



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

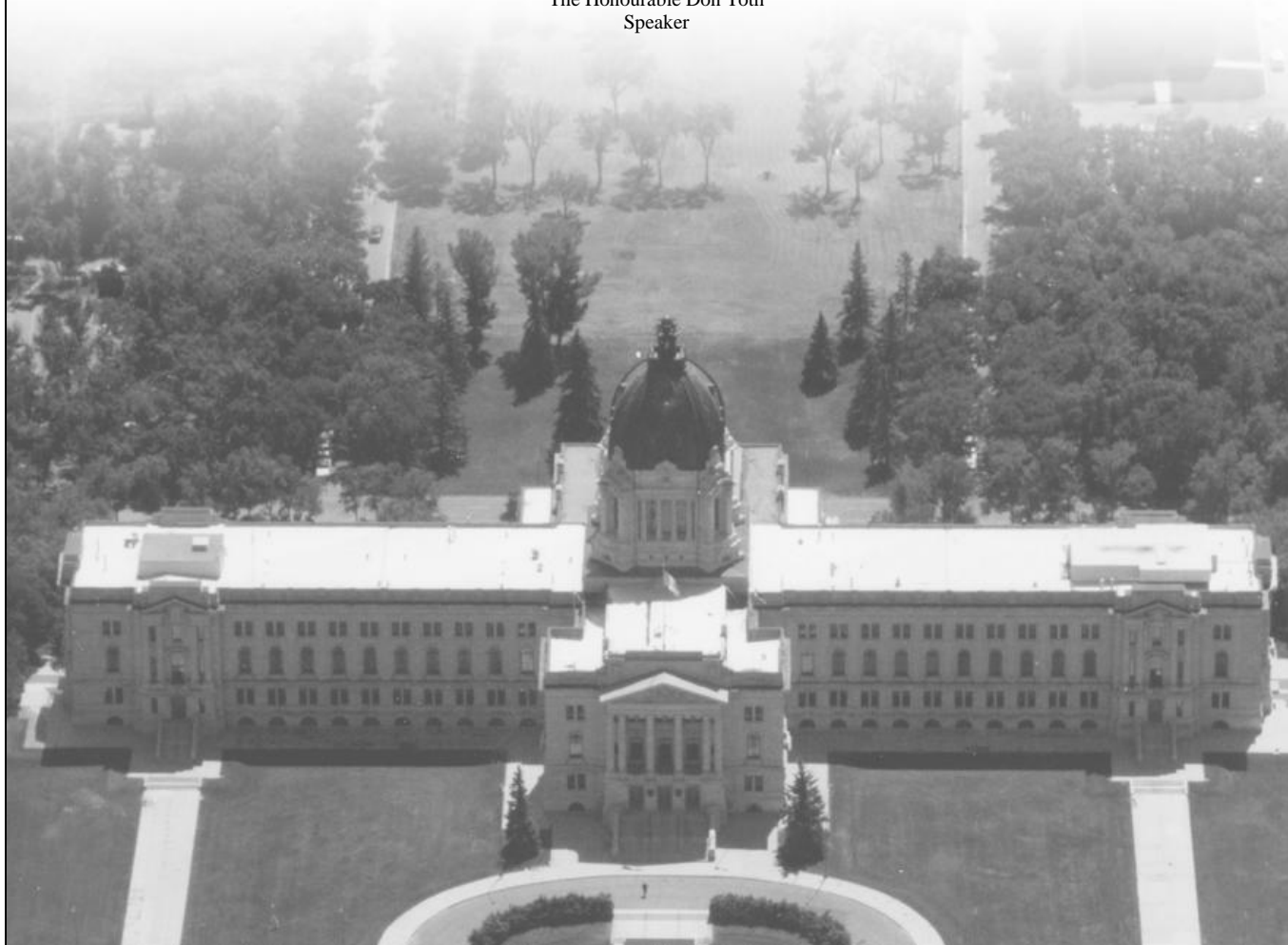
of the

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 — Dwain Lingenfelter

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
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, 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, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Higgins, Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, Hon. D.F. (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
Lingenfelter, Dwain	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, 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
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 member from Weyburn.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as you and all members will know, November 22nd to the 28th was proclaimed Multicultural Week in Saskatchewan, and I'm pleased to introduce a number of individuals in the gallery, in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

Today we have with us Rhonda Rosenberg, the executive director of the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan; Getachew Woldyesus with the Open Door Society; Neelu Sachdev, the executive director of the Regina immigrant centre, and Carol Lafayette-Boyd with the Saskatchewan Canadian heritage museum.

Mr. Speaker, these individuals and the organizations that they represent under the umbrella of the Multicultural Council all work to welcome and assist, teach and encourage newcomers from all over the world to our province, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And I would ask all members to help me to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Chartier: — On behalf of the official opposition it also gives me great pleasure to welcome the leaders from the Multicultural Council in celebration of Multicultural Awareness Week. Thank you. Please welcome them to their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I'd like to introduce a Russian delegation that we have in your gallery today, Mr. Speaker, that are in Regina for Agribition. To start with I have Mr. Alexander Ivanovich Bellayev. He's the deputy minister of Agriculture from the Russian Federation. His assistant, Yulia Surovtseva. Denis Cherkesov from ... the deputy head in charge of livestock. And also we have other representatives with the Russian delegations and I don't have all the names, Mr. Speaker, but we want to welcome them here today, too.

Also, Mr. Speaker, with the delegation today, and I think familiar to many in here, is Jason Pollock, Agribition CEO [chief executive officer] and general manager. Did a tremendous amount of work to put on this show, Mr. Speaker. And Stewart Stone, Chair of the international business centre.

Mr. Speaker, Deputy Minister Belayev's area of responsibility include livestock, plant cultivation, and vet issues. He's a part of the large contingents from Russia attending Agribition this year, including a delegation that's here to buy cattle.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan and Russia have a strong trading relationship that we hope will only continue to grow. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to give them a very warm welcome to Saskatchewan and to our legislature.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the Minister of Agriculture in welcoming our guests from Russia and those who are here from Agribition because we have people from all over the world who are visiting our province and our city. It is the premier agricultural show in Canada, in fact in North America. I'm sure the minister will agree.

The effort that goes into this is phenomenal by thousands of people. And I want to join with him in welcoming our guests from Russia, wish them the best, and hope they're able to stay and enjoy some of the festivities around Grey Cup parties here in the city this weekend. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through you and to you to the rest of the Assembly, I have a number of guests that I want to introduce, some from SEMSA [Saskatchewan Emergency Medical Services Association] and some from the regional health authorities.

First of all is Trevor Dutchak, president of SEMSA. Also Ron Dufresne who is past president of SEMSA, and Steve Skoworodko also is the vice-president from SEMSA. As well joining them would be Rod MacKenzie from the Saskatoon Health Region, Wayne Nogier from Kelsey Trail Health Region, and Krista Koenders from the Heartland Health Region. As well as Gerry Schriemer and Larise Skoretz who are both members of SEMSA.

So I'd like all members in the Legislative Assembly to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

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

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with the minister in welcoming all the members from SEMSA and the health regions.

I'm assuming they're here to talk about the EMS [emergency medical services] review which I'm looking forward to seeing. I'm understanding it's supposed to be done shortly. I'd like to welcome them all on behalf of the official opposition to the legislature this morning. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cypress Hills.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, I'd like to introduce two people in particular and a larger group that are sitting in your gallery.

I'd like to welcome the Discovery Learning School from Maple

Creek. They're seated in the Speaker's gallery and they are guests of Ombudsman Kevin Fenwick. And the students are attending today along with their teachers and some of their parents. But I'd especially like to welcome a grade 11 student, Shannon Bowyer, of the Discovery Learning School, who wrote the winning essay for the Ombudsman's Fairness Week contest.

The contest was in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the world's first parliamentary ombudsman appointed in Sweden in 1809. Mr. Speaker, since that time there have been many other countries that have appointed ombudsmen and that same type of job has been applied to other types of enterprises. For instance, there are now ombudsmen serving for banks, for prisons, for insurance companies, and the NHL [National Hockey League] — and even, Mr. Speaker, the Canada Revenue Agency. I'm sure that's good news for anybody who's had a tax problem.

But today I'd like to welcome this group from the Maple Creek Discovery School Foundation and particularly congratulate Shannon Bowyer. Would you join with me in welcoming them to their House today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The province of Saskatchewan benefits mightily from excellent leadership at our universities, and I notice in the west gallery we have an excellent example of that leadership. Joining us today in the Assembly, if my vision isn't betraying me, is president of the University of Saskatchewan, Peter MacKinnon. And so to you and through you, we want to welcome him to his Legislative Assembly this morning.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the Premier on behalf of the official opposition in welcoming President MacKinnon to the legislature today. Not a stranger to the Assembly and not a stranger here in the province as he's served the university very well for a good length of time. So I join with the Premier in welcoming President MacKinnon.

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

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to introduce to you and through you four students from St. Gabriel School and St. Catherine School in Regina.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

Mr. Speaker, these students are from Ukraine and are attending school here in Saskatchewan through an educational agreement between Saskatchewan and Chernivtsi Oblast, the region in western Ukraine.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

Mr. Speaker, in the fall of 2008, I had the fortunate honour to travel to Chernivtsi Oblast to renew this agreement for co-operation in education, which was first signed in 1991. Mr. Speaker, I also had the opportunity of placing a wreath at the

Holodomor monument in Kiev to honour the memory of those who perished in 1932-33. As you may know, Mr. Speaker, this week is International Holodomor Remembrance Week.

I invite all members to join me in welcoming these very special guests to the Legislative Assembly during this important time of remembrance for our friends in Ukraine and for the citizens of our province, like myself, who are of Ukrainian heritage.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — [The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to welcome all the students from Ukraine to Canada. I also notice President Lysyk and Orest Warnyca are here joining us today, and I welcome them to our legislature. And I look forward afterwards to the candle ceremony and meeting the students from St. Catherine's and St. Gabriel also. Thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of concerned citizens of Saskatchewan who are concerned over the condition of Highway 22. The petition indicates that the highway has deteriorated to a point where it is now a safety hazard for residents who have to drive on that highway. And, Mr. Speaker, I will read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Sask Party government to commit to providing the repairs to Highway 22 that the people of Saskatchewan need.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good folks of Earl Grey, Saskatchewan. I so submit.

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

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of Saskatchewan citizens that speaks to the issue that is well known across the province, that inadequate access to quality, affordable child care is a major roadblock for parents who want to access the labour market or to further their own education. And, Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately add at least 1,000 new child care spaces in Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Speaker, I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of wage equity for CBO [community-based organization] workers. And we know, Mr. Speaker, that workers in community-based organizations in Saskatchewan have traditionally been underpaid and many continue to earn poverty-level wages. And in fact research has shown that CBO workers are paid on average 8 to \$10 an hour less than employees performing work of equal value in government departments. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the development and implementation of a multi-year funding plan to ensure that CBO workers achieve wage equity with employees who perform work of equal value in government departments.

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

Mr. Speaker, these folks come from Ituna and Regina. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition in support of a new long-term care facility in La Ronge. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately invest in the planning and construction of new long-term care beds in La Ronge.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

It is signed by the good people of La Ronge and area. I so present.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition in support of fairness for students here in Saskatchewan through the necessary expansion of the graduate retention program. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately expand the graduate retention program to include master's and Ph.D. graduates.

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

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition are from the city of Saskatoon. I see the constituencies of Sutherland,

Nutana, Greystone, Massey Place, and perhaps Eastview, not sure. Mr. Speaker, I so present.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present yet another petition on behalf of rural residents of Saskatchewan who question why the Sask Party government is leaving them behind with respect to providing safe and affordable water, and who have not yet had any commitment from the Saskatchewan Party government. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to financially assist the town of Duck Lake residents for the good of their health and safety due to the exorbitant water rates being forced on them by a government agency, and that this government fulfills its commitment to rural Saskatchewan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by the good residents of Duck Lake. I so present.

[10:15]

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I stand today and present a petition in support of withdrawal of Bill 80. Mr. Speaker, the building trades unions in our province have a proud history of craft union certification. And, Mr. Speaker, they also have contracts that support apprenticeship system training which results in a highly skilled workforce which is so necessary for our province. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to withdraw its ill-conceived Bill 80, *The Construction Industry Labour Relations Amendment Act, 2009*, which dismantles the proud history of the building trades in this province, creates instability in the labour market, and impacts the quality of training required for workers before entering the workforce.

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

The petitions are signed by people in Moose Jaw, Bienfait, Wapella, Battleford, Emerald Park, Corman Park, Dundurn, Rosetown, Humboldt, Martensville, Lloydminster, Langham, Hudson Bay, Colonsay, Prince Albert, Regina, Melfort, Saskatoon, Cupar, Dilke, Fort Qu'Appelle, Holdfast, and Briercrest. I so present, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to rise, presenting a petition in support of affordable rents and housing for The Battlefords, Mr. Speaker.

The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to call upon the Government of Saskatchewan to develop an affordable housing program that will result in a greater number of quality and affordable rental units to be made available to a greater number of people throughout The Battlefords and that will implement a process of rent review or rent control to better protect tenants in a non-competitive housing environment.

Mr. Speaker, the petition is signed by residents of the city of North Battleford, the town of Battleford, and the village of Scott, Saskatchewan. I so present, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the unprecedented mismanagement of our finances by the Sask Party. With the confirmation of the billion dollar deficit created by the Sask Party, the concern across this province is huge, and that may understate it, Mr. Speaker. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Sask Party government to start managing our provincial finances responsibly and prudently to ensure that it does not continue its trend of massive budgetary shortfalls, runaway and unsustainable spending, equity stripping from our Crowns, and irresponsible revenue setting.

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

These petitions, Mr. Speaker, are but a sample of the many individuals across Saskatchewan. These are signed by residents of Regina. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Elmwood Residences Celebrate 40th Anniversary

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to congratulate Elmwood Residences on their 40th anniversary. Elmwood Residences is a community-based residential service in Saskatoon Eastview.

