would like to start out, Mr. Speaker, the forestry industry is in dire needs of assistance. You know, there's many promises made, certain individuals will make. The member from Prince Albert Carlton definitely made promises in his campaign and as he was . . . [inaudible] . . . and he is elected now as a member of this House. He made his statements very clearly: a vote for Darryl would be a vote for the pulp mill opening and the mill opening.

And, you know, I find it very hard to find the member from Prince Albert Carlton making statements, and then when it comes back to dealing after he's successful, I sometimes wonder was this process politics or was it not politics? You know, was his word his word, and that's good, and he'll follow through with what he promised to the voters that supported him. He's got some areas to answer to.

I guess you talk about the forestry sector and the dire need that it needs and the problems that are with the forestry sector. Mr. Speaker, we know there's a lot of concerns and a lot of issues that have to be addressed. There was supposed to be a process and a report on the forestry by the member and a few of the MLAs. They were supposed to do a report on the forestry sector with shareholders and provide that and make some recommendations on the industry and community. And at this time, we have not seen that report. That report has been asked to be tabled. It has not been tabled. Where is that report? It would be interesting to see what kind of recommendations are coming. So I guess I'm really excited to find out about this report, what kind of help it's going to do for the forestry sector, and who exactly did they involve in this report. But glad to see that.

So at this point, you know, you also go to the next sector, and you talk about the renaming of the Forestry Centre which is very interesting, you know. I find that very interesting that the time will come to have a centre changed. ForestryFirst? How about dealing with the communities first that are impacted by the forestry sector, the letdown in the industry and the families that have been impacted on this. How about the review? How about talking to them? Where are the meetings going to happen? How are they consulted? Who should they talk to?

It is the responsibility of this government to hear their concerns, and I hope, I hope that you guys will make an effort to go and listen to them. And then we go out and we have an opportunity, and it's called sector teams. And the forestry's been fortunate to have a sector team so it can make recommendation to Enterprise Saskatchewan. I find it hard to understand, it's one meeting they've had. One meeting in a year that this whole . . . The opportunity they've come together, they've had one meeting.

And you have the minister making comments of Enterprise Saskatchewan. He thinks that's a good working place. I find it very interesting why he figures one meeting within a whole year is moving in the right direction. And I think he said the quote, it was a pretty good job of having one meeting to make

recommendations to Enterprise Saskatchewan from the forestry sector. Well if that's a good start or a pretty good job, well I'm concerned.

Now we know that the federal government came out with some money to help the forestry sector. And that's why we're asking for . . . Questions . . . The money was divvied up or sent to certain departments. We've asked those questions and today, I'd like to hear what communities that are impacted have had an opportunity to have some of that money? What is that, I believe \$36.4 million. Where's the money? Who's using those dollars?

We talk about the concern and, you know, there's concern for the forestry sector. And some of us may have worked in the forestry sector; some of us haven't. Some might have family businesses that are in the forestry sector for years. There might be problems.

And I want to go back to this because this is very interesting. When you talk about a sector team, how about a sector team for the forestry industry that's out there? I hope that when it comes and makes recommendations that it would definitely . . . Enterprise Saskatchewan will take those recommendations from the forestry sector team. It's important that they're . . . And we heard that they're supposed to be the industry, the professionals. They're supposed to have the professional background, the knowledge. I hope that Enterprise Saskatchewan takes the recommendations of the forestry sector team and moves on those. Now that they start their one meeting, I'm hoping they'll have many more meetings to bring recommendations to Enterprise Saskatchewan, so this government will act on that.

That's why, when I see what's going on with the forestry sector that I support this motion . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well that's very good, and that's the point. If they're the professionals, I think it's wonderful that the recommendations that come from that team will definitely be acted on by Enterprise Saskatchewan, if that's what the minister's saying. Well that's nice. That's wonderful. I'm glad to hear that, and I'm sure the sector team will be glad to hear that.

[11:45]

You know, you talk about dollars and all the money that's in the coffers and talk about a track record. And some of the members opposite talk about the different programs that they've offered and the kind of things they're doing for Saskatchewan people, saving them money. How many people are unemployed that will not have, true, will not be impacted by any tax cuts? How many people in the North are affected by the forestry, the closures? Many of them. What this tax break's going to do for them, I truly don't know. Maybe you guys are going to explain that. You'll do a better job explaining it to them than I understand it.

But actually I see so many needs in the North that are being . . . I don't know if it's the understanding, that we don't understand what we're saying as northern people. I'm hoping that we can bring the issues to this government who is responsible to take care of the issues. And we could make comments about who's to blame, but today the decision is yours and your government has the power. You have the options, you have the choices to make. The people that supported you, it's time that you say,

well it's time that you help them in the North.

An Hon. Member: — Why didn't you do that for 16 years?

Mr. Vermette: — There you go. Thank you for that 16 years again.

It's amazing what the track record of the opposite will be, what your government will do. We'll see what your track record's like. You get to make all the decisions. And I hope, I hope in three years that the people of this province send you a message and look at your track record in all the industries, and let's see if everything's all so wonderful.

So it's easy to blame, but at the end of the day I hope, for the northern people and the people of this province, the government will act on some of the problems that are happening — not talk about them, act on them in partnership with the communities that are coming before you.

There's many issues. We've got roads, education. There's a lot of things going on, and it's our responsibility as MLAs and as members of this Legislative Assembly to deal with those problems. So hopefully at the end of the day we can work together . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . There's many more announcements should be done, and you can comment about schools announcing. That's wonderful. We need many more announcements. I encourage you to make more announcements in the North. Thank you, Mr. Member opposite.

Anyway at this point I'll wind it down. I'll wind it down. And I just want to say I do support this motion and I will give my backing to this motion and move forward.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, certainly I'm pleased to be able to enter into this 75-minute debate to take the members opposite to task over their motion. Even in the best economic times that this province has seen, they always seem to find the dark side.

Certainly there are some challenges in some sectors of agriculture and the forestry sector. However they should remember, I'm sure, unless their memories are very short, when they were government they had no magic wand to find those magic solutions to solve these very difficult problems.

In my constituency we don't have a forest industry, but in some of my previous experience in this House I did have some knowledge and contact with the forest industry, particularly in agroforestry which is a new initiative that is currently under way at the ForestFirst centre in Prince Albert. And contrary to what the member from Northeast said, it is more than just a name change, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is a whole new direction for at least part of the forest industry.

As some of my colleagues on this side of the House have said with regards to forestry, this is not a problem that is only unique to Saskatchewan. It's a problem all across this country, all across North America, and I'm guessing a large part of the world. There is economic factors have come to bear. Housing

starts are down in North America. And we've seen this in the past. Commodity-based industries are always subject to the cyclical price cycles, and unfortunately the forest sector is seeing one of those down times right now.

In fact I would guess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we're seeing a fundamental change in the forestry industry all across this country and all across North America. And that is what this ForestFirst centre is designed to help with. It is designed to take a new vision and look for new opportunities in the forest industry.

And the one that caught my attention was, establish and develop the fundamentals of a viable agroforestry sector. This is an idea that's been around for quite some time. And the reason I'm raising it in this debate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that it has some real opportunities down the road for parts of agriculture in this province, and particularly those areas in part of my constituency and more in the Northeast and those agricultural areas where trees grow very rapidly and abundantly.

It is another option that I believe will be there sometime in the future. And instead of reacting all the time to the current situation, we need to be forward-looking. And that is what this government is doing.

We certainly, as any government, we don't have magic wands to fix every problem. If governing was that easy, we wouldn't have any problems in this province or in this country, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But some of the initiatives that we've already done in our short period of time since the November 2007 election, this is just one small example.

One of the members opposite was very critical over the Minister of Education's new initiative to deal with school closures in rural Saskatchewan. Well the fact is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that change is the only constant in our world today, and that's how it's been for a long time. And so there's rationalization takes place, whether it be in the grains industry . . . We saw massive rationalization with the grain handling and transportation system a number of years back.

We see changes in rural communities where some communities grow, other ones decline because of proximity to larger centres, services that are lost in their communities. And as a result people no longer live in the area. The number of children in school diminishes.

And what we've done is we've given those communities who are faced with that very difficult task of dealing with school closures more options, making sure that the community is fully consulted, that the consultation period is longer. And we also put in place a new initiative called the schools of opportunity where communities, if they can present a business case that their community is going to grow and their schools are going to grow, that there is some time for them to put that into place.

Part of the motion that the members opposite put forward, it says, and I quote, "fix producer support programs for the hog and livestock industries." Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think the key word here is fix because the reason that those programs need to be fixed . . . And there is no argument, Mr. Deputy Speaker; we have some very significant shortcomings in the

programs that are there. But one of the reasons that we have those shortcomings is because when those members opposite sat on this side of the House, it was well known that they provided very little leadership at the national level where most of these programs were designed.

In fact, the former minister of Agriculture, Eric Upshall, went to Ottawa when there was a crisis in the grain industry and says, we've got a problem in agriculture in Saskatchewan, but it's the federal government, you have to fix it; and went and left without bringing any ideas to the table, without bringing any dollars to the table. And those deficiencies continue.

Our Minister of Agriculture is working hard to fix those things. You don't fix something in a matter of a month or two, the things that haven't been working as they should for a long period of time. And especially when you're dealing at the national level, dealing with other provinces, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it takes some time. In fact, Saskatchewan's credibility was much less than it needed to be, and we need to build that credibility up on the national level. And the Minister of Agriculture and our Premier have done just an excellent job in that regard.

And we are putting real initiatives forward, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'm confident that in the future, in the short future we will see some initiatives that will address some of these problems, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I know there is real hurt in the livestock industry out there. I have producers who are feeling the effects of the perfect storm that has hit them, and we're just coming out of some of that. When we had the dollar at par, we had energy costs at the highest levels they've ever been, grain prices, particularly feed grain prices, were at very high levels, and that spelled bad news for the livestock industry.

It's no big secret that when grain prices are high, which is an input to the livestock industry, the price paid to the primary producers in the livestock industry drops, and vice versa. When feed grain prices were low, the calf prices and hog prices were quite strong because of the relationship between the input side of one industry and the other, the grains and livestock sector, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I can assure the producers out there that we are working hard on coming up with those solutions because the band-aid solutions didn't work in the past, and that is not what the livestock producers are looking for now, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — . . . to the 10-minute question period. I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chair. I just want to ask a question to the member of Batoche who spoke about the 16-year record of the NDP. The question is actually twofold, Mr. Deputy Chair. Number one, would the member agree that in those 16 years that the NDP paid down \$11 billion in interest payments, and does that have an effect on how you're able to respond to some other crises? And the second thing, Mr. Deputy Chair, the second part of my question is, after we paid down 11 billion, you paid another four and half billion dollars on your actual debt, does that have an effect on how you're able to respond to certain sectors?

And my final part of my question, Mr. Deputy Chair, is promises made by that party opposite, Mr. Deputy Chair, were made by a number of those members, a number of them. And that member in particular, the member from Batoche, who had no support for industry — whether it's cattle or whether it's forestry — to have no support for them, he was commissioned to make a report, a report on the future of forestry. Where is that report, Mr. Deputy Chair?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise to answer that question about the report. They were the government. They had the reports, and they put them on the shelves. We issued a report for internal before we were the government. That was our own report, but you had reports and you didn't use them. You sat there on them and did nothing in forestry until Weyerhaeuser said, we're leaving. And then, oh, maybe we can pull out 100 million. There's your report.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Wilson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, thank you. As a cow-calf producer from rural Saskatchewan, I understand that the prices of cull cows, cull bulls, and fed cattle are higher now than they were when the NDP was still in government. Hog prices are now also \$25 to \$50 a head higher than they were when the NDP was government last fall.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the member from Regina Rosemont: why did your government not help livestock producers last fall? Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[12:00]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — It's my pleasure to take the question. And it's an absolute shame we've seen from this government since they've been elected in regards to the livestock sector. And that member can ask questions and quote prices and whatnot, but what's happening to the herd? Because that's where the tire hits the pavement.