This organization or group of homes offers quality services for individuals with intellectual disabilities. It was established in 1969 with the goal of providing, as closely as possible, a home and family life environment, to develop a sense of self-worth in each individual resident, and to promote and sustain a positive philosophy that would assure the well-being and abilities of each person.

Mr. Speaker, from the beginning the Saskatoon Kinsmen have

been consistent and generous donors, both in financing and individual resources. In fact on September 8th, 2008, the main home on Arlington Avenue was renamed Kinsmen Manor in acknowledgement of that generosity.

I want to send special congratulations to Shelley Bartram, executive director of Elmwood. She has worked long and hard to ensure the excellence of services at the residence.

In the first year of Elmwood there were 38 residents. Today 50 individuals continue to enjoy life at Kinsmen Manor. Sixty-five people live with their friends at 11 Elmwood group homes. Approximately 50 families use the respite home, and another 25 people are supported so they can live alone in the community.

Life at Elmwood is exemplified by the joy of being together and receiving the love and support individuals need to enjoy a happy and successful life of their choosing.

Mr. Speaker, truly it is amazing what is possible when good people unite together in a common cause.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Commercial Cattleman of the Year

Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. John Wayne said, "Talk low, talk slow, and don't say too much." This quote describes the man I have the honour of recognizing today: Tom Hougham, who ranches on the south bank of the North Saskatchewan River in an area called North Bend. Tom does have these characteristics, and when he speaks, I always listen. Tom is a heck of a rancher, a great community man, and I am privileged to call him a friend. So I am very proud that Tom Hougham is being presented with the Commercial Cattleman of the Year award at Canadian Western Agribition tomorrow.

The Saskatchewan Hereford Association presents this award to an individual who has shown their dedication to the Hereford breed for many years and even generations. Those chosen are an elite group of commercial cattlemen that have demonstrated excellence towards the production of quality Hereford-influenced commercial cattle.

Mr. Speaker, there is another well-used cowboy quote: Behind every successful rancher is a spouse who works in town. In this case it certainly applies, as Tom is married to Marilyn Hougham who is, when she is not Tom's top cowhand on the ranch, I am very pleased to have as my constituency assistant in Lloydminster.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all of the Assembly to join with me in congratulating Tom and Marilyn Hougham from Tom-Lyn Ranch on this well-deserved award. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Troy's Youth Canoe Quest

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, Troy's Youth Canoe Quest is a friendly competition held annually in northern Saskatchewan. This year it was held in Wollaston Lake on August 4th, 2009.

Troy's Youth Canoe Quest is a friendly competition created with a goal of shedding light on youth suicide interventions. It was inspired by Troy Dorion of Pelican Narrows, who committed suicide at a young age. The purpose of the quest is not only awareness of this important issue, but also to keep young people focused on positive activities and setting goals.

Troy was inspired while travelling with his uncles on the 2005 Centennial Canoe Quest, an epic, 1100-kilometre journey that traced the original voyageur trade route on the Churchill River. After Troy's death, his principal, Ray Highway, decided to create a canoe quest in his memory, since Troy had enjoyed it so much.

This year's Troy's Canoe Quest included three teams from Pelican Narrows. Paddlers were age 14 to 19. They paddled a remarkable 100 kilometres in two days. Troy's Youth Canoe Quest is a great example of the achievement of our young people in our province and helps us to remember that the high rate of suicide in the North must be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in commending all competitors and organizers of this Troy's Youth Canoe Quest.

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

Local, Everyday Heroes

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Regina is a safer place to live today because of our local, everyday heroes — our dedicated police officers. Thanks to the Regina police, our city's monthly crime stats are continuing a downward trend.

October saw more impressive reductions. Property crimes are down by more than 10 per cent. Regina police attribute this progress to a reduction of more than 20 per cent in both break and enters and car thefts. Our home and our police vehicles are safer than ever. Plus we are safer because of the brave men and women serving on our local police force.

Crimes against persons have been reduced this year by over 1 per cent. Regina police chief, Troy Hagen, explained to the public that while these crimes are difficult to prevent because of their personal nature, they are continuing to put their focus and attention on these crimes.

Today the citizens of Regina can feel safer and proud of our police officers, the men and women who show their courage each and every single day. Thank you very much.

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

Famous Duos

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. History gives us many examples of names that will live together forever: Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, Bonnie and Clyde, Bert and Ernie, Sonny and Cher, the Caped Crusader and his ward, Boy Wonder.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate another dynamic duo, the

Minister of Finance and his ward, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who have served together for a half year on the board of directors for the Municipal Financing Corporation of Saskatchewan.

Paper is traditional for a one-year anniversary, Mr. Speaker, but a member statement will have to do for a pair who have managed to blow their corporation's budget by 100 per cent in just six months with no knowledge of this overrun.

Allow me to introduce these two prudent ministers, Mr. Speaker, by the nicknames known to their friends and admirers — check and balance. Check, Mr. Speaker, hails from Meadow Lake and was a federal Conservative candidate back when his favourite pair of words used to be “in” and “out.” Now, Mr. Speaker, check's been distracted, as a pair of Conservative lawyers fight his case in Ottawa, so he hasn't noticed far more money going out than coming in.

Balance, Mr. Speaker, calls Melfort home. And his favourite pair of words used to be “strong” and “steady.” But despite the bad budget numbers, he hid from the public behind those words for so long that a certain columnist began to doubt he owned a pair of something else. And so I give you check and balance, Mr. Speaker. May they keep an eye on the balance sheet of this province much better in the months to come.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Services for People with Intellectual Disabilities

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm pleased to advise the Assembly about an exciting new pilot project that's been launched in Yorkton today on behalf of people with intellectual disabilities. The goal of this \$171,000 project, a partnership of the Yorkton branch of the Sask Abilities Council and the Ministry of Social Services, is to strengthen the services provided to people with intellectual disabilities by approved private service homes.

Mr. Speaker, approved private service homes play a valuable role in supporting people with intellectual disabilities in communities across Saskatchewan. This unique partnership with the Yorkton branch of the Sask Abilities Council links that organization, with its volunteers and staff, with approved private service home operators in the Yorkton area. Those operators will be provided with respite training and education, behavioural and after-hour crisis supports, and networking opportunities. Through this initiative we hope to enhance capacity and develop more and better services that respond to the needs of people with disabilities in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, this pilot project is part of our government's four-year \$76.9 million commitment to eliminate the wait-list of 440 people with intellectual disabilities across Saskatchewan who require residential, day, and specialized programs to meet their assessment needs. The wait-list initiative is the largest investment in Saskatchewan history in support of people with intellectual disabilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Premier's Trip to Washington

Ms. Morin: — Last week the Premier jetted off to Washington to wine and dine with political representatives in America claiming to talk about energy and climate change.

Mr. Speaker, at first glance this may seem like a positive action. Could it be that the Premier was finally taking climate change seriously? Could it be that he wanted to propose serious actions in advance of the Copenhagen conference on December 8th? Alas, this was not it. The Premier was there with one disappointing message. We need to rag the puck so that fighting climate change won't get in the way of his hunt for an economic boom since his government blew the last one.

For those unfamiliar with the term, ragging the puck is a technique in hockey, essentially meaning to proceed slowly in order to use up time. The Premier wants to stall. At a time when climate change experts are repeatedly stressing the urgency of the situation, the Premier's response is to tell his colleagues to just slow down, just stall for time.

Let's not be a leader in this field, says the Premier, despite the fact that the impacts of climate change are now happening much more quickly than expected, and despite the fact that Saskatchewan has the resource potential to tap into renewable energies to combat our carbon footprint.

The province needs real leadership in the fight to address climate change and they need it immediately. Mr. Premier, Mr. Premier, we do not have time to rag the puck, and the people of the province will remind him of that in 2011.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Management of Provincial Economy

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, everyone in the province now knows that last March our Minister of Finance introduced the most unbelievable and irresponsible budget in the history of the province. And last week when we asked about the result of that budget that led to \$293 million in cuts across 19 departments, those questions were put in good faith on behalf of the people of the province.

And what was the answer? The answer was that no, he would not give the answers until when? Until after the next budget. My question to the minister is, how is it that it's going to take him till after the next budget to know what cuts he made in this budget? How does that work?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting to note the line of questioning we've had from the members opposite with respect to the length of the session.

[10:30]

With respect to the issue of supplementary estimates, Mr.

Speaker, I think, and I'll get the exact years, but I think for five or six years, from about '92 through '96 when that member who just asked the question sat on the government benches, when they had the option of calling a fall session, they never did it. So supplementary estimates weren't considered at all, Mr. Speaker, until the spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

This session, this session will not end without the full scrutiny and vote on all estimates, including supplementary estimates, Mr. Speaker. This session, which will end in the spring, will not end without another budget being presented, a balanced budget on the strength of debt reduction, on the strength of sustainable tax relief, and on the strength of the healthiest economy on the continent, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Just a reminder for members which I've tried to communicate through the House leaders. The questions are to be put through the Chair, and I'd like to have that acknowledgement — rule 51. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, a new question to the Minister of Finance. It doesn't surprise anyone in the province that he doesn't understand his own budget as it would . . . [inaudible] . . . in the Municipal Finance Corporation that was mentioned earlier in the House has gone wrong by \$31 million. The answer to our budget cut question should be at the minister's fingertips. Obviously they know, the minister knows, what the budget cuts are, the \$293 million. Or maybe he doesn't.

But my question is, which answer is correct — that you're hiding the answers from the public, hiding it from the public? Or is it that you just don't know and that you're that incompetent? There's one of two answers that we would like from the minister. Are you incompetent? Are you hiding the facts? Which is it?

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I would also ask members to be mindful of the terms or the reflections upon members based on the rules. And the members, there's a significant number of rulings in the past as to what's reflective, how we reflect on members. And I ask members to be mindful of that. I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The minister has answered the questions with respect to the Municipal Finance Corporation.

It's interesting, Mr. Speaker. The additional request for help through the Saskatchewan infrastructure and growth initiative instituted by this government that drove much of the changes to the Municipal Finance Corporation were what, Mr. Speaker? They were the growth of the province of Saskatchewan. They were an application from the city of Regina to proceed with what I think will be Canada's finest global transportation hub on the outskirts of the very city that he represents, Mr. Speaker. I think those are positive things. They are the reactions of this government to the growth that's occurring around the province.

We've heard members opposite talk about the length of debate. And in a moment of honesty, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that

the Social Services critic over there, on this issue of what's been happening in committees on debates, said this:

It's one of the things in opposition, you get to ask some questions that you wished you had asked when you were in government. But we're all very busy [he said]. And so this is a real . . . opportunity [for learning] for us. [The member said.]

So the members opposite are learning about government even though they served on government for 16 years. It's our objective if they find opposition a chance to learn, we believe in education. We'll give them that chance for learning for a long time to come.

The Speaker: — Order. Just a reminder as well for when ministers are responding, to at least acknowledge or have some relevance to tie the response to the question. Thank you. I recognize the Opposition Leader.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. My question to the Premier is this. When it comes to accountability and being open and transparent about the budget, the people of the province are really wondering why they can't get answers to the question that is, where are the cuts, the \$293 million? We've asked in question period. No answers. We've asked in committee. Not an answer. We've written questions to the ministers. No answers.

I want to quote from the election platform of the Sask Party and ask the Premier a question. In that document, you say, "A Saskatchewan Party Government will provide Saskatchewan people with more transparency and accountability than . . . previous government."

I want to ask him how is this hiding the 293 million in cuts being open and transparent? How does that work?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, first of all, with respect to the numbers the member has highlighted here today, we have highlighted those in terms of the deferrals. Those are deferrals, Mr. Speaker. We're going to get to those projects when the finances of the province afford it.

Now to directly answer the member's question. His question was this: we campaigned on more transparency in the platform, Mr. Speaker. When we inherited government, here's the situation. The situation that was that that party in government had stopped the long-standing practice of four-year . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order, order. I would just remind the Premier of responding through the Chair. Thank you. Recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, when that party was in office, it made a decision in its dying days, the tired old NDP [New Democratic Party] decided, we're not going to provide the four-year forecast that had been the tradition of budgeting in this province back to the days of Roy Romanow when we saw a

lot . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. The members have asked a question, would like to hear an answer. And I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — So, Mr. Speaker, we campaigned on more transparency. What did we do? We changed that. Our first budget had that four-year projection, had that transparency, so people could see the plan going forward. The same is true for the second budget. It'll be true in the third budget, Mr. Speaker. And what will also be true in the next budget is that it will be balanced, Mr. Speaker. The debt in the province will be lower than it ever was under that party. Taxes will be lower and our economy will lead the country, Mr. Speaker.

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

Provision of High-Speed Internet

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, on October 28th, 2008, the Sask Party announced that it had established a new policy framework which would, and I quote, ". . . focus the Crowns on investing within Saskatchewan." Yesterday the Minister of CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] stated, and I'll quote again: ". . . we believe in investing in Saskatchewan." But last week SaskTel announced that it had reached an agreement with two private sector operators to provide fixed wireless Internet high-speed service to 15 communities.

To the minister: why is SaskTel turning to private sector providers to make investments the Saskatchewan Party claimed would be done by the Crowns? And did the Sask Party drain so much equity from the Crowns that they can no longer afford to deliver these services to the people of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be able to get up today to remind members that our government made a commitment to try and provide 100 per cent high-speed Internet coverage throughout the province. Mr. Speaker, that high-speed Internet coverage is provided through a variety of different private sector partners. The member opposite makes reference to some small communities in the province. Prior to very recent times, it was provided by three different satellite companies, none of whom were Saskatchewan companies. Mr. Speaker, not one of them. They were in operation prior to the last change of government.

Those satellite partners will be . . . Those communities will be upgraded, and will now receive either fixed wireless or DSL [digital subscriber line] through private sector partners, one of which is a Manitoba company, the other one which is a Saskatchewan company, Mr. Speaker. These communities will be well-served. Their Internet speeds will go up markedly, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Yates: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On May the 5th the Sask Party said, and I'll quote again: "SaskTel is exploring partnership options which would allow private sector companies to provide residential high speed Internet in the community in return for a subsidy." Mr. Speaker, a subsidy.