And what's happening is we've had a third of our herd reduced in one year. So where the tire hits the pavement, where the support needs to be, they're failing. They're failing miserably and we expect a whole heck of lot more.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Furber: — The member from Batoche had mentioned that the report that he generated in his time spent running around the province in support of forestry was an internal report. And so if it's an internal report, shouldn't some of his members understand what's in that report? Wouldn't one of the members that was on that tour understand some of the things that came out of that report, some of the points that were made? You'd think somebody would know about it. Somebody would know something about that report.

So why is it — to the member from Batoche — why is it that the minister responsible for forestry has no idea of anything that came out of that report?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — The minister has lots on that report. But where was your report? You did nothing. You're the boys that sat on a report that was an inch thick on what should be done on forestry. It was people right in the industry that came to you with answers, and you didn't give them anything.

The Deputy Speaker: — Just to remind the members to direct the question and answers through the Chair. I recognize the member from Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — They had their chance. They had an inch-thick report and they waited until the ship sank.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Chisholm: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My question is for the member from Saskatoon Nutana. Mr. Speaker, would the member consider encouraging the 73-year-old gentleman to whom she referred this morning to share his records with a representative of our caucus so that we might actually review his situation with the purpose of seeing if we can offer some positive advice and counsel?

On our side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we actually have members who are successful and have been successful agriculture producers. And we also have a number of people with various business backgrounds, accounting training, etc. Would the member encourage her example case, producer, to allow us to examine his records so we can determine how serious his situation really is?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, when you have a very large operation, when you have your son and your daughter involved in your operation, and when you've experienced low prices for a number of years — I think there are some members over there that understand this very well — you start to see a

reduction in your assets, Mr. Speaker.

Now I will talk to the gentleman to see whether or not he's prepared to share his business situation, but I will say to the member . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I don't like to cut in 10 minutes, but I would like to hear the question being placed and the answer being placed. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — I will certainly ask the gentleman if he's prepared to share his information, but I can tell the members opposite he has been in contact with their members.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the members across the way here, opposition members as the Sask Party, looked communities in the eyes, looked residents in the eyes and made promises about stopping school closures. Then the minister came forward and he put forward his failed plan. What did the people say about it? Well in the *Leader-Post*, "Education minister flunks the test." By the CBC, "School closure law called broken promise." By the *Leader-Post*, "An F for Sask Party."

My question is to the member from Carrot River. How do you justify your blatant broken promises with regards to school closures?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Bradshaw: — Well I thank the member for that question, and actually what we have done, what our minister has really worked on is getting together the schools of opportunity. This puts forward schools of opportunity for areas where there is a possibility that that school may be closed. That community, Mr. Speaker, can actually, can actually go out and request a school of opportunity because this province is growing now, contrary to what it was doing before — it was going downhill all the time. Now our province is growing, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to be getting more people in here, and that's why we have the schools of opportunity. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much. My question is to the member from Last Mountain. And I'd ask that member if he could share with the House some specific ways that your government could help the livestock industry in this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I certainly would be pleased to inform the member opposite as to the things that this government has already done. We have fully funded the AgriStability program right up front, something that that government never did until the 11th hour. We are aggressively moving forward on the reduction of education tax on property. In our platform we said that for agricultural land we would be at 80 per cent rebate at a minimum at the end of our first term. We are working aggressively on that file as opposed to . . . There was no mention from members opposite in their platform to do with any tax relief on agricultural land.

The Minister of Agriculture worked to put a water program in place for the Southwest to address some of their water needs. There are many more other initiatives that we have already done.

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

Mr. Bradshaw: — Yes thank you, Mr. Speaker. Due to the downturn in the forest industry and due to the . . . Speaking of the member from Cumberland, I would like to ask the member from Cumberland, what would be his suggestion that could be done with the forest industry?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — It needs, the industry that's out there . . . This is a recommendation that you guys could use if you'd like, to go out to the communities that are impacted, to the people that are impacted and ask them, and to the industry and ask them, what truly can we do? Is there anything as a government we can do to assist you? What is it? You're first.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Harper: — Mr. Speaker, with cattle revenues coming in below the cost of production, I would like to ask the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood if he believes . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The 75-minute debate has now expired. We now move on to private members' motions.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 1 — Saskatchewan's Uranium Industry

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

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

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm

very pleased to stand and enter the debate on the motion put forward by my colleague and friend from Meadow Lake, and I would just like to enter again the motion into the books. And the motion is:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan supports the consideration of further value-added development of Saskatchewan's uranium industry including nuclear power generation and recognizes the potential benefits to the growth and prosperity of the people of our province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm very, very supportive of the nuclear industry in this province, and I wish members on the other side would also. They are no doubt a house divided when it comes to the nuclear industry and the value-added. We have a former premier that would march around trying to destroy the nuclear industry in this province. Him and his colleague, Peter Prebble, that marched against the nuclear value-added plant that was going to go into Warman. That's the kind of people we have on the other side of the House that are against any of the progress being made. We have a former premier that announced that this is the dirtiest form of energy — and yet today he's probably flip-flopped a little on that — talking about the dirtiest form of energy, when in fact it's probably the cleanest form of energy when we start looking at greenhouse gases or GHGs. And that is the place of the future, is looking at nuclear generation to reduce greenhouse gases. And yet the former premier calls it the dirtiest form of energy. That is totally unbelievable and unacceptable, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Our government, we on this side of the House, we fully support adding value to our uranium. Value-added. And we have 26, slash, 30 per cent of the world's uranium, and we have some of the richest uranium deposits in the world. I and some of my colleagues had the opportunity to visit a uranium mine in the North, and some of the uranium there is so pure that it has to be downgraded or mixed with sand so they can process it. That's the type of uranium mines that we have in this province. And what do we do with it? What have we done with it? Under the former administration, they put their head in the sand, put it into yellowcake, close their eyes, and ship it out of the province to be processed.

Again, back to the former premier, it was he and his cohorts that marched against having any value-added in the uranium industry in this province. Such a terrible, terrible way to go, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have on this side of the House opened our eyes, our eyes to the value that this could be for the province, the total uranium industry and what it would do. We also feel, because we are a supplier of uranium, a world supplier of uranium, that we should be in on all of the advance technology that goes into the industry. We should be doing that here. We should be a leader on this file, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We have a natural advantage in this regard to lead, because of our uranium resources that we have. And so the potential is definitely obvious. We have companies in this province that are very, very world renowned in the uranium industry.

So what would all of this do? When we start looking at, why would we want value-added? Why would we want to enter into this industry, value-added? Well you look at the jobs that it would create, the thousands of jobs. And I do have some figures

here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I would like to read into the record.

And we hear members opposite talk about, oh in 25 years what are you going to do, you know, what about in the future? Well in fact Bruce Power talks about a 60-year operation. Sixty years if they were to build a nuclear facility here in this province — a 60-year plan.

But I really want to talk about some of the impacts that value-added would have on a province. And even if we just look at the generational loan and not the enrichment and enhancement even, just nuclear generation, it would contribute about 4 billion — \$4 billion — to the provincial economy. It would generate a total of 20,000 direct and indirect jobs during the construction phase. During the peak year of construction, the project would directly and indirectly contribute approximately 2.2 per cent of provincial GDP [gross domestic product] — 2.2 per cent.

And yet we have members on the far side and the opposite side that are against it. They're against the growth; they're against everything that's kind of nuclear. They're against the province growing. I think they realize that if this province grows and the people moving back into this province are entrepreneurs and business people, they are really not NDPers.

But a nuclear facility not only provides significant economic impacts during construction, but it would provide the economic benefits again — and I want to reuse that phrase — for 60 years. And economic impacts are estimated to be . . . And I just want to go over some of these. The project will generate 1,000 full-time jobs in addition to 900 indirect jobs for 60 years. On an annual basis, the project would contribute \$240 million to the provincial economy. In fact the construction of a nuclear power station in Saskatchewan would be the largest single infrastructure project ever undertaken in our province — the largest infrastructure project. I think that's worth repeating.

And what would a power plant bring to Saskatchewan through revenues? And I've talked about this. Construction phase, project total tax revenues generated would be about \$1.8 billion. Sixty years of operation, it would literally bring \$10 billion in government revenues.

And I kind of want to talk a little bit about the revenues creating some very, very high-paying jobs, lots of jobs, and the value-added part of the nuclear cycle also, if we get into the enrichment and enhancement side of it, the jobs that that would create. And it would put us as a world leader in the uranium cycle.

[12:15]

And if we look at the billions of dollars, the billions of dollars it would create for this province, why would members opposite be against that? Why would they actually be against growth? There are the fearmongers. There are the fearmongers over there that, ooh, people will glow in the dark. We know how they operate. We know how they operated in the election campaign, that they operate on fear, total fear.

So where do they come from on the nuclear side of the House?

Fear. People will glow in the dark. If you touch anything nuclear, you'll glow in the dark. And I would remind members opposite that the nuclear industry, the uranium industry, the nuclear spinoff . . . And I talk to people quite freely and openly about this and I say, when I talk about the nuclear cycle or the nuclear industry, what do you think of first? And I think this is where members opposite come from. What do you think of first? And a lot of people will say, Chernobyl. They will think the bomb. And that is where the fear has been implanted in the people's minds.

Three Mile Island . . . And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had the opportunity to fly over Three Mile Island. And I did it at extremely low level. And the output of that, the total . . . this thing that was supposed to be such a catastrophic mess, I flew over it and it wouldn't even light up the luminous dial in my watch. There is absolutely no leakage from that whatsoever. And yet the fear, the fear that's been involved with even the Three Mile Island one, and it's purported and spread by people like members opposite.

But then you have to get realistic . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . All three of them. Then you have to get realistic. And I address it to people and I say, what do you think about medical isotopes? Oh, they're good. Oh boy, this medical isotope is just a fabulous thing. For cancer treatment, it's just absolutely outstanding.

Well then I posed the rhetorical question: where do you suppose the isotopes come from? There's not a little magic wand that creates isotopes. It comes from uranium and from the nuclear industry. And so here we have people that are turning their eyes against, turning their backs on an industry that is providing some of the best health care services that we have in the world, and they want to turn their backs against that. I don't think that's very genuine.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's an awful lot of issues, reasons why we want to be involved in the nuclear cycle. And I mentioned money that would be generated for the province. And I don't know how anybody on the other side could even be against the creation of new wealth in this province, but here's 80 reasons, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Here's 80 reasons why we on this side of the House are in favour of creating new wealth in this province, and again as I mentioned, the billions of dollars that would come from the nuclear enhancement in this province.

And the 80 reasons . . . I'm going to enlighten people opposite with some of the reasons why that I think that we should be involved in getting this money. Because we could increase operating funding to post-secondary institutions, like, to the tune of \$27 million. Well we made that promise, Mr. Speaker, and guess what? We kept it.

How about keeping tuition affordable for students by increasing operating funding to post-secondary institutions? And that's a promise that we made, Mr. Speaker, and it's a promise we kept. That is why we want to enhance industry in this province, so the province could actually gain more money.

If you have the resources, you can launch the most aggressive youth retention plan in Canada by rebating up to \$20,000 in tuition costs for post-secondary graduates who stay in

Saskatchewan for seven years after graduation — \$20,000. Well, Mr. Speaker, this takes some resources; this takes some revenue to do that. If we expand our nuclear industry, we would have money to do that. But oh, by the way, we did that. Promise made, promise kept.