And we all know that companies like YourLink Inc. and RFNow could never afford to provide affordable high-speed Internet service to those communities at the price SaskTel could, given its economies of scale.

To the minister: how much is the government subsidizing these companies to provide the service that should be provided by the people of Saskatchewan through their Crown utility?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I can advise the members and I can advise the House that RFNow has provided services in this province in Moosomin and Carlyle since 2001 under the previous administration. They provide good quality service. YourLink, which is a Saskatoon company, has provided Internet services throughout Saskatchewan in smaller communities where it has not been economically viable for SaskTel to use their business model to do it. It was done under the previous administration; it is now done under this government.

And, Mr. Speaker, we will provide appropriate subsidies in communities where it's acceptable to ensure that the citizens of this province get good quality high-speed Internet. And we are going to make it a target that we will provide it to 100 per cent of the province of Saskatchewan. And we will do so during our mandate, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Yates: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party's drained money out of the Crowns to pay for their fiscal mismanagement to nearly a \$1 billion. They won't allow the Crowns to invest in profitable enterprises outside the province. They privatized or tried to privatize everything that wasn't nailed down in the corporation, including email services, message relay services, and telephone operators, Mr. Speaker.

Now they're subsidizing other companies to provide high-speed Internet services, which we do as a company. They're privatizing more of the operations of SaskTel, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it won't be long before SaskTel is a shell of its former self, providing its customers with nothing but a dial tone.

To the minister: how long will it take the Sask Party to undermine the Crowns and privatize enough of it so that they'll have to sell it off because it has no value?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Investments.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I find it absolutely amazing that the members opposite will talk about the money that they've spent outside of this province. Do they know that there's \$300 million that could be in the province of

Saskatchewan if they wouldn't have decided that Channel Lake or Guyana or . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. When the minister's attempting to answer a question that's being presented by the opposition, I would ask the opposition members to allow the minister to respond in the same way the opposition were given the opportunity to place the question. I recognize the Minister Responsible.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite when they were in government spent an average of \$500 million a year on capital investments in SaskPower, SaskTel, and SaskEnergy. In the last two years, we've spent \$2.2 billion on capital improvements at SaskTel.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very, very pleased to tell the members opposite we spent \$90 million on high-speed Internet. We've got the lowest natural gas rates in Canada. Mr. Speaker, SaskEnergy now has 4,000 new customers, in fact in some communities where their services, where there hasn't been a new connection for over two decades. That's what happens when you have a province that's improving and growing. We're investing in our province through our Crowns because we're growing — \$2.2 billion, Mr. Speaker.

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

Big River Saw Mill

Mr. Furber: — I've got a question for the Minister of Energy and Resources. Can he confirm that at a community meeting in Big River earlier this year he told residents of Big River that Eacom Timber Corporation, the company which is finalizing the purchase of the Big River saw mill was, and I quote, "not a viable company," and went on to tell residents that quote, if they were to investigate, they would see that Eacom was a shady company, and that Rick Doman, their CEO, was quote "a shady character"?

Does the minister confirm making these defamatory statements about Eacom Timber, a publicly traded company, and did he make the same statement to members of the cabinet?

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

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, later today we will be making an announcement around the forest management agreement, talking about the various areas of interest to the forestry sector in Saskatchewan. There will be an involvement of large companies, small companies, independent forestry companies, and of course communities and First Nations people affected by the agreement that we'll be announcing.

And when it comes to the agreement with the community of Big River, the discussion about Big River, certainly there are grave concerns about the company that is in question here. I think it's on the public record, through the various media outlets about the start-up of that company, from a pharmaceutical company

that it used to be, through to now a start-up in the forestry sector. Mr. Speaker, I think there are concerns about the viability potential of this company and those who surround the questions as being asked.

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

Mr. Furber: — Mr. Speaker, I have a fax recently received by the president and CEO of Eacom Timber, Rick Doman, from a businessperson in Big River confirming the minister's defamatory remarks.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Big River have been waiting two years for somebody to purchase and reopen their sawmill. Eacom Timber stepped up to the plate with zero government assistance. They didn't have to borrow the money to do it. They had it in the bank and their company, but instead of welcoming this new business to the province, the minister defames them in Big River and again in this Assembly today.

What kind of game is he playing with the people of Big River and the jobs and the future in that town and with this company, Mr. Speaker?

[10:45]

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

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, the question surrounding Eacom is a very interesting one. And I quote from a CBC news article of May 8th, 2001, where they're involved in a number of lawsuits. The first one involves the Government of British Columbia, a lawsuit where they're suggesting that they reneged on forest licences. The second lawsuit is with regard to stumpage rates, and the third lawsuit as a result of what they claim is government mismanagement of the forestry sector.

Mr. Speaker, there are ongoing questions about the company that the member refers to. There are many, many concerns about the proposal as came forward. We expected we would see a proposal that would involve the forestry company. When we received the proposal, there certainly was no mention whatsoever of that, Mr. Speaker. And that's the reason why there are a number of questions about this company.

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

Mr. Furber: — Is this Minister of Energy and Resources today saying that this government will not do business with any corporation that has a lawsuit against it in the province of Saskatchewan? Is that what he's saying? It's unbelievable, Mr. Speaker.

And to save 300 jobs in Big River, all he has to do is provide this saw mill with the same allocation it had two years ago. Without an allocation, Eacom Timber has stated that they have no option but to move this asset out of the province, effectively killing this opportunity forever in Saskatchewan.

Why has this minister failed to offer Big River saw mill an

adequate wood supply to keep the mill here in Saskatchewan and bring back hundreds of jobs to that community?

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

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, any time the Government of Saskatchewan receives proposals from various companies that want to do business in Saskatchewan, there's, a great deal of due diligence takes place to determine whether the company has viability or not. Not only the Ministry of Energy and Resources took a look at this. We also consulted with an outside agency, an accounting company to take a look at this. They came back with the same conclusion that we came back with, that this proposal simply would not be viable and did not meet the test of viability in Saskatchewan.

There are lawsuits in question. There are questions about the start-up of this company. And there are certainly concerns about the proposal that they brought forward that did not include the forestry partner that they said it was going to include.

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

Funding for Boards of Education and Property Tax Issues

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, last spring the Saskatchewan Party introduced the biggest changes to education financing in the history of the province and took away school boards' ability to tax property. At the time, Saskatchewan people were promised that the government would be increasing funding next year to further reduce education taxes on property. They also promised school boards that they would have predictable and secure funding in place by 2011.

Fast forward six months. We've got a billion dollar deficit, the rainy day fund and the Crown corporations are being sucked dry by the government's financial incompetence. And now the Minister of Education says he'll have to break the Sask Party's promise to property owners and school boards.

So to the minister: can he confirm that the Sask Party is about to break another promise?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to talk about the promises that this government has kept. Promises, Mr. Speaker, that in the first two years, in the first two years of a Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker, we have instituted two major changes. The largest income tax break to the province of Saskatchewan ever, Mr. Speaker, that's in the first year.

Mr. Speaker, in the second year of our term as government . . .

[Interjections]

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

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite challenges and says, poor Ken, Mr. Speaker, poor Ken. Mr. Speaker, the opposition has

asked a question. I'm prepared to answer the fact, but that we have put in place the largest tax change in the province's history in Saskatchewan — \$103 million. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure there'll be more questions, and I'll have a chance to add some more information to the member opposite.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier started out the week by hugging Gainer the Gopher, but it looks like he's been bitten by the prairie dog. Because the Premier recently told the *prairie dog* magazine, and I quote, "There are fewer words more powerful in politics than, 'They did what they set out to do.'"

Well what did the Sask Party say last spring? They promised Regina property tax payers that they'd get a \$150 property tax cut next year. They promised farmers in Winslow a \$1,000 tax cut. And the Premier promised commercial tax payers a tax cut of about \$200.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they're not doing what they set out to do. They're full of big talk just a few months ago, but it turns out that cheerleading is not the same as governing. So to the minister: why should the people of this province believe any announcement that that minister makes?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education?

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, again we have a chance to talk about promises made, promises kept — 112 promises, Mr. Speaker, 112 promises made. Mr. Speaker, I think the members opposite have to understand where they have been for the last number of years. I'm going to introduce a quote, Mr. Speaker, from *Hansard*. And the date of that quote, Mr. Speaker, is September the 22nd, 1987. And it says this:

And I say, Mr. Speaker, is there any wonder that a tax revolt is brewing in this province? People are being taxed to death and they're saying, we can't take any more.

Mr. Speaker, there's another interesting quote. This is a quote, Mr. Speaker, and it says this:

We are pledged to do away with the education tax as soon as we get the new sources of revenue to take the place of the revenue now realized from that tax.

Mr. Speaker, the date of that quote August the 3rd, 1944, by then Tommy Douglas, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — I think the Minister of Education should listen to the member from Lloydminster, where earlier today he said, talk low, talk slow, according to John Wayne, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in today's *StarPhoenix*, Ray Morrison, the Chair of the Saskatoon Public School Board, said, and I quote:

... his biggest concern would be the government lowering the education property tax mill rate next year without backfilling the funding that would be lost.

"Then we would be in a position where ... it would probably have some significant impact on programming."

Mr. Speaker, it's not hard to imagine this government trying to make someone else foot the bill and take the blame for their broken promises. So to the minister: can he guarantee here today that school boards will receive the funding that they were promised, or will Saskatchewan school children be the latest victims of your \$1 billion fiscal and financial mismanagement and incompetence?

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Just a reminder to the members that the use of words like "your" directly is implying something about an individual member. Members, remember to put the question through the Speaker. I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated to this Assembly many times, there have been two large changes in the province of Saskatchewan — the property tax change and the income tax change. The people of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are saving thousands of dollars. They're very pleased, Mr. Speaker, with the fact that the Saskatchewan Party government has kept an NDP promise made by Lorne Calvert, the former leader of the NDP, Tommy Douglas. And, Mr. Speaker, we've kept that promise. We have made those commitments.

Mr. Speaker, we have also said to the boards of education, as we've moved forward over planning, we've said to them that ...

[Interjections]

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

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, boards of education understand that there has been a change. They no longer have access to the tax base, and the changes that the provincial government makes to education tax is directly to the taxpayer. It doesn't have an effect on the school board any longer, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker ...

Well the members opposite don't know exactly how funding is done, Mr. Speaker. Grant plus tax equals the amount that is needed for school divisions, Mr. Speaker. The province of Saskatchewan sets the tax rate. So the member opposite can suggest that changing or lowering or not lowering or raising the tax somehow affects the boards of education, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't. And we will make a commitment to ensure that boards of education have adequate funding to do the job that they're there for, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Speaker, with leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Corrections has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted? Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. I recognize the minister.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery we have some guests that I would like to introduce. One individual is my chief of staff, Rob Nicolay. But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, is Rob's parents. It's Joe and Glenna Nicolay. They are from Etter's Beach, Saskatchewan. And it's very nice to see them here today, and hopefully I get a chance to meet with them afterwards and see what their view on question period was. So I'd ask all members of the Assembly to please welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, with leave, to make a statement regarding the celebration of the Holodomor.

The Speaker: — The minister has asked for leave to make a statement regarding the Holodomor. Leave is granted.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

International Holodomor Remembrance Week

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the members opposite. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, November 21st to 28th is International Holodomor Remembrance Week.

The Ukrainian Holodomor commemorates the lives of millions of innocent Ukrainian victims of the famine genocide in the heart of Europe's breadbasket that occurred in 1932 and 1933. Historians estimate that possibly at least 7 million people died during this period, eradicated by man-made famine under Joseph Stalin's dictatorial regime. It is said, Mr. Speaker, that at the height of the famine the rate at which Ukrainians were dying was 24,000 people per day, and one-third of those victims were children.

Imagine for a moment, Mr. Speaker, the populations of Yorkton, Melville, and Canora dying of hunger each day and then you will begin to understand the magnitude of the horror inflicted on the people of Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, the starvation that plagued Ukraine during these years has no natural cause. In fact Ukraine was the only Soviet republic that enjoyed bumper crops in 1932. Sadly, grain crops were confiscated and people were isolated by the army, preventing them from receiving food from neighbouring nations. Mr. Speaker, the Soviet government refused to acknowledge that the people of one of the richest agricultural regions in the world were starving. They even went so far as to turn down assistance offered by other countries and the Red Cross.

The perpetrators of this genocide attempted to hide their crime

against humanity by erasing it from the pages of history. On Joseph Stalin's orders, those who conducted the 1937 Soviet population census which revealed a sharp decrease in the Ukrainian population following the years of the Holodomor were shot, and the census results were suppressed. Unquestionably, Mr. Speaker, this is one of the most horrific calamities that Ukraine endured in modern history.

In 2008 the government of Ukraine, the United States Senate, the Senate of Canada, UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization] and the United Nations joined over 40 other jurisdictions around the world to officially condemn the Holodomor, or recognize it as genocide. And the Government of Saskatchewan unanimously passed legislation to designate the fourth Saturday in November each year as Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day. This week, Mr. Speaker, there will be commemorative services held across the country and around the world to honour the memory of the innocent victims of Ukrainian Holodomor.

[11:00]

In Saskatchewan we will also honour and remember the many people of Ukrainian descent in our province and country who lost loved ones during Holodomor. Many survivors of this tragic time in history and their descendants live in our province and have contributed greatly to our cultural, economic, political, and educational life.

Mr. Speaker, if I may, I'd like to quote the 19th century Ukrainian poet and humanist, Taras Shevchenko, who said in his poem "My Testament":

Oh bury me, then rise ye up
And break your heavy chains
And water with the tyrants' blood
The freedom you have gained.
And in the great new family,
The family of the free,
With softly spoken, kindly word
Remember also me.

I ask all members here today, Mr. Speaker, to join me directly after these proceedings in the rotunda for a brief memorial service so together we can, as Shevchenko so eloquently wrote, remember those buried and express our gratitude for the freedom of those who survived.