We also having money to put into the school of public policies to assist in professional development opportunities for public servants. See, we need revenues so we can do that. But there again, Mr. Speaker, is a promise that we made and it's a promise that we kept.

Mr. Speaker, we talked earlier on on this day about agriculture, and we said on this side of the House that we were going to conduct an immediate review of crop insurance program to determine how the coverage could be increased and the premiums reduced. Again we need revenues to do that. If you enhance something like the uranium industry and bring business into this province, you have the revenues to do that. And, Mr. Speaker, we have done that. We made the promise and we kept the promise.

The fully funding of provincial government's share of agriculture risk management programs. Again revenues from such industries as a nuclear industry give us the resources, and would give us more resources where we could do that. And, Mr. Speaker, there was a promise that we made and a promise that we kept.

Mr. Speaker, when you have increased revenues from any of our resource industries, well from any businesses even that pay money into the province, you can actually help out the people of the province. One way of doing that is ensuring safety to the degree possible for our citizens. And one way of doing that is having more police — unlike a government that I knew here once a few years ago that had promised 200 police officers — and promise made, promise not kept by the previous government.

Two hundred police officers they promised and — what was it? — eight years later that we still didn't have the 200 police officers. Well, Mr. Speaker, with the resources that we have and the resources that we can expect from the uranium industry, we have said that we will hire 120 new police officers over the four years. There's a promise that we have kept, Mr. Speaker, already.

Again with additional resources you can put money into dealing with organized crime and gangs. By the way, that's a promise that we made, and that's a promise that we kept.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's time to just talk a little bit about some of the record of the other side. We hear just a little bit of push back from them — I'm not sure on what topic they're trying to push back on — but when I talk about the amount of things that's been done with increased revenues. And as this province grows, so does the provincial coffers grow.

And we are a little bit different on this side of the House. No, I'll rephrase that. We're one heck of a lot different than the people on the other side of House, because when they had a little bit of extra money, do you know what they did? And it wasn't really extra money because the province was hurting at

the time. But they decided, they decided that with the extra money that they gained, they would do something like buy into tappedinto.com. And we have a question on this side of the House. How did they make out, Mr. Speaker? How did they make out with tappedinto.com? Well I'm going to stand here and tell you how they made out. They lost \$6.7 million, \$6.7 million.

Well that wasn't good enough. They had to go into Persona, which is another dot-com, and how did they make out with Persona? Well that one outdid it a little bit. That was \$9.4 million loss. So here we're talking about value-added in the uranium industry and what we could do with value-added dollars.

And what did they do with the little bit of the extra money that they had, that they could not afford to lose, Mr. Speaker? Well they decided that a couple really wasn't enough, so they got into . . . My favourite is Navigata. And Navigata cost us \$70 million and we don't know how much more, because with the putting the books into a pot on the stove and stirring it up, they rolled Navigata into the parent company and so we couldn't even see how much more Navigata actually lost. But, Mr. Speaker, there's \$70 million lost in one company with an outside investment, out-of-the-province investment, and here we're looking at value-added within the province of Saskatchewan and how we can wisely spend dollars.

The Speaker: — Order. There are just too many debates taking place across the floor, unfortunately, which is interfering with the member's opportunity to be heard. So I would ask members, we're not that far away from adjourning the session to enjoy the holiday season, so let's begin it right now. I recognize the member from Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Well I don't blame them for yipping, Mr. Speaker, because they just can't . . .

The Speaker: — I would just ask the member not to comment on Speaker's rulings or indirectly refer to. Member from Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well members opposite really don't enjoy bad news, but I'm going to give them some more bad news from their record.

Did I mention Retx.com? Retx.com, well they only lost \$26 million. You know, the minister responsible for SPUDCO, he was proud about this one because he lost more on SPUDCO at \$35 million so he outdid Retx.com by a few million bucks. They were competing to see what ministry and who could lose the most money.

Well then we have Craig Wireless. Craig Wireless only lost 10 million. That didn't even make it into their group of top 10.

NST [NST Network Services of Chicago], \$16 million loss.

And here's a catchy one, really catchy. Clickabid.com lost \$1.9 million. Now again, I'm going to repeat to members, when we look at value-added in the uranium industry and the dollars that we would get from that, I assure members on that side of the House that we would not put it into Clickabid.com.

Soft Tracks, \$2.2 million loss; agdealer, \$8.9 million loss.

The list goes on. And I'm sure members opposite enjoy this list so I'm going to continue with it.

How about Channel Lake? We heard about Channel Lake, I believe. That was a \$15 million loss . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, I think the designated leader of the party opposite was involved in that.

Guyana, a \$2 million loss.

Then we come to one of my all-time favourites. We had a socialist government that wanted to get involved in everything so it could be under the umbrella of the socialist system. They wanted to get into bingo. Under the I, mega bingo lost \$8 million. Why in the world would even a socialist want to get involved in running a bingo industry? But oh, we had women and men on that side of the House that said, oh we'll get into the bingo. It's kind of nice to be involved in bingo, so we will get into bingo and we'll only lose \$8 million on it.

Well, Pangaea. Pangaea lost 3.5 million. So again we want to enhance this province, grow this province, increase revenues in this province so we can do the right things, and here they are doing that kind of investment in the past.

We also know, Mr. Speaker, that they wanted to basically throw away \$100 million in the forest industry, offering a sweetheart deal to a company. And we are not in favour of that although there's lots of forestry around where the uranium is mined. And we want to enhance the uranium industry in this province. And there might be some forest area around where the uranium industry is, but I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, we wouldn't put \$100 million into that forest area around the uranium mines.

[12:30]

Mr. Speaker, again, the money that can come in from these resources would allow us again to make promises and to be able to keep promises. And I think it's worthwhile to note some of these promises that we would be making and keeping. Funding for schools that meet stringent criteria, schools of opportunity. If you have the resources, you can do that. Well we did. We made a promise, and we kept that promise.

The reduction of the education portion of property taxes for Saskatchewan homeowners by increasing the property tax rebate from 10 to 12 per cent in 2008-2009. Increased revenues allow us to do that. We made that promise, and you know what? We kept that promise.

Increase the rebate on agricultural land from 38 to 47 per cent. Again, with increased revenues you can do that and, Mr. Speaker, that was a promise that we made and that's a promise that we kept.

Increasing education operating funding to school boards by \$28 million. When you have funds, when you have increased revenues from industry such as value-added uranium industry, you could afford to do that. And, Mr. Speaker, we made that promise, and that's a promise that we kept.

We provided an additional \$2 million to community schools across the province for school lunch and anti-hunger programs. Again, with enhanced revenues we were able to do that, and that was a promise that we made and a promise that we kept.

I think I'll pause on some of our promises for a couple of minutes, Mr. Speaker, and move . . . I'll get back to them.

Looking more directly at the nuclear power, it would definitely increase our uranium exports. We could see uranium value-added here, value-added where we could actually get into the producing of rods, and look what that would do for exports — not only jobs and revenue for us in this province, but for exports.

And we have to be realistic about the generation of electrical power. And I know members opposite . . . It would be fun to be in one of their debates in their caucus when they get into this, the yes, no part of the nuclear industry. But if we can put value-added into this industry, I mention the dollars it would create but the opportunities it would create for technology, we could be at the leading edge of the nuclear technological cycle. It's kind of a non-stop, open-ended opportunity for us to be involved in this and we should, we should, and could be the world leaders in technology in the uranium cycle.

We have to look, we have to be realistic and look at other countries. We look at countries like France. They're generating, I think it's 50 per cent or 70 per cent of their power generations come from the nuclear cycle. And I think we should inform members opposite that are so much against the nuclear cycle, that my time that I spent in France I didn't really see anybody that was glowing in the dark. They have their nuclear facilities, but I didn't see one person that was glowing in the dark in France.

Other countries around the world are looking at going into the nuclear generating systems for very, very many good reasons. One is the CO₂ emissions and the sustainability as we start looking at fossil fuels — and there is a finite supply — and the nuclear generation of electricity would greatly, greatly enhance the length of fossil fuel supply in this world.

And we know that the global demand for nuclear energy is going to increase even though we have the diehard leftists that are against it; reality does set in. Reality does even come to the mind of some of those in the extreme left of the political spectrum that are dead against this. They don't mind turning the light switch on and having a light bulb, but they're against how the source gets there. And again, head in the sand — the ostrich theory — they put their head in the sand and they don't believe it.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, from the report they talk about . . . I'm going to give you some quotes from the report, Bruce Power report, "The economic and environmental benefits make the case for nuclear power a [very] compelling one." And we on this side of the House totally agree with that. Members opposite? A little bit of flip, a little bit of flop. I don't know. I'll keep my head in the sand. I won't vote on that. I'll go out of the room while you guys vote on it. Well half of them would go out of the room if it comes to a vote on it or half of them just wouldn't vote. And we actually have seen that happen.

We can encourage “. . . post-secondary institutions to establish educational programs in the area of nuclear science.” And this is out of the report, this isn’t our words, this is out of the report from Bruce Power. We totally support adding value to the raw uranium.

Again as I mentioned visiting the mine and seeing the ore come up and through the process. And I couldn’t really explain the whole process, but it is turned into a yellowcake, and the yellowcake is then shipped out of the province. And we even have members opposite that are against the transportation of yellowcake. Well you can put your hand in a barrel of yellowcake, and it wouldn’t hurt you. I mean, it’s . . . But not from them. Because they want to promote the fear of this. So even driving a truckload of yellowcake down the highway, they’re against that. They’re against that because oh this bad word uranium, and they don’t want to have anything to do with anything in uranium except close their eyes and take in the revenue from it.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we have always said that we would do and which we are doing is we’re consulting with the people of Saskatchewan and what their feelings are on nuclear. And it’s not surprising to me; it’s surprising to them. But there’s a majority, a majority of the people in this province today that are in favour of nuclear generation of electricity. A majority of the people are in favour — I’m going to repeat that because members opposite should hear that — a majority of the people in this province are in favour of having nuclear generated electricity.

And, Mr. Speaker, the dichotomy that comes from the other side of the House is strange at best. As I mentioned earlier, we have a former premier that was just absolutely against it. He was marching, marching with his cohorts to stop the uranium processing plant in Warman. And that was one day.

Now on the next day followed a couple years later, a few years later, and this is what the former premier had to say just recently, “The province would consider any business case to establish a reactor or nuclear waste storage facility in the province.” There’s a little bit of dichotomy in there. There’s a little bit of flip and a little bit of a flop because he says we don’t want to do anything, we don’t want any part of the nuclear industry in this province.

In fact we shouldn’t even be mining it and that is actually a quote, “The Government of Saskatchewan should phase out uranium mining in the province.” That is a quote. That is a quote, and I would repeat it again for the member opposite that in . . . Mr. Prebble as a matter of fact that made the quote. And he said, “The Government of Saskatchewan should phase out uranium mining in the province.” And he also quoted, he said, “As long as I am in this legislature, I will continue to oppose that practice . . .”

So here we have a group of women and men on that side, I don’t know if they’re on the flip side or the flop side because it’s both. There’s a flip and there’s a flop. And you know the former premier, the leader of the socialist party, says that:

“As a province that mines and benefits economically from uranium, it is our responsibility as citizens of the globe to

share in the burden of dealing with all the byproducts of its use.”

That is again the former premier that is totally against the uranium, but well maybe I’m not, but maybe I am. And so we have no idea where he stands.

At least the designated candidate for the leadership, he has a firm position. That’s one thing I give him credit for. He has a firm position on the nuclear industry. I don’t know if members opposite support that or not, but I’m not sure, I’m not sure. Again a caucus divided. They should actually form a coalition over there on the uranium front.