Let us remember, Mr. Speaker, that when we bring the Holodomor to international attention, we pay tribute to millions of innocent victims, we condemn the crimes of the Soviet communist regime, we restore historical justice, and we further the recognition of the Ukrainian genocide.

Just as important for our own era, by acknowledging the Holodomor as genocide we increase the international community's awareness that engineered famines are still being used as a weapon against the innocent. And by raising this awareness, we hope to prevent such deplorable acts elsewhere in the world. In this way, Mr. Speaker, we not only honour the memory of the victims of this tragedy, but we educate and ensure that this most unconscionable type of crime against humanity will never occur again. Thank you.

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, with leave to make an extended reply.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — [The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

Mr. Speaker, we remember so that we do not forget. Mr. Speaker, on May 7, 2008, this Legislative Assembly unanimously passed third reading of Bill 40, *The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act*. Mr. Speaker, as in the Ukraine, the Bill recognizes the fourth Saturday of November each year as the annual day to commemorate the innocent victims of the 1932-33 Holodomor.

Mr. Speaker, Ukrainian Holodomor commemorates the lives of millions of innocent men, women, and children who were eradicated by starvation in the heart of Europe's breadbasket. Mr. Speaker, many of Ukrainian ancestry have listened to stories, read historical, or watched film and video documentation of the Holodomor. But so much more must be done to understand the period of Ukrainian history as it was.

Mr. Speaker, on November 28th many commemorative services will be held throughout the world, Canada, and here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Regina branch, organized a special presentation of personal stories and dramatization of the Holodomor on November 21st of this year. Mr. Speaker, it is events such as these which contribute to a more informed understanding of this period of Ukrainian history.

Mr. Speaker, we must continue to educate. We must remember, remember the history, tell the story of the attempts to destroy the national consciousness and the attempts to quash the aspirations of independence through starvation. We do this, Mr. Speaker, not only so that history might not repeat itself, but that the flame of human rights burns strong, a flame that we shall deeply cherish.

Mr. Speaker, as many as 7 million died, one-third of them children, as a result of the man-made famine under Joseph Stalin's harsh and dictatorial regime. At the height of the famine, Ukrainians were dying at the rate of 1,000 per hour, 25,000 perishing in a day. The government of the Ukraine, the United States House of Representatives, the United States Senate, the Senate of Canada, UNESCO the cultural organization, the United Nations, and over 40 jurisdictions around the world have officially condemned the Holodomor recognized as a genocide.

Mr. Speaker, we must remember. We remembered this when the Holodomor Remembrance Flame came to our province, at

that time celebrating the 75th anniversary of the famine and genocide which occurred in the Ukraine. Mr. Speaker, we all remember when the flame arrived here in Regina. We also remember the events organized by the Canadian Ukrainian Congress titled, "Keep the Flame Alive." Remember the victims of the Holodomor while ensuring that their story was transferred from generation to generation.

Mr. Speaker, we remember Stefan Horlatsch in our Assembly here, who was a survivor of that Ukrainian famine. He initiated that symbolic walk for us and walked through several major cities in Canada. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Horlatsch himself was an author of six books and he, as a survivor, was recently inducted as an honorary member of the Ukrainian writers' union. Mr. Horlatsch lost 11 members of his own family to the Holodomor.

Mr. Speaker, we must remember, and we must remember all those Canadians who have joined the international community in commemorating this tragedy to recognize the Holodomor as a genocide against Ukrainian people, and to ensure this heinous crime of using food as a weapon against people is no longer used by despots around the world.

Mr. Speaker, it was not an easy road for people to get here. There was much skepticism. And we must work hard and we must keep that flame alive. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — Before we move further in orders of the day, I lay on the table under section 14(1) of *The Provincial Auditor Act* the business and financial plan for the year ending March 31, '09.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Openness and Accountability

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to enter into this debate where we have introduced a motion during the 75-minute debate:

That the Legislative Assembly condemn the government for their unwillingness to be open and accountable to the people of Saskatchewan in regard to the recent budget cuts that were brought about as a result of the government's unprecedented financial mismanagement.

Mr. Speaker, we have tried everything that we possibly can do in order to understand the exact nature of, in essence, what really is \$355.9 million in expense reductions introduced by this government as a result of their \$1 billion deficit, Mr. Speaker.

We have asked the government to extend the session so that we can understand precisely how these cuts are going to be implemented and what impact they will have on the people of our province, and they have said no. We've asked a written question that we understand those 18 — or is it 19? — agencies

and departments, how much is being reduced, and what is the impact upon the citizens of our province. And what have they done in response to those written questions? They have said that we'll know about this after next spring when they introduce their next budget, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier of Saskatchewan and the Sask Party promised the citizens of this province that they would be open and accountable and transparent. But at every opportunity, Mr. Speaker, at every opportunity those members opposite have denied the opposition and the public the ability to understand precisely the impact of those cuts of \$355.9 million in expense restraint.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we think it's unacceptable. We think it's unacceptable that a government that came to office promising to be open and transparent and accountable would be so hard-nosed and so non-transparent that they deny us, through written question, the opportunity to understand the \$355.9 million in expense restraint.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have learned recently that the Saskatchewan School Council Association will no longer receive their minimum grant of \$34 million. And, Mr. Speaker, this is an organization that's been in our province for 71 years. This is an organization that is considered one of the partners in education along with school trustees, directors of education, school financial officers, along with the directors of education and the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation. Well the government in essence, as a result of the reduction of a very small amount of money, has decided to muzzle one of the partners in education, which are the parents.

But, Mr. Speaker, we don't know where all of the cuts are. We do not know. And the members opposite have said, trust us. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's very difficult to trust them when we learn, for instance, that the Minister of Health, who ran around the province announcing all of these nursing homes all across Saskatchewan, has now decided that no, there aren't going to be these nursing homes, that the money that was put out the door in 2008-09 of \$122 million, it was sent out to all these various health authorities, that in fact, here's what's going to happen: we're going to reduce your operating grant, regional health authority, and you can backfill it by using the money that was there for long-term care facilities.

So for instance in the area that I come from, Biggar, Saskatchewan or the member from Biggar — a Sask Party member represents that community — there was great fanfare, the mayor was there, the whole town was there when they announced that there was going to be a new nursing home built in Biggar. But what's happened? What's happened is the health region that represents the town of Biggar and the surrounding area has now used the money that was designated for that nursing home as part of its operating costs because the government has cut over \$192 million from its budget, its Health budget, which apparently allows regional health authorities to use long-term care capital funds not currently required to replace operating grants from the Ministry of Health.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there are communities after communities after communities that were promised. In fact the Minister of

Health went to those communities with great fanfare along with the local member of the legislature, Sask Party member of the legislature. I call them the king of press releases. They had press release after press release telling us how this long-term care money was going to mean better facilities for our elderly, frail elderly, and disabled people in our towns across Saskatchewan. And in fact, that's incorrect.

It's not true because what the government has done is they've clawed all of that money back and told those health regions that received that money that this money is going to go to replace operating grants that should come from the Ministry of Health. Because you know what, Mr. Speaker, it's called? They are overcommitting out there and underperforming, Mr. Speaker.

Now if you go through their budget, it says that the Department of Health budget is down \$192 million. Now we don't know what they've cut. Have they cut chiropractic care for children? We don't know. We do know that they've replaced operating grants with the money that was there for long-term care facilities, but we don't know what else they've cut.

In Education, the Minister of Education advised us that he had cut the \$30 million out of the capital budget for Education, but there's another \$1.2 million in Education cuts. Now could that be the child daycare money that they announced? Because they certainly haven't been able to get those spaces up and operational even though there are thousands of children in Saskatchewan waiting for a child daycare space all across the province. But they had press releases everywhere, that they were creating all of these child daycare spaces. But we don't know whether they've cut child daycare funding because they won't tell us, Mr. Speaker. We do know that they've cut the Saskatchewan Association of School Councils, but what else have they cut?

Now, Mr. Speaker, what'll be very interesting to see is whether or not all the money that the Minister of Education has committed to school capital all across Saskatchewan, whether the Minister of Education is going to do the same thing. They send it out to the health board and then what they do is they cut operating grants and say, take that capital money and that will be part of your operating grant. So we'll see what happens there.

[11:15]

Mr. Speaker, we also know, we also know that Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport is down apparently by \$10.7 million. But this is supposed to be primarily due to deferral of capital funding relating to the building communities program, and a reduction in estimated funding requirements for the active families benefit. But what we don't know is what else have they cut. Because we know that departments have escalating expenses and what Finance tells those departments to do is, eat it, which means you have to go and find money somewhere in your budget to offset those escalating expenses. So we have no clue what this government has done in terms of reducing expenditures in the province.

Now then, we have Government Services. It's apparently down \$2.6 million, and this is because of travel restraint. Well, Mr. Speaker, we know that there are some people, even with the

travel restraint, that are still flying off to far places, still flying off first class, still flying off first class to faraway places and they aren't really showing much in the way of travel expenses. And I'm sure we'll get to that in the next little while, Mr. Speaker.

So we're interested in knowing which vacancies, which vacancies, because we also know that there are some places in government where there has been a significant increase in pay to certain individuals without it ever having gone through the Public Service Commission for their review. It's just that they wanted to make sure that some people somewhere got a pay increase, but it never went through the process of the Public Service Commission to ensure that the movement, from say a management 5 to a management 8, was legitimate. They wanted to make sure that some individuals someplace got a huge pay increase. So much for expense restraint, Mr. Speaker.

And then we had that organization called Enterprise Saskatchewan, an organization that, as far as we can see, has racked up a whole bunch of eat, drink, and travel, but haven't really done much in the way of ensuring that we have various projects in the province. It's a \$2.4 million reduction. We don't know what's been reduced. And this is apparently due to reduced project costs. Well what projects? What projects have been reduced? We have no idea.

And then, of course, they say Advanced Education, Employment and Labour is up. Now that is one department we can get at. You know why, Mr. Speaker? Because anyone that's spending more, we get to review them in committee. But if you are cutting and you're not spending more, we don't get to review them in committee.

In fact, the Ministry of Education is not in committee. The Ministry of Agriculture is not in committee. The Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport is not in committee. And we'll be very interested to know how much in fact the Olympics cost us, because we're told that it's a lot more than \$7 million. And these people opposite are refusing to be transparent and tell us precisely how much money is being spent by the Saskatchewan Sask Party government on those Olympics.

Now we don't have Government Services coming into committee. We don't have Enterprise Saskatchewan coming into committee. We don't have all kinds of other departments and agencies coming into committee. So, Mr. Speaker, how is this open and transparent? How is it open and transparent?

We'd like to see Executive Council come in here and tell us, you know, how much did you . . . Or maybe it's not Executive Council. Maybe it's Intergovernmental. How much was spent on the Council of the Federation? Because we're told that when the Premier had all the premiers here last summer that we spent money like there was no tomorrow. And now they'll say, oh we had a lot of money.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, this is how you get in trouble. You can't eat, drink, and travel your way across the globe; you can't pay off all your buds with escalating contracts; you can't spend like there's no tomorrow — and not rack up a deficit.

Now I remember one previous premier that said you could be

incompetent and still make money in the province of Saskatchewan. You know what? That was Grant Devine. And you know what we learned? You cannot be incompetent managers of our province's finances and still make money.

Now maybe they could do it for a year, but the chickens have come home to roost. And we have a billion dollar deficit. We have a billion dollar deficit. We're draining money out of the Crown Investments Corporation, which is the holding company for all of those Crowns. We're draining money like crazy to pay for their fiscal . . . I can't say the words. I can't say the word, mismanagement.

And then we had the rainy day account. You know, Mr. Speaker, we left these people with \$2.3 billion in cash. That's how much money we left them. And what do we have left? Two point three billion, and what do we have? It is two years later, two years later, only their second budget. And we've got a billion dollar deficit, Mr. Speaker.

We have a rainy day fund that's been drained to the point of . . . Who knows what's left in the rainy day fund? Because we don't have the third quarter yet. We have a CIC, which is the holding company that had over \$1 billion in cash. It's been stripped clean over there because of their financial — I can't say the word, Mr. Speaker — mismanagement, even though we used to use that I-word in the '80s. But we'll call it the mismanagement word, Mr. Speaker.

So we have a government that's run amok. That's what they've done. They've run amok. You know they have said, time and time again, about the NDPers and how we ran government. Well I do know this: that if you didn't have the money, you didn't spend it. And I know this: that when it came to increasing the expenses of the province, we watched to make sure that we could afford it. When we cut taxes, we made sure we could afford it, Mr. Speaker. But not these people.

And now we have a situation where they have reduced education tax on property. They have taken away school boards' ability to tax. And we don't know what's going to happen to school boards next year, Mr. Speaker. We have no idea, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is a group of men and women . . .

The Speaker: — I believe I need to have the member raise the motion. Fifteen minutes time has elapsed.

Ms. Atkinson: — I've got to read the motion. Okay. Sorry. Sorry, Mr. Speaker.

That the Legislative Assembly . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — [Inaudible] . . . to place the motion so we can have the further debate. I recognize the member.

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I would move:

That the Legislative Assembly condemn the government for their unwillingness to be open and accountable to the

people of Saskatchewan in regards to the recent budget cuts that were brought about as a result of the government's unprecedented financial mismanagement.

The Speaker: — The motion before the Assembly is the motion presented by the member from Saskatoon Nutana. Will the members take it as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a real pleasure to be able to speak to this motion. The opposition's motion is just inaccurate, disingenuous. It seems that everything that the member from Saskatoon Nutana just spoke about is actually the opposite, is accurate and the truth. Mr. Speaker . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I'd just ask members to be careful as to how they, the words they use in regards to the debate in the Assembly. I recognize the member from Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Our Finance minister has stated again and again and again about what has happened with potash revenue, and I'll enter it into the record again. There's really two stories to Saskatchewan's economy right now. One is the reduction of potash revenue and all the other things that are going very well in the province. And I'll put it on the record again. I'll quote from the mid-year report, Mr. Speaker:

At mid-year, potash revenue is forecast to be only \$109.0 million, a decline of \$1.8 billion from budget, or \$528.6 million less than the first quarter. [Now] To compensate for this revenue shortfall and maintain a balanced budget, capital deferrals and spending restraint [on that] are necessary. Higher federal transfers related to Saskatchewan infrastructure spending, and an additional \$460.0 million in CIC dividend — funded from the Saskferco sale proceeds — are also included in the mid-year [financial] . . . update.

A transfer of \$564.3 million will be made from the Growth and Financial Security Fund to ensure that the budgeted \$424.5 million GRF surplus remains intact and that the government debt remains unchanged at \$4.2 billion.

The GFSF is projected to have a balance of \$650.8 million at the end of the 2009-10.

Mr. Speaker, this lays it out very transparently what our finances are in this province. The member from Saskatoon Nutana leaves the impression that we're running a deficit. Well it's just not true. When you run a deficit that means your overall debt goes up. Our debt in this province is not going up. It's going to remain unchanged at \$4.2 billion. Debt does not change.

Now I'd like to point out what the NDP did when they were in government. They pretended to have money in a savings account. They pretended to have this money. So when they needed to increase spending, they borrowed money and increased the debt. And they said that wasn't a deficit. In their day, when they increased the . . . when they had a deficit they

increased debt. This, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is not a deficit. It's a balanced budget, and our debt is not going up one iota.

And also the other thing the member from Saskatoon Nutana said was that we've taken all the money out of the Growth and Financial Security Fund. Well at the end of this fiscal year, we're still going to have \$650.8 million in the Growth and Financial Security Fund. There's a number of differences between what the member from Nutana said and what reality is.

Now going back to the projection of the potash prices and tonnage. All you have to do is go to page 30 . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — There's been a little bit of hollering. It's mostly coming from my left side of the ear, and I'm having a hard time hearing the speaker. I would ask that the people respect . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I recognize the member from Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd just like the members opposite to look at the mid-term report, page 32, volumes of potash sales. Well what does it show, Mr. Deputy Speaker? 2009, 4.4 million tonnes. We haven't seen those types of tonnage in the potash sales since 1972. For 15 straight years the trend line has been going up to 7, 8, 9, 10, over 10 million tonnes of potash being moved.

No one, including the members opposite, forecast that the Chinese and Indian governments were not going to be buying any potash this year. They pretend that they knew. They always say that they knew this was going to happen. There were no analysts anywhere projecting those types of changes in potash sales.

I wonder what the members opposite would have said if we said, well just on the safe side, we're not going to say there's going to be any potash sales in the upcoming year. Well the members opposite would have been screaming and yelling about how could we actually say that. They would be bringing out quotes and graphs to show that, no, Saskatchewan has always had high rates of revenue from the potash sales. But that's fine.

You know, there's a global recession on, the worst global recession on since the dirty thirties, since the Depression. Of course I'm sure the NDP across the other side forecast that too. And so the world has gone through some tough times economically. The potash industry's going through some tough times.

But guess what, Mr. Speaker? Guess who is the strongest economy, not only in Canada, but in North America, and actually compared to many places in the world? Well it's Saskatchewan has the strongest economy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that certainly speaks well to the future.

We're going to go through this rough spot. There's no doubt

about it. But our government, our Finance Minister, has been very responsible, transparent, and asks government to look at places to decrease spending and deferrals of spending.

[11:30]

And I like to point out what the member from Saskatoon Nutana said about long-term care facilities. She specifically mentioned Biggar. Well unfortunately I don't know why she's not the NDP shadow member for Biggar since she likes to say that she's from Biggar constituency. So she sends the member from Saskatoon Massey Place out to do media in Biggar.

Well what do the members say from the NDP about the long-term care facility? They leave the impression that we have cancelled these 13 long-term care facilities. And it's not true. What we have is, we've taken the \$122 million back from health regions to offset the loss of revenue from potash. And it's been made very clear again and again and again by the Minister of Finance and the Premier and the Minister of Health that when these projects are ready to be built, the money will be there. There's going to be no delay in any long-term care facility projects. That's the fact.

Why does the NDP keep saying something otherwise? The money will be there when they need it. It's the same thing with the . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. I'll bring the . . . I would ask the Leader of the Opposition to come to order. I recognize the member from Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you very much. Well I just have to say again that the money for the long-term care facilities in Biggar and the other 12 locations in Saskatchewan will be there, as it will be there for the children's hospital in Saskatoon. There will be no delays to any project because of funding. That's the fact, and I don't know why the NDP keep talking otherwise.

Now, the other theme, and I'm starting to run out of time, is what would the NDP do? They keep talking about well we, you know, we spent too much money. Well what projects would the NDP like to cut? That's going to be an interesting question to the opposition. I know in Biggar constituency, agriculture is one of the main industries. Well would the opposition like to ask for the \$40 a head back from the cattle producers in Biggar constituency and livestock producers around the province?

Would they like ask them that money back? Would they like to raise taxes? The 80,000 people that had a tax decrease, are the NDP suggesting that . . . Would they raise taxes and ask to get more money back from those people? I can tell you, after our budget last year . . . There's Teresa from Perdue. She works at the Co-op, and she personally thanked me for reducing her tax because she's a low-income person. And she really appreciated the benefit that would give to her and her family.

Are the members opposite saying that I should go to Teresa from Perdue and say, no, no, no, the NDP, they want to raise your taxes? I wonder what she would say to that then. That's the irresponsible thing.

We're going to work through this situation with the potash

revenue. Potash sales will increase in the future. And our cabinet and our Finance minister has done the prudent thing to keep our books balanced and without affecting any construction projects in the future in any way. And I can only say that this motion, that the member from Nutana is absolutely irresponsible. And I certainly will not be supporting it.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that the people of the province are insulted with the kind of discourse and the kind of speeches that we just hear right now. What people in this province are talking about right now, Mr. Speaker — and these members across here know it because it's coming from their own backyards and their own constituencies — is how on earth, Mr. Speaker, how on earth did a government in just two years take a Saskatchewan that was booming under New Democratic policies and take that province from boom to bust in two years? Boom to bust.

People are asking that question in Weyburn, Mr. Speaker. And the reason I know that is because I'm chatting with many of them. People are chatting about that down in Arcola, and down in Stoughton, and people are talking about that down in Cypress Hills, Mr. Speaker. And they're saying, how, Mr. Speaker, how does a government come on in to power and in two years take reserves of \$2.3 billion and exhaust them, Mr. Speaker, in two years? In two years, boom to bust, Mr. Speaker.

And the people of this province are a very practical bunch of people, Mr. Speaker, and they're a wise bunch of people. And they're realizing pretty quickly, Mr. Speaker, that what has gone on is that they've had a government that didn't know what they were doing, a government that's mismanaged their finances. They've realized that the budget that was put forward in March of 2009 was based on phony revenue projections.

And I know the minister, the member from Weyburn, knows this full well as well. And I'll bet if that member would have been at the table at that point in time, he might have offered advice otherwise, but I doubt his elbows would have been heavy enough to influence that budget.

So phony revenue projections, runaway spending — the people of Saskatchewan disdain, Mr. Speaker. We can read it down in *The Estevan Mercury*. We can read about it in the *Weyburn Review*. People of this province are concerned, Mr. Speaker.

They say you can't sustain, Mr. Speaker, because in many way, managing the treasury and managing the province is much like running your family or running a business, and you can't increase spending 32 per cent over two years on a path that's unsustainable. You can't book estimates on revenues that are fake, that are phony, and that are made up, Mr. Speaker. And that's exactly what this government has done.

They put forward growth projections that had no resemblance of what the private sector was saying, Mr. Speaker. These supposed captains of industry have been proven to be fiscal buffoons in short order, Mr. Speaker. It's embarrassing for the Saskatchewan people, embarrassing, Mr. Speaker, and damaging on institutions that are important to the people of this

province — health care and education.

The Deputy Speaker: — Why is the member on her feet? I recognize the member from Sutherland.

Ms. Schriemer: — The member from Rosemont used some terms — phony, made up, also buffoon. It is the long-standing history in the legislature that name-calling and accusations of being untruthful are unparliamentary, Mr. Speaker. And I request that he withdraw and apologize for his uncalled-for remarks.

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

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On the point of order, I simply want to let you know, as you listen to the point of order from the members opposite, that I listened very carefully to the member from Regina Rosemont's comments, comments that are particularly relevant to the motion in front of the House today.

The member, and I think I understand the rules of the Chamber fairly well, the member did not use any word that would be listed as unparliamentary. The member's comments were relevant and direct to the motion in front of us. And, Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite, rather than advise on a point of order, has simply entered the debate. And that, Mr. Speaker, would be out of order. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — On the point of order, I would caution the member not to direct, when he's talking, if he's directing words at ministers or individuals, not to do that. It can be directed at the government or policy, but not at particular individuals.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's nothing more concerning in this province at this point in time, that we see a government that can't manage its fiscal circumstance. And it's having a significant impact on the people of this province. My comments, although strong here before, are truthful, Mr. Speaker.

And when we look at the mismanagement of this government putting forward revenue estimates, Mr. Speaker, that were completely out of line with all of the advice — all of the analysts' suggestions, and what was going on in our world — was reckless, irresponsible, and damaging to the financial state of Saskatchewan.

When we damage the financial state of Saskatchewan, we damage the hopes, the opportunities for prosperity, and for well-being in this province, Mr. Speaker. And we see that as members opposite cut long-term care facility after long-term care facility across this province . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . One of the members opposite calls this a deferral, Mr. Speaker, but that's not true, Mr. Speaker. It's a cut because we don't know where that money is going to come next year, Mr. Speaker, because they've exhausted all of the resources that they have on hand. There's dollars that aren't earmarked. We have a government here, Mr. Speaker, who is hiding from transparency and accountability and driving us back to the dark ages of fiscal management.

Governments around the world, Mr. Speaker, at every level have urged and moved and progressed towards financial accountability and transparency. And for this government to retreat from those sort of commitments and the kind of progress that should be made is shameful, Mr. Speaker. For Saskatchewan people to be phoning with question after question after question with respect to the mismanagement of this budget, to the cuts of this government, and to not be provided the opportunity to get answers from this government is shameful.

This is a government that hides from the responsibility that they owe to Saskatchewan people. We no longer have faith in a single number, in a single document that comes forward from this government whether that be estimates at first quarter or mid-year or budgets . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And, Mr. Speaker, I hear opposite, well what would you do? What would you've cut? Well, Mr. Speaker, I can be certain on one thing. We would always, always set a budget out of balanced budget principles. And in a circumstance like we're in here this year with well over \$9 billion of revenues, when just two years ago we had 7.8 billion as our budget, we would have advanced very important, meaningful priorities for the people of this province. And we would have balanced the budget, Mr. Speaker.

And in doing so we would have kept the hope, the opportunity, and the prosperity of this province moving forward. We wouldn't have kicked out the feet of this economy. We wouldn't have dragged this economy into recession, and we would have understood what was going on in the world around us and how it affected the treasury here in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Different individuals are weighing in on what this government . . . That we hear, in the *Leader-Post* here: "Minister talking nonsense." Another comment here from the *Leader-Post*: "Province's economy has got Gantefoer confused." Another right here from *The Estevan Mercury* — I can take a look here — talks about the irresponsible behaviour has to be turned into responsible reactions, Mr. Speaker. Responsible reactions. Do we see that, Mr. Speaker? Not a chance.

We have a government who's hiding behind blacked out document after blacked out document. We have a government who has rejected the opportunity to answer to the people of this province and the opposition, the Official Opposition of this province, for us to fairly question the budget documents of this government — the documents, Mr. Speaker, that they've mismanaged and the purse of this province that they've mismanaged, Mr. Speaker. And as a result of that, Mr. Speaker, we don't know at this point in time the reality of what's going on.

Now we hear all sorts of things, Mr. Speaker, about potential damage going on. We hear that as a result of this mismanagement, we hear that inadequate funding will be provided to school boards next year, Mr. Speaker. If that's true, that's a huge concern because that means in classrooms and in schools across this province we're going to be short of being able to provide the meaningful programs that we need for our children, for the youth in this province who will be the future and part of our knowledge-based economy, Mr. Speaker. Underfunding education is a distinct reality that we're going

into.

We have IOU [I owe you] after IOU from the Minister of Finance and the Premier. They float all sorts of popular balloons in the air, Mr. Speaker — long-term care, all sorts of different promises — and they've been forced to shoot them out of the air, Mr. Speaker. And of no great consequence they believe, Mr. Speaker.

But I believe there is a great consequence that these members opposite that are mismanaging peoples' priorities, mismanaging the budget, they'll be paying for that, Mr. Speaker, in short order — in two years, Mr. Speaker, at the polls in 2011 because you can't treat Saskatchewan people like this.

Mr. Speaker, people in this province have a right to know that when they're committed to a specific program that enhances their community, they need to be able to count on that program, that institution being provided. We see a government here who's canning a children's hospital. We see a government here that's canning long-term care facilities. We see a government here who's canning their promises on property tax. We see a government here that's likely to be cutting funding to education, all a result of their own financial mismanagement, Mr. Speaker.

We have not been afforded, the people of Saskatchewan have not been afforded the opportunity to ask the rightful questions they have of this government that's hidden from the opportunity to be accountable.

[11:45]

We have a Premier that when the things heat up, and then he's got a true test, he leaves the province, leaves the country. Leaves the province and leaves the country, Mr. Speaker, at the taxpayers' expense, to leave his colleagues high and dry for the terrible business decisions of his own making, Mr. Speaker. We have a shameful circumstance that's developing in this province.

The opposition New Democrats are proud of our legacy of financial management, of our prudent history, and it looks like that's going to be a huge part of our future as well, Mr. Speaker. We're proud to bring that to the Assembly and proud to support the motion that's been . . .

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today to participate in this debate. After observing the buffoonery from the opposite side, Mr. Speaker, there is some questions as to the validity of their arguments, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what we're seeing from the other side is political spin, Mr. Speaker, nothing but political spin. In fact I'm surprised, Mr. Speaker, that the Suzuki Foundation hasn't put a CO₂ muzzle on them by now, Mr. Speaker.