Here again I’ll quote what the then premier said, actually it was in 2005:

“Let me say today definitely, the answer is no. Under my leadership in this province, there will not be in Saskatchewan a nuclear waste disposal facility.”

Now right out of the same one, he says:

“As a province that mines and benefits economically from uranium, it is our responsibility as citizens of the globe to share in the burden of dealing with all the byproducts of its use.”

Again is that Mr. Flip or is that Mr. Flop, because he has just said — and those two statements both came in 2005 — we’ll have no part of that, but oh by the way, we’ll have part of that. We should. So what is his position? I don’t know if anybody over there actually has a position on the uranium industry.

An Hon. Member: — Let’s talk some more about their failed business dealings.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Shall we? I’ve got another page of failed business deals that I could enlighten them with.

And then we have the former minister of Finance, he also got into the quotes on the nuclear industry. And he said, and I quote, “If you benefit from the mining of uranium or the use of uranium in your nuclear reactors . . . you can’t then wash your hands of all the other issues.”

Now is he on the side of flip or is he on the side of flop because again there’s two sides or three sides or no sides to that group of women and men on that side of the House when it comes to this industry.

Mr. Lingenfelter, the only candidate for the leadership thus far over there, as I mentioned, he’s made his case pretty solid, pretty solid. And I want to quote him and he said, “If Tommy Douglas were here, it would be exactly what he would be doing.” I’m not too sure who Tommy Douglas is, but he quoted Mr. Douglas anyway, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there is just so much positive to deal with the uranium industry and the value-added. I mean, I could talk for a long time on the benefits that we would reap in this province from value-added in the industry — the revenues, the jobs.

And I understand members opposite. They really don't like to see growth. They're probably against having 10,000 new jobs created from this industry. They're probably against that. They'd probably stand up and vote against it. Again, their philosophy is if we don't have these 10,000 more people coming in, there's more for us. Right? I think that was quoted from one of their ministers as a matter of fact, that if people leave the province there's more left here for those of us that are left. There's more for us. So here we are looking at growing the province and expanding our resource base value-added, and they actually wanted people to leave the province.

Mr. Speaker, the agreed time has come that we were going to shut down this debate for the moment. And at this time, I would like to adjourn debate.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The member from Wood River has moved adjournment of debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

[12:45]

Hon. Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to move a motion adjourning the House, but before I do I'd like to ask leave to make a short statement.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

MOTIONS

House Adjournment

Hon. Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is the time of year again when we come to the completion of the fall session of the sitting of the Saskatchewan legislature. And certainly it is one of those times and opportunities when we can express our gratitude for those many people that make it possible for us to do our job as members of this Assembly.

And to certainly begin by thanking you, Mr. Speaker, and all of the staff and personnel under your direction that support us in our work as legislators. Mr. Speaker, I won't go into the detailed listing of all of them — they know who they are and I certainly will intend to recognize them more individually at the end of the spring session — but at this time I want to express this Assembly's heartfelt appreciation for everything they do to assist us in the discharge of our duty.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, I would like to thank the

Opposition House Leader for his efforts in this regard and the opposition caucus for their efforts in terms of making this legislature a place of debate and consideration and decision, and certainly, I think, it does all of us proud by the way we conduct ourselves in this Assembly.

At this time of the year it's particularly important, I think, to recognize and thank those who are probably the most important to all of us in terms of the discharge of our duty, and that's our families. You know, it is always something that I think does not get said often enough to our spouses and our families in saying, when we come home exhausted at the end of the week and they are understanding and helpful and supportive, is — I don't think any of us say often enough and meaningfully enough and lovingly enough — thank you. And I think that when we have the opportunity to do it officially on the record, we should take that opportunity and mean it from the bottom of our hearts to thank our families.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Gantefoer: — Mr. Speaker, we're at the time of year as well where we're going to embark on a very special season, a season of wonder and joy and family being together, and being able to relive our own childhood, and maybe in the eyes — for me now, of our grandchildren — for many members, their children. But it is also a time of wonder and awe and celebration.

And I think my favourite advertisement on television is the ad — I won't say the company that is responsible for it — where these two little kids with reindeer horns on their head are decorating the Christmas tree. And then as the camera pans backward, the tree is decorated beautifully up to the height that they can reach. Well I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, at our household that's the level where we can only put the candy canes down to because they can help themselves if we get it any lower than that.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's a season of awe and wonder, and we have to remember as well it is all because of a child that 2,000 years ago came into the world to bring peace and tranquility in the world. And I think in closing, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to wish everyone in this Assembly, their families and loved ones, a very merry and blessed Christmas and the very best in the new year.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Taylor: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. By leave, I request time to also bring greetings.

The Speaker: — The Opposition House Leader has asked for leave. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I certainly appreciate the opportunity to, on behalf of the opposition caucus, on behalf of the leader of the New Democratic Party,

and on behalf of my caucus colleagues to bring the greetings of the season here as we close this session of the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I share with the Government House Leader our thanks to all of those who serve us as we are doing the work that the public has asked us to do, including yourself, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for what you have done to ensure that we have the capacity to do the work that we do here, and for those who support you in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker — the Clerks at the Table, the Pages, the people behind the wall who are working in the offices, etc., Mr. Speaker, our friends at Hansard. Today we celebrated long service of an individual at Hansard who visited the Chamber, Mr. Speaker, and you recognized that individual earlier today, Mr. Speaker. There's an awful lot of people who help us to do that work, and on behalf of the caucus I say Merry Christmas and best wishes to them.

And, Mr. Speaker, to all of those who serve the people of Saskatchewan through their standing for nomination for election and for their service in this Chamber, thanks for all that has been done on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan. And also especially to the Government House Leader, who throughout this session has provided me with the information that I needed to be able to do the work for the opposition caucus that allows this place to work in a fashion that allows work to be completed. And so I thank the Government House Leader in that regard.