One of the members opposite in their presentation commented on what's happening in Stoughton, which is in my constituency, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a very large amount of growth taking place within this province, Mr. Speaker, and a lot

of that growth is actually taking place within my constituency, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the growth in the oil patch has increased the provincial budget by almost \$400 million, Mr. Speaker — \$400 million increase, Mr. Speaker.

And yet the members opposite don't want to mention that, Mr. Speaker, because it doesn't fit within their frame, Mr. Speaker, because their frame for success means that they need Saskatchewan to fail. Their vision, their hope for the future, Mr. Speaker, is the failure of Saskatchewan, just as it was for the last 16 years, Mr. Speaker. They could not see themselves progressing unless Saskatchewan was failing, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan voted on October 22nd, 2007, to make . . . I think it was 22nd. November the 7th it was, November the 7th to make a determination about the NDP method of operating this province. They made the determination, Mr. Speaker. And the NDP Party now sits in opposition — 32 to 20 members, Mr. Speaker. The judgment was made on the NDP, Mr. Speaker.

And I've listened to the members opposite talk a lot about how they always had a balanced budget. No, Mr. Speaker, for most of their 16 years they had deficit budgets. They had deficit budgets, Mr. Speaker. Oh yes, they had balanced budgets in the GRF [General Revenue Fund], but every year the summary financial statements of that government showed a deficit, Mr. Speaker, and the debt increased.

Mr. Speaker, we've heard from the members opposite, especially the member from Regina Rosemont, that he predicted that potash sales were going to crash, that the potash price was going to nothing, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the prophet of potash, Mr. Speaker, still is in this House. You know, if he was such a great prophet, why didn't he invest and short potash sales? Why didn't he short the potash prices? You know, our latter day Nostradamus, Mr. Speaker, has to, has to be a prophet of doom and gloom, Mr. Speaker, for his party to possibly succeed, Mr. Speaker.

You know, he kind of reminds me a bit of Miss Cleo, the midnight TV psychic who gives you an answer, Mr. Speaker, that will fit either side of the spectrum. You know, their prophecy can be successful or it cannot be successful, but they've got both ends of it covered, Mr. Speaker. And that is what the prophet of potash is doing, Mr. Speaker.

But there is one prophecy though that the member from Regina Rosemont has made that I do support, Mr. Speaker, that I do support. And I would like to quote from the member from the *Estevan Mercury* of February 25th, 2009, and I quote, "I don't think there is any probability as far as a likelihood of winning government in 2011."

Mr. Speaker, that member was addressing the possibilities of the NDP in winning government. So, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, he claims his prophecy of lack of potash revenues was accurate. Well I'm hoping as well that this prophecy that the member made is also accurate. But, you know, I think it's a case very much like Miss Cleo. You've got to phone in and pay to get the answers, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the question has been asked about the NDP

opposite as to what they would do with the budget, Mr. Speaker, in the case of a shortfall. And certainly with potash prices being down, with sales being completely in the tank, Mr. Speaker, there is certainly a deficit.

Well if we look at the NDP's record on what they have done, Mr. Speaker, they cut rural hospitals. They closed 52 rural hospitals. They closed the Plains Hospital, Mr. Speaker. They cancelled agriculture programs. They didn't build a single long-term care facility in this province in 16 years, Mr. Speaker. And that's not a new record for them because under Allan Blakeney and the NDP in the '70s, they put a freeze on construction of long-term care facilities then as well. So they have a history, Mr. Speaker, there.

This government promised to be open and transparent, Mr. Speaker, that's why we have the numbers, Mr. Speaker. That's why we have the ability to be in this House and debate the mid-term speech, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the past there was no debate on mid-term supplementary estimates, Mr. Speaker, because the House didn't sit. It's only been the last few years that that's actually happened, Mr. Speaker. So this gives the opposition and the people of Saskatchewan the opportunity to actually see what's happening within the budget as the year progresses, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, you know I have a note here someplace, a quote from the papers that we have the lowest unemployment in Canada. And yes, Mr. Speaker, that number has gone up from last month. But, Mr. Speaker, you have to take into account that we also have a growing population that's significantly larger than it was during any of the years the members opposite were in government. So yes, Mr. Speaker, unemployment numbers have gone up from last month to this month, but we have a lot more people employed than ever before in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

You know the members opposite are railing about the loss of revenues from potash sales. And yet, Mr. Speaker, in the last two years we have put in almost double the amount of money into capital construction in Health, in the last two years, as that previous administration did in their last two full years. They put in \$140 million in capital construction in Health. This government has put in \$265 million. Mr. Speaker, that's actual construction taking place.

So, Mr. Speaker, while the members opposite may decry the failure to sell potash, the potash corporations operating in Saskatchewan don't have the same pessimistic view that the members opposite have. And fact is, Mr. Speaker, they're investing over \$5 billion. Over \$5 billion, Mr. Speaker, in new potash mines around Saskatchewan. And fact is some of the very largest mining companies, such as BHP Billiton, is looking to come to Saskatchewan to enhance their opportunities to be a partner in the potash corporations, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I listened to the comments of some of the members when they were speaking. And the member from Nutana was complaining about the lack of an additional eight days to speak on this. Mr. Speaker. These rules were put in place under the NDP when they thought they were going to

win. Now that they lost, all of a sudden these rules have to change to suit their need, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think that's a bit disingenuous of them.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, the potash corporations in Saskatchewan are expanding. Mr. Speaker, I'll put my faith in them, rather than a party that needs to see the failure of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, for them to have any hope of electoral success. I will be opposing this motion.

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

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased and honoured to join in the debate, in the seventy-five minute emergency debate on the billion dollar boondoggle created by that party opposite, Mr. Speaker.

And let us be absolutely clear, Mr. Speaker, that my opening statement is these guys couldn't manage a two-car parade in the 1980s. And they still can't manage a two-car parade come 2007, 2008, 2009, Mr. Speaker.

What the people of Saskatchewan are saying, what the people of Saskatchewan are saying is they trusted them. They give them the opportunity. And what did they do? They made a big mess of things, Mr. Speaker — \$1 billion in one budget year.

And the member before me spoke, Mr. Speaker, and he spoke about a wide variety of issues. And the member after me is going to speak as well from the opposite side. And guess what, Mr. Speaker, he and the member after me have both been fired from cabinet because, Mr. Speaker, they offered nothing to the people of Saskatchewan.

So as people watch and listen to some of their words, remember: the guy before me and the guy after me got fired from cabinet because they couldn't offer the people of Saskatchewan anything new, anything innovative. And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are going to come back and they're going to make these guys pay in 2011, Mr. Speaker. Because of their incompetence, because of their incompetence, they are going to be fired, Mr. Speaker.

And one of things that people have been telling me in the North, in the cities, in rural Saskatchewan, everywhere I go, everywhere I go they say these guys made a complete mess of this province in the 1980s — a complete mess. Fifteen and a half billion dollars in debt. They destroyed Saskatchewan's credibility in nine short years, Mr. Speaker, and now they're coming back to finish off Saskatchewan a full 16 years later after NDP rule, Mr. Speaker. And that's why I tell them it's important, it's very important right now, that we stop them in 2011. And that's our plan on this side, Mr. Speaker.

One billion dollars, \$1.1 billion dollars in deficit, Mr. Speaker — that is unforgivable. Unforgivable. And they were warned. They were told by how many different groups of people, don't do it. But no, Mr. Speaker, they refused to park their pompoms. And they wanted to be everything to everybody. And guess what, Mr. Speaker: as a result, they're nothing to everybody, Mr. Speaker, today.

And that's why, by great numbers, people that have supported these guys before and said, let's give them a chance, they are extremely disappointed. They are extremely disappointed. And some of their long-serving members who I've had discussions with, they come back to me and they say, I am going never to vote for these guys again. Never vote for these guys again. I supported them last time, and I'm not going to do it again. Why? Because they can't manage the finances of the people of Saskatchewan, and that's a clear message we're getting. And that's why in 2011, we are going to get them out of there because they're tired, they're uninspired, and they need to be fired, Mr. Speaker.

One billion dollars in debt. And really if you look at it, they come along in 2007. And all the NDP said, all the NDP said is, look, the people of Saskatchewan have given us a time out. And they said, you're going to be in the opposition for a while, and we'll accept that. That's the role we're given. But one of the things we said is, please don't screw this up. You have a booming economy. You've got \$2.3 billion in the bank. People of Saskatchewan are optimistic. Okay, if we got a time out. Don't screw it up.

And what did they do, Mr. Speaker? What did they do their first full budget year under their government? They put us \$1.1 billion in debt — \$1.1 billion dollars in the hole. And that is unforgivable, Mr. Speaker. Unforgivable.

And I look at people out there, and again, if you look at what they want to do, they want to continue on this path. And what's going to happen next year? And what's going to happen the year after?

[12:00]

They know they're in trouble financially. We know that they're in trouble financially. And, Mr. Speaker, that's why a change in leadership needs to happen and needs to happen in 2011 because the NDP are not prepared to clean up another mess left by that party in the 1980s, Mr. Speaker. We are not prepared to clean up another mess. And that's why we got to stop them now, Mr. Speaker. We got to stop them dead in their tracks because the people of Saskatchewan don't deserve that government anymore.

We give them a chance and what did they do? What did they do? They put us \$1.1 billion in debt — 1.1 billion. And, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot of questions on the cuts and all their deferred projects, as they referred to them. What's going to happen next year? They're going to need more money and more money and more money to complete what they say are their promises that they won't break.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we've seen this act before. And it was in the 1980s. We've seen this act before. And, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that people ought to know is that you gave them a chance. You gave them a chance and they betrayed that trust. They betrayed that trust. Why? Because they wanted to be everything to everybody. And when you're in government sometimes, as my colleague from Saskatoon says, sometimes you have to say no. Sometimes you have to say no.

Now the exciting opportunity, Mr. Speaker, that's coming up,

it's coming up. And I look at all the people across the way that have been fired as cabinet ministers, and I wonder why. I wonder how they're feeling now. And the reason why is because they're uninspiring, Mr. Speaker. They're tired. And as I said before, that whole group is uninspired and they're tired and they need to be fired in 2011. Because we can't afford another government as we've seen in the 1980s, Mr. Speaker. And that's why 2011, we need to stop them. We need to stop them.

But the exciting part of what we're trying to do, Mr. Speaker, is that come 2011, you're going to see a brand new vision for the people of Saskatchewan under our leader and the next premier of Saskatchewan and the NDP, Mr. Speaker.

We've got a plan that not only talks about protecting the working people, that talks about building our Crowns, rebuilding the credibility of our finances, that talks about the Aboriginal people, the northern people, that talks about all the different groups of people that need to be involved. You're going to see that vision in due time.

And you contrast that vision to their bungling of this financial management, their so-called financial management, and people of Saskatchewan will say one thing very clear: we give these guys an opportunity and all we've seen from them is they're tired, uninspired, and they need to be fired, Mr. Speaker. And I'll say it again and I'll keep saying wherever I go.

But lately, Mr. Speaker, we notice every time they have trouble, there's three things they do. The first thing they do is they wave their pompoms, wave their pompoms. And the people of Saskatchewan are saying, burn your pompoms and face reality. It's time for you guys to grow up. Or they'll drape themselves in the Saskatchewan Roughrider flag. Well, Mr. Speaker, leave the Roughriders alone. It's a distraction. Don't give them anymore bad luck. We want them to win this weekend, so stop wrapping yourselves up in the Saskatchewan Roughrider flag. We want the Roughriders to win. Don't put a pox on them, please.

And the last thing they do, Mr. Speaker, is every time they get in trouble, they hide behind the NDP. You notice when you get a tough question is they say, oh, what did you guys do. What would you guys do if you were in our situation? They have been so used to being in opposition, they don't even know how to act like a government, Mr. Speaker. And if you don't know what you're doing over there, if you don't know what you're doing, get off the way. We'll come there and we'll fix the problems for you. And we'll show you leadership, Mr. Speaker.

A billion dollar mess, their first full year as the government. Because last year in 2007-2008, there's a lot of NDP money and projects rolled out. But, Mr. Speaker, what we're seeing now, we're seeing not only these guys going in the hole, they're depleting our savings account.

And what they're also doing is they're also attacking our Crowns, and they're having a wall-to-wall sale of our Crowns, Mr. Speaker, a wall-to-wall sale of the Crowns. They're equity stripping so they can make the Crowns so unattractive that people have to end up saying, well we ought to sell them. Because what's happening is they're destroying the credibility

of our Crowns by stripping the money that they have and by refusing to recognize that problem.

So again I think there's no question in my mind that come 2011 and even before then, Mr. Speaker, we're going to fight these guys on the doorstep, Mr. Speaker. We're going to fight them in northern towns. We're going to fight them in committee meetings, in this Assembly. We're going to fight them in the hockey rink. We're going to fight them on the farmyard. We're going to fight them on the reserves. We're going to tell everybody and anybody out there exactly what they're doing.

And, Mr. Speaker, the truth will guide us, Mr. Speaker. The truth will guide us because the facts are there and everywhere you look from every agency, they say these guys have bungled it. From the media, from the corporations, from the private sector, from people that manage money, well, they say these guys have made a mess.

To the people of Saskatchewan, yes, you gave them the opportunity — fair enough — but these guys have destroyed that trust. They have betrayed your faith that they'll do things right. And the first thing they've done, is they put us a billion dollars in the hole. So my message is burn your pompoms. Stop draping yourselves in Roughrider flags. Stop blaming the NDP for every problem that you have. Grow up. Fix your own mess.

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

Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will make this very brief. May I ask the Assembly for leave to introduce guests?

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Lloydminster has asked leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will make my comments brief because I understand that this is a timed period we have here. I would just like to mention a couple people who have been referenced in the gallery fairly extensively in the last couple of weeks.

First off, Mr. David Krughoff and his wife. They are here to watch the motion of the private members' debate later on the wild ponies. I would also like to mention Mr. Tom Hougham and his wife Marilyn, who we just heard about in a member's statement today. Tom is receiving the Cattleman of the Year award tomorrow at Canadian Western Agribition.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would be very remiss if I didn't recognize my beautiful wife and two little girls. It's nice to always have them in the Assembly. We have many other members, gentlemen and ladies that have joined us. But back to the debate, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cypress Hills.

Openness and Accountability (continued)

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter the debate today. I can assure the House and those who are watching that there won't be nearly as much bluster in my presentation as the previous one, but then I'm not nearly as angry as he is. He never had a better job than when he sat over here as a cabinet minister, and now he's been demoted to the opposition benches. And he's frustrated as can be, Mr. Speaker.

And I can hear that speech over and over and over again. He never says anything different. It's the same thing. You know, the people of Saskatchewan are pretty tired with that type of rhetoric. They've moved on to a new and different style of politics. They want leadership and vision in this province, and they're looking to the Saskatchewan Party to give it. And, Mr. Speaker, that's why I'm pleased to enter this debate today.

I looked at the motion, Mr. Speaker. You know, it's really an interesting few words that have been assembled for this motion. But it's purely political. It's rife with misinformation and assumption. And I'm hesitant to use this word, but I think I will because the Leader of the Opposition has sort of entered it into the lexicon of discussion in the province of Saskatchewan: the motion is really disingenuous.

And I'll tell you why, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to inform the House why I believe the motion is disingenuous. The assumption in the motion is that by saying that this government is not open and accountable, when they were government, they were.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to put four separate instances on the record today in which you will understand, the people of the province will understand, that when that group were the government of the day, they were no more open and accountable — in fact they were much less open and accountable — than this government. In fact they were so unaccountable to the people of the province that, at one point, a minister had to get up and apologize for misleading the House.

But let me give you a couple of examples, Mr. Speaker. The first example was the hundreds of millions of dollars that that group of men and women invested in dot-coms and ideas, in small companies operating all around North America, most of which couldn't have survived on their own. But they made the decision to invest in those companies and wouldn't tell anybody about it until it showed up in a public record at some point later. It was never discussed publicly with the people.

If the people of Saskatchewan had known that they were willing to put 300-plus million dollars at risk for these kind of crazy adventures and investments, those captains of industry lost every nickel of that money. And, Mr. Speaker, that wasn't reported. That wasn't really what I would call open and accountable government. That's the first item.

The second item was the money spent on SPUDCO

[Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company]. I think the SPUDCO fiasco was the idea of the man who is now the leader of the opposition. And you know, Mr. Speaker, when that particular fiasco came to light, there was a \$36 million loss. But that, Mr. Speaker, that \$36 million wasn't the biggest problem with the SPUDCO fiasco. The biggest problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was that the government of the day tried to hide that fact and managed to do it for six years. And it wasn't until it was finally ferreted out, the facts were ferreted out, that the minister ultimately had to stand up and apologize to the House for misleading the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the evidence is pretty clear from those first two examples that open and accountable government was not their style.

Mr. Speaker, I've got a third item I want to talk about. That was the \$36 million that those men and women invested in Navigata. It sounded like a good idea at the time. It was a BC [British Columbia]-based company. It was going to bring all sorts of new technology to Internet and wireless service. Mr. Speaker, that particular boondoggle turned into a \$90 million loss.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the \$90 million loss, as bad as it was, wasn't the biggest part of the problem. The biggest part of the problem was they took that Navigata purchase and embedded it into SaskTel so that the real losses as they accumulated couldn't be identified. They tried to hide their ongoing losses in that investment. And when we became the government, the total had amounted to \$90 million. And we finally dumped it because it was a bottomless pit and would never make the province of Saskatchewan or the taxpayers any money. They hid that fact and that shows their lack of interest in openness and accountability.

And fourthly, the fourth point I want to make, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the interesting scenario we had running up to the 2003 election, where there was a very vigorous election campaign. It was won ultimately by the NDP. But there was not a word during that campaign about the province's finances and the tough situation the province was facing.

And you know what happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker? The campaign was barely over, the NDP were back in power by the skin of their teeth. And what did we get? We got a tax increase, a sales tax increase from the minister of Finance at that time who, when he was asked about that, acknowledged that talking about the province's finances and the need for a tax increase really wasn't a good thing to discuss during an election campaign.

Open and accountable, who are they trying to kid, Mr. Speaker? Those four episodes in themselves are enough to make this particular motion very suspect. This is why this motion is so disingenuous. It comes from a group of men and women who were prepared to hide the facts from the people of Saskatchewan when it suited them politically. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the difference in that group of men and women's method of operation and this government today is openness and transparency.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to just go into a little bit of the

situation. I've heard the members opposite talk about boom and bust. You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they're the only people who think that this province is in a bust situation. The billion-dollar deficit that I keep hearing about is a shortage of cash. It's directly related to the potash industry, and as a result, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a cash flow problem. But you know, if these men and women understood the realities of the economy, they would also understand that a shortage of cash today is likely to be an abundance of cash tomorrow.

The potash industry is one of our most successful investment industries in this province. It produces tremendous revenue for the province. And if the industry thought there was any likelihood that this scenario would continue, I'm sure they wouldn't have announced 7, 8, 9, \$10 billion of additional monies to go into expanded production in this province. I am sure that new greenfield mines wouldn't be under consideration by the world's largest mining company. I'm sure that China wouldn't be in Saskatchewan looking for property they could develop in the potash industry.

A slowdown in sales and cash flow today is going to transfer into one of the largest and most successful resource industries in this province. And I hope that when the turnaround comes, they're as ready to stand to their feet and give this government credit for the success of the industry.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've heard the complaints over there about the loss of revenue. I heard them take credit for foreordained knowledge on this issue. I guess, you know, when I was looking at the budget process, the value that we attach to potash pricing was considerably more cautious than had happened in the previous year. But what I haven't heard any of them say yet, I haven't seen anybody acknowledge the fact that, with their foresight and their insight, they were able to predict totally and completely the lack of sales in the international market. Nobody predicted that. The pricing issue might be a different story.

[12:15]

The Deputy Speaker: — The 65-minute debate has ended. Now it is 10 minutes of question period. I recognize the member from Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Now, Mr. Speaker, we've put in written questions to understand how much money . . . or what has been cut in the \$355.9 million in expenses. We didn't get any answers. In fact they converted the questions, so they don't have to answer until after the next budget.

So I guess, to the member from Cannington: can he tell us what was cut? Give us all of the information in terms of being open and accountable. The \$355.9 million in expenses, give us a listing of every cut in every government department because that way it will then be open and accountable.

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the cuts that the member opposite talked about in most cases are not cuts but rather are deferrals, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the sense of the long-term care facilities that the members

opposite didn't build for 16 years and froze the construction of in the 1960s, Mr. Speaker . . . these projects are in the stage of development, Mr. Speaker, where they are getting their plans together. They're getting their architectural drawings done, Mr. Speaker. They're not ready to actually start construction with nails and hammers, Mr. Speaker. So when those are, Mr. Speaker, ready to do that kind of construction, then it will come forward.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, though, had the opportunity to debate the supplementary estimates in committee, Mr. Speaker. They've been given that opportunity, Mr. Speaker. They want an extra eight hours. We've offered them 54 more hours, Mr. Speaker, and every time they call the clock and shut the committees down.

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

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our Saskatchewan Party government believes that we are elected to work for the people of this province. Given the track record of the members opposite, I would submit they do not believe that. Our track record reflects that commitment. We have improved highways, made historic tax cuts. We have reduced the provincial debt by 40 per cent. We've invested heavily in programming and services for society's most vulnerable.

To the member from Athabasca, I would like to ask this simple, multiple choice question. Which of these important investments would he cut — (a) tax relief, (b) debt paydown, (c) programming for the vulnerable, or (d) all of the above?

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

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question. And I'll point out that we're not going to do your work for you. If you can't figure that out on your own, then perhaps, like I said before, you ought to step aside and we'll show you how to govern.

The New Democratic Party will in due course unveil their plan for Saskatchewan. And one of the things that . . . Last thing that we'll do is seek any advice from that party opposite. So when you ask us for advice as to where we would cut, sir, I would say to you, do your own job.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Question here for the member from Biggar. With no excuse for a billion dollar deficit and a billion dollar debt growth in the Crown corporations and a billion dollar stripping of equity within those Crown corporations but for their own mismanagement, how does the member from Biggar justify to farmers, to families, to business within his constituency the huge, massive increases to come on our utility bills, the back door tax, Mr. Speaker, that his residents, his families, and his businesses are going to have to pay for his own incompetence?

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government, to the constituents of Biggar, we have reduced the debt by 40 per cent. That was \$2.6 billion. We have taken 80,000 people off the tax roll. To Teresa in Perdue who works at the Perdue Co-op, we have reduced her tax and then she thanked me personally for reducing her taxes. She's so grateful. What did we do, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We paid the livestock producers \$40 a head so that they could survive the tough times last year through the livestock industry, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We will continue to do what's right for the constituents of Biggar. We will continue to be prudent and responsible with the finances of Saskatchewan. And you only need to look at all the other things that are happening great in the province.

We have the lowest unemployment rate in Canada. Saskatoon has the lowest unemployment rate of any city in Canada. Regina is second. Housing starts are up in Saskatoon. Our population's growing faster than any time in the last 50 years. We have two new cities in the province since 100 years ago. Saskatchewan's doing very . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Time's member has elapsed. I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan know our government is working hard in order that Saskatchewan people can keep more of their hard-earned money. This government demonstrated this commitment by delivering the largest income tax cuts in the province's history. We took 80,000 low-income earners off the tax roll altogether.

Mr. Speaker, this government has made a commitment to review and change education property tax — something the members opposite said they would do, but they never did. Since 1944 they've talked about it, but they never delivered on it. Our government made the commitment and made the delivery.

To the member from Saskatoon Nutana: why is the NDP MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] attacking the history tax reliefs of this province that is a benefit to the people of this province?

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

Ms. Atkinson: — I thank the member for his question. Between 1986 and 1991, I served in this legislature as a member of the opposition. And the Conservative Grant Devine government racked up \$15.5 billion in debt. We had the highest debt per capita of any province in the country. And, Mr. Speaker, when we tried to start dealing with this fiscal disaster, we had to go see the federal Tories in Ottawa to get them to give us a little bit of money to bankroll this province because it was financially bankrupt.

So if the member is wondering why we're so interested in the \$1 billion deficit, I'll tell you why. For 16 years we worked hard and long for the citizens to get this financial house in order, and we're not going to let you mess it up again.

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we've got is a \$1 billion deficit six months into this fiscal year. Six months, \$1 billion deficit. We've had \$355 million ripped out of the budget, much of that money was pegged for education and long-term care facilities, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party brought out press release after press release after press release announcing the spending seven months ago.

My question to the member for Biggar is, will they devote one fraction of the time to debate, to discuss, to apologize to the people that have had this \$355 million ripped out of the budget?

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our Premier made it very clear that the opposition wants more time; they will be given more time. We offered to the opposition that they can sit every day while we're sitting, until midnight or even beyond midnight if they like.

But the opposition don't want to sit late. We offered it in committee, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We actually had to make the opposition stay later than what the time was. They wanted to adjourn the other night at 9 o'clock in the evening where it was scheduled normally for 10:30. We had to force them to stay till 10:30 so that they can ask questions to the ministers on the government side concerning the estimates.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't know. The NDP are just being irresponsible. They don't want to actually debate the issues at all. They just want to grandstand and pretend that they're doing something.

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

Ms. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Like a broken record, the members opposite have been singing the same song lately over and over again with the following chorus: where's the money gone, and then doom and gloom. Notwithstanding their woefully inadequate songwriting skills, it is the question which members on this side of the House are more than happy to answer.

Among the many prudent investments we have made on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, there are several directly benefits to my constituency. For example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the \$34 million Highway No. 1 and Lewvan Drive interchange project. Now this important project will prevent fatal collisions. And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member for Regina Rosemont, can I assume he does not support this important investment which will ensure the safety of people of Regina?

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to take that question from that member and to speak about the gross mismanagement of this government. The member talks about songs that people are singing, and I think that I heard the

member from Saskatoon Northwest sing one day, I can see clearly; the rain has gone. I think more appropriately as the Finance critic, I can see clearly, the rainy day . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — We now move on to priority motion.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

BILL No. 606

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. McMillan that **Bill No. 606 — *The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I was saying when I last spoke to this . . . I won't repeat the things I said in *Hansard*, but I left the debate saying that I would consult, which was something that the Bill had had very little, if any, done — and having found out, as I've done that, that the concerns I raised in *Hansard* were valid.

First Nations and the First Nations bands that are around this Bronson Forest do not feel — and they have said it to me that they do not feel — that they were adequately consulted. None of them saw the Bill. And I understand, as I said in *Hansard* — I won't repeat it — when the Bill was presented, that we in the opposition support the safety and the protection of the ponies.

What has been done, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the member from Lloydminster has — as I said before, two weeks ago, that he is naïve — he has actually totally ignored the process of the House with the process of a Bill and as it pertains to consultation. And I think we've seen that many, many times with this government. Consultation means so little.

And when I have asked people, phoned people and asked them, what is their response to this, they have eagerly shared their response and have asked me to send the Bill, which I have done. I have sent the Bill out far and wide and have received responses in the short time that I've been able to do this. I think that the fact I said in *Hansard* last time that this would have been better done as a Bill through a minister's office, which certainly could have been done since I actually sent a letter to the Minister of the Environment, who forwarded it to the Minister of Agriculture. Could have been done better, but despite the fact that it has been done so poorly, there still is a very high level of support for protecting the ponies.

So I would want to see this go to committee. And I have proposed amendments which I've shared with the member from Lloydminster. I've also shared it widely with the people I've consulted with, and have got feedback on those as well. And so I think that, given the short time we've had to consult and given

the feedback I have, we can still actually move this Bill forward with some significant changes that I think will strengthen the Bill, certainly address some of the concerns that are out there.