Earlier today, Mr. Speaker, the member from Saskatoon Massey Place did a member's statement, a member's statement of Christmas greeting. And in that statement the member from Saskatoon Massey Place quoted the former leader of the New Democratic Party, a former premier of this province, an individual who is recognized by all political parties, Mr. Speaker, as a great and wonderful individual, Mr. T.C. Douglas, who once said:

The shepherds who heard the message of 'Peace on Earth' did not consider that to be a description of things as they were, but a vision of what they might be if we could learn to live together in a spirit of mutual goodwill and better understanding . . .

Mr. Douglas was a wise individual, Mr. Speaker, whose words when spoken are as important today as they were then. So for this reason, Mr. Speaker, it is important when we gather together with our loved ones to observe this season, in whatever our custom, to renew our pledge of goodwill to all.

I want to also, as the Minister of Finance, the Government House Leader, indicated, to thank our families at this time of year, Mr. Speaker. We are leaving this place and we are returning to do some work in our constituencies, but also now to spend, at this important time of year spend some valuable time with our families, Mr. Speaker.

I think I have said on previous occasions and certainly in social occasions around here that quite often this place is not very spouse friendly. We get wrapped up in a lot of the work that we do here, Mr. Speaker. We know our work is important — sometimes we think it is more important than it actually is on a given day, Mr. Speaker — but it is our spouses and our

immediate family who support us in our desire to do the best we can in this place. And sometimes, Mr. Speaker, they are sitting alone watching the work that we do and we need to remind ourselves and them of how important that individual relationship is between us.

So, Mr. Speaker, to my spouse, Cheryl, working at home in North Battleford today — as she has been throughout this session, Mr. Speaker — I say thank you, and on behalf of the opposition caucus to all of our immediate spouses, Mr. Speaker, I say on our behalf, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, that having been said, we are returning to our constituencies for this important time of year. We will return in the new year back to our seats. Mr. Speaker, I know we all look forward to the time at home. We look forward to the time when we return here. I wish us all best wishes for this time away, and I hope we return in good spirits, good health, prepared to continue to serve the interests and needs of the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

The Speaker: — Before I present the motion as presented by the Government House Leader, I also want to extend my thanks to each and every one of the members of the Assembly. At times it's been somewhat of a challenge, but that's the political field we play in, we work in, and each and every one of you are a spokesperson for your constituents. And we don't always agree, but this is the opportunity to share the values that you stand for, regardless of which side of the Assembly you happen to sit on at this time. And as Speaker I want to thank you for your co-operation through this past fall session.

You know, as was already mentioned there are many people that we want to say thank you to, and to the Clerks at the Table, to Greg and Ken, Iris and Meta, we say thank you. To the Pages who have served us this fall session we want to say thank you, to Brianne Coffey, Meagan Fraser, Tanessa Johnson, Samantha Kerr, Desiree McPartlin, and Raegan Woods. And we trust that even though it's a short session it's been very rewarding for you, and educational. And thank you so much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — To our Sergeant-at-Arms, Pat, and his staff, both the ongoing security and sessional, thank you. So far he hasn't caught me with the club yet.

But you know, what I find interesting about this place is the fact that we not only have strong views but we also have the opportunity to laugh. And you know, I guess sometimes I may have looked quite stern. I trust that hasn't been always reflected as the true who I am, but I really appreciate each and every one of you as individuals.

And what I'll say as well, thank you to the many staff people and the people who work in the backrooms. And certainly in

my office to Margaret and Kathy and Irene and Rhonda, as she's facing some challenges at this time.

You know, I walk downstairs to the cafeteria . . . I think we've also acknowledged the cafeteria staff have worked very hard. But I think we would also like to extend a special wish to our cafeteria chef. It'll be a challenging Christmas for him and his son. And if you have a moment just say, yes we're thinking of you; it's going to be difficult but, you know, our thoughts are with you — we trust you'll find this a special season, difficult as it is.

Finally, just a wish that each and every one of you enjoy this time with your family and recognizing the reason for the season. It's been shared by members on both sides of the Assembly as the message of hope and peace and love that came through a child. May you not forget that. That's what binds us together. At the end of the day, that's the only hope we really have.

And I want to extend my sincere wishes for a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. And I'll look forward to working with you and meeting you all again as we gather together in the new year.

At this time I place a motion that this House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:58.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Draude	1973
Ottenbreit	1973
Wall	1973
Bradshaw	1973
The Speaker	1973

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Higgins	1973
Iwanchuk	1974
Forbes	1974
Brotten	1974

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women	
Wilson	1974
Questions from Students	
Iwanchuk	1975
Wendel Clark Honoured	
Draude	1975
Support for Women Victims of Violence	
Morin	1975
Kindersley Wins Seat Belt Challenge	
Boyd	1976
Christmas Greetings	
Brotten	1976
LeClerc	1976

QUESTION PERIOD

Support for Livestock Producers	
Atkinson	1976
Bjornerud	1977
Government's Performance	
Calvert	1977
Wall	1978

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 604 — <i>The Professional Public Service Employees Protection Act</i>	
Yates	1982

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker	1982
-------------------	------

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Weekes	1982
--------------	------

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

Disappointment in Government	
Atkinson	1982, 1992
Bradshaw	1984, 1992
Wotherspoon	1986, 1991
Kirsch	1987, 1991
Vermette	1989
Hart	1990, 1993
Belanger	1991
Wilson	1991
Furber	1992
Chisholm	1992

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 1 — Saskatchewan's Uranium Industry	
Huyghebaert	1993

MOTIONS

House Adjournment	
Gantfoer	1998
Taylor	1998
The Speaker	1999

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Brad Wall
Premier

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

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

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of Crown Corporations

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

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

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

Hon. Rod Gantfoer
Minister of Finance

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Minister of Social Services

Hon. Nancy Heppner
Minister of Environment

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

Hon. Bill Hutchinson
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Gaming Corporation

Hon. Ken Krawetz
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Minister of Education

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Minister of Health

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Minister of Justice
Attorney General

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

Hon. Lyle Stewart
Minister of Enterprise and Innovation

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