And I would certainly like to say, I wish the member would have had advice from his colleagues who know better the process of this House. It's an insult to the opposition to expect us to do nothing on a Bill that's presented to this House. We have an obligation to the people that it will affect to actually talk to them. And that's what I did and that I did on behalf of the opposition.

And now we are at this point that we can actually bring the Bill forward, move it to committee, and propose some amendments that reflect the concerns of the people I spoke to. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member from Lloydminster that Bill No. 606, *The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

[12:30]

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Mr. McMillan: — I designate that this Bill No. 606, *The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act* be committed to the Committee of the Whole and request leave of the said Bill to be considered in the Committee of the Whole immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Lloydminster has asked with leave that this Bill be sent to Committee of the Whole, and that it be committed today on Bill No. 606, *The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act*. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. I now leave the Chair for Committee of the Whole. Why is the member on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce guests.

The Deputy Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to introduce to you and through you to the Chamber, to the committee, a number of special guests seated in the Speaker's gallery. These are people who are helping to organize or are participating in the 2010 Olympic Torch Run across Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Olympic torch relay has already visited La Ronge and will be stopping for celebrations in eight more Saskatchewan communities on its way west to Vancouver.

Mr. Speaker, we have representatives from the committees of some of our nine community torch relay celebration locations. They are Randy Goulden from Yorkton, city councillor Mike O'Donnell from Regina, Jasmine Jackman from Moose Jaw, Nola Smith from Swift Current, Michelle Dezell from Saskatoon, Laura Allan from North Battleford, Katlin Pegg from Lloydminster, and, Mr. Speaker, Tammy Fiske from La Ronge who, while I'm on my feet, I would like to say that the community of La Ronge did an incredible job a couple of weeks ago in organizing their celebrations.

Mr. Speaker, it is also my pleasure to introduce some of Saskatchewan's Olympic torchbearer cauldron lighters. These individuals have the honour of running the last 300 metres with the torch and then using it to ignite the cauldron in their home community. Mr. Speaker, the lit cauldron symbolizes that community's inclusion and participation in Canada's games.

Mr. Speaker, these individuals are Barry Sharpe from Yorkton. Barry is a leader in the business community and organizes events that brings people together throughout the Yorkton Business Improvement District. Callie Morris from Regina, who's been involved in wrestling, winning medals at the provincial level. She's also played softball at the national Aboriginal and Indigenous Games. Diane Therrien from Moose Jaw who's run a number of marathons and she's well prepared to carry the Olympic flame.

Kathryn Durant from Swift Current. At the 2007 Canada Games, Kathryn won silver in Special Olympics figure skating. In 2007 she was recognized as the Special Olympic Female Athlete of the Year. Fiona Smith-Bell from North Battleford. As a member of Canada's National Women's Hockey Team from '94 to 2002, she's received a total of seven international gold medals. And, Mr. Speaker, Merv Mann from Lloydminster, who has played hockey three years at the University of Saskatchewan Huskies and also played in Sweden and Norway.

And, Mr. Speaker, we also have three very special guests who we are honoured to have today, who hardly need any introduction: Clayton Gerein, seated on the floor with us; Marcia Gudereit, an Olympic gold medallist in curling, Mr. Speaker; and Mr. Tony Cote, who is with us today.

And I also do want to mention, Mr. Speaker, that we're joined by Joan McCusker who has done such a tremendous job for the province of Saskatchewan in organizing the torch relays and the organizing for the communities, Mr. Speaker. And I would ask all the members that are carrying the torch to stand and give a

wave to their Legislative Chamber, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — I'd like to thank the minister for the introduction and, on behalf of the Chair, I would also welcome the guests in the gallery today. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — With leave to introduce guests.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member.

Ms. Chartier: — On behalf of the official opposition, it gives me great pleasure to follow the minister's comments and welcome all the special guests from the torch relay communities and all the cauldron lighters who represent the best in sport in Saskatchewan. I have to say welcome . . . I'm picking out Michelle Dezell who I actually know from my own badminton days a very, very long time ago.

So with that, I'd like to just say welcome on behalf of the official opposition to your legislature.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY

Bill No. 606 — *The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act*

The Deputy Chair: — The item of business before the committee is Bill No. 606, *The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act*. Clause 1, short title. Is clause 1 agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clause 2 agreed to.]

Clause 3

The Deputy Chair: — Clause 3. Is clause 3 agreed? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Deputy Chair, I do have an amendment for clause 3, to:

Strike out clause 3 of the printed Bill and substitute the following:

Prohibition

3(1) No person shall in any way wilfully molest, interfere with, hurt, capture or kill any of the wild ponies of the Bronson Forest.

(2) No person shall transport any wild pony from the Bronson Forest for the purpose of wilfully harming, hunting or killing it.

The Deputy Chair: — Moved by the member from Eastview:

Strike out clause 3 of the printed Bill and substitute the following:

Prohibition

3(1) No person shall in any way wilfully molest, interfere with, hurt, capture or kill any of the wild ponies of the Bronson forest.

(2) No person shall transport any wild pony from the Bronson Forest for the purpose of wilfully harming, hunting or killing it.

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

Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the interest of the opposition in this Bill and their attempts to improve it. I do have a couple of concerns about this amendment that I would like to share briefly as time is short.

In looking at this amendment, the Ministry of Justice, who looked at it fairly thoroughly, said subsection (1) is identical to the proposed subsection. There is no need for this subsection. It adds nothing to subsection (1). If a person was to transport a pony, they would have had to have had interfered with or logically captured it which are covered in subsection (1).

Normally, Mr. Speaker, a redundancy like this would not be a large concern to me, but I would like to make the members aware that in talking to local ranchers in the area where they haul horse trailers up and down the highway there and in and out of the forest to manage their cattle on a regular basis, that having the authorities looking inside horse trailers and if a family comes up there with ponies in their horse trailers, this . . . Being that it does not accomplish anything and that it is redundant, I think it weakens the Bill to have this provision and would not be that well received from the local residents who utilize that forest for grazing cattle and riding their horses.

Thank you for your time, Mr. Chair.

The Deputy Chair: — Are we ready for the question on the amendment?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Chair: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the amendment?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Deputy Chair: — I think the nos have it.

We're returning to clause 3. Clause 3. Is it agreed?

[Clause 3 agreed to.]

[Clauses 4 and 5 agreed to.]

Clause 6

The Deputy Chair: — I recognize the member from Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — I have a new clause to follow clause 5 of the printed Bill, under Criminal Code penalty. New 6:

The wild ponies of the Bronson Forest are deemed to be “cattle” for the purposes of section 444 of the *Criminal Code* (Canada).

The Deputy Chair: — Ladies and gentlemen of the committee, we have a new clause following clause 5 of the printed Bill. Criminal Code penalty, I guess it’d be clause 6 to replace the existing clause 6:

The wild ponies of the Bronson Forest are deemed to be “cattle” for the purposes of section 444 of the *Criminal Code* (Canada).

I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. This clause I also had the Justice officials look at. Their comments were, this section would have no effect at all. The provincial government cannot amend the Criminal Code. So deeming the ponies as cattle would not affect the interpretation of 444, the Criminal Code of Canada.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, with doing a little more research on the Criminal Code itself, printing off section 444 of the Criminal Code, I will read it here:

Section 444 makes it an indictable offence to wilfully kill, injure or endanger cattle.

The definition for cattle under the Criminal Code of Canada include any cow, horse, mule, pig, ass, or sheep. So, Mr. Speaker, this clause that is put forward, on one hand it would not have any effect, a provincial legislation on the Criminal Code of Canada. But two, it is already included in the Criminal Code of Canada. So I would not be supporting that, Mr. Chair.

[12:45]

The Deputy Chair: — Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the amendment?

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Deputy Chair: — I recognize the member from Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — I just want to clarify that my information about the certain section of the Criminal Code does not include wild ponies in the definition of cattle. It only includes horses. So this was to be clear that this would be different and would be added strength for conservation officers or wardens to enforce this.

The Deputy Chair: — Is the committee ready for the question on the amendment? Those in favour of the proposed amendment say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair: — Those opposed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Deputy Chair: — The nos have it.

[The division bells rang from 12:46 until 12:50.]

The Deputy Chair: — Those in favour of the amendment, please rise.

[Yeas — 20]

Lingenfelter	McCall	Belanger
Harper	Trew	Higgins
Junor	Atkinson	Nilson
Forbes	Vermette	Broten
Furber	Morin	Yates
Iwanchuk	Taylor	Quennell
Wotherspoon	Chartier	

The Deputy Chair: — Those opposed to the amendment please rise.

[Nays — 29]

Bjornerud	Draude	Krawetz
Eagles	McMorris	D’Autremont
Hickie	Cheveldayoff	Harpauer
Gantfoer	Kirsch	Norris
Morgan	Hutchinson	Huyghebaert
Brkich	Hart	Reiter
Schriemer	Allchurch	Weekes
Duncan	Michelson	LeClerc
Ottobreit	Ross	Chisholm
Harrison	McMillan	

The Deputy Chair: — Order. Order.

Principal Clerk: — Mr. Chair, those in favour of the amendment, the motion, is 20; those opposed, 29.

The Deputy Chair: — I declare the amendment lost.

Returning to clause 6, coming into force. I recognize the member from Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Deputy Chair, I’d like to add a new clause before 6 of the printed Bill. And it would read that:

Nothing in this Act shall be construed or interpreted so as to abrogate or derogate directly or indirectly any treaty or Aboriginal rights recognized and affirmed by subsection 35(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

The Deputy Chair: — The amendment proposed by the member from Eastview reads as follows:

That nothing in this Act shall be construed or interpreted so as to abrogate or derogate directly or indirectly any treaty or Aboriginal rights recognized and affirmed by subsection 35(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

Is the committee ready for the question? I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. The amendments were provided to me from the opposition a couple days ago so that I could peruse them. This one however is substantially

different than the one that was provided to me, but my comments that I had prepared are still relevant.

In all law, the Charter applies to all laws irregardless of whether it is expressly stated in any one law. Section 35 of the *Constitution Act . . . 14(1)*, *The Interpretation Act, 1995* already applies to protect Aboriginal rights, if any, that might be affected in this Act.

Mr. Chair, that being said, this is very similar in theory to the trespass Act which had effect across the whole province. In that Act, there was no explicit reference to the Constitution and the First Nations. However their rights are expressly interpreted through all legislation. That makes this particular provision redundant, Mr. Speaker, and I won't be supporting it.

[13:00]

The Deputy Chair: — I recognize the member from Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair of Committees. This change in wording came directly to me from the lawyer acting on behalf of the Island Lake First Nation and that is his wording that he has submitted. I have had conversations with the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] as well as the various First Nations bands affected by this. They are not reassured by what they have heard and the consultation that has not occurred.

They would really want this in this legislation and it is their wording, their lawyer's wording, that I am presenting today.

The Deputy Chair: — Order. Is the committee ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Chair: — Is it the will of the committee to adopt the amendment?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Deputy Chair: — Those in favour say no. Sorry. Short circuit. Short circuit. I was contemplating which voices were louder when I made that comment.

Those in favour of the amendment say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Deputy Chair: — And those opposed to the amendment say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Deputy Chair: — I think the nos have it.

[The division bells rang from 13:02 until 13:07.]

The Deputy Chair: — The committee will come to order. Will those in favour of the motion please rise?

[Interjections]

The Deputy Chair: — Will the committee come to order.

[Yeas — 49]

Bjornerud	Draude	Krawetz
Eagles	McMorris	D'Autremont
Hickie	Cheveldayoff	Harpauer
Gantfoer	Kirsch	Norris
Morgan	Hutchinson	Huyghebaert
Brkich	Hart	Reiter
Schriemer	Allchurch	Weekes
Duncan	Michelson	LeClerc
Ottenbreit	Ross	Chisholm
Harrison	McMillan	Lingenfelter
McCall	Belanger	Harper
Trew	Higgins	Junor
Atkinson	Nilson	Forbes
Vermette	Broten	Furber
Morin	Yates	Iwanchuk
Taylor	Quennell	Wotherspoon
Chartier		

[Nays — nil]

The Deputy Chair: — The committee will come to order. Order, order. The committee will, the committee will come to order. The committee will come to order.

Principal Clerk: — Mr. Chair, those in favour of the motion, 49; those opposed, 0.

The Deputy Chair: — The amendment is carried. We're moving to clause 6, coming into force. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair: — Carried.

[Clause 6 agreed to.]

The Deputy Chair: — The number will be adjusted accordingly by the Law Clerk. The preamble, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair: — Carried.

[Preamble agreed to.]

The Deputy Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: *The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Mr. McMillan: — I move that the committee report the Bill with amendment.

The Deputy Chair: — It has been moved that the committee report Bill No. 606 with amendment. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair: — Carried. I recognize the House Leader of the . . .

Hon. Mr. Gantefoer: — I move that we rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

The Deputy Chair: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader, the member from Melfort, that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair: — Carried.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of Committees.

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 606, *The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act* with amendment and ask for leave to sit again.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered the first and second time?

Mr. McMillan: — With leave, now.

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS OF AMENDMENTS

Bill No. 606 – The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act

The Speaker: — The amendments are read a first and second time. I recognize the member from Lloydminster. Pardon me, I got it now. Sorry about that. The member has asked for leave that the amendments be read the first and second time. Is the Assembly agreed that the amendments be read the first and second time?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Principal Clerk: — First and second reading of the amendments.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Speaker, by leave I move that this Bill now be read a third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — The member from Lloydminster has requested leave that Bill No. 606, *The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act* be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 606 — The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act

Mr. McMillan: — I move that this Bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from Lloydminster that Bill No. 606, *The Protection of the Wild Ponies of the Bronson Forest Act* be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Third reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the committee sit again?

Some Hon. Members: — Next sitting.

The Speaker: — At the next sitting. It being past the hour of adjournment, this Assembly stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

[The Assembly adjourned at 13:18.]

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President of the Executive Council

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Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Crop Insurance Corporation

Hon. Bill BOYD
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation
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