

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour and a pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Legislative Assembly, three visitors from Namibia: Hendrik Thirion, Eva Neels, and Vatanavi Mazeingo. Mr. Speaker, they're sitting in your gallery.

The Government of Saskatchewan is once again participating in the Canada-Namibia exchange program sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA, and the Institute of Public Administration of Canada, IPAC. The program objective is to provide for exchanges among practising public servants. The Namibian candidates will be provided with an opportunity to observe the Saskatchewan public service with an emphasis on the functioning of a deputy minister's office. Saskatchewan was selected as the host province, based on similarities including our agricultural base, the province's two major urban centres, and the Saskatchewan oil and gas industry.

The candidates currently hold senior positions within the Namibian government in the departments of Mines and Energy, Trade and Industry, and Women's Affairs. This visit follows previous exchanges with Namibia in 1993, which have resulted in Namibia adopting the Saskatchewan model for executive government decision-making processes.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan is pleased to welcome the Namibian delegation and honoured to have been chosen to participate in this program. I believe that we can provide our Namibian guests with a unique perspective and insight into the workings of government. I ask all members to welcome our guests to Saskatchewan.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

National Access Awareness Week

Ms. Crofford: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today marks the beginning of National Access Awareness Week. It's organized by a partnership of charitable foundations, various levels of government, and thousands of volunteers. The week challenges us to think differently about the things we take for granted, namely, access to education, employment, transportation, housing, communications, and recreation.

In Saskatchewan the week is coordinated by the disabilities directorate of Saskatchewan Labour and it's undertaking two major activities. The first of these is the face-to-face program. Managers and job seekers

with disabilities will meet in an informal setting to discuss job requirements and job accommodation. An important focus is on obtaining job interviews. In the general population, one in ten people who apply for a job receive an interview; but in the disabled community, the ratio is one in one hundred. Face-to-face will work to make that ratio more equitable.

The second major activity is the launching of the Government Access Award, an annual award that will first be presented in 1995. This award will recognize areas within government that distinguish themselves by providing either extraordinary access to employees with disabilities or programs and services for the disabled.

I think it's important at this time to recognize and thank all of the people who work not only this week but every day to ensure that being disabled does not mean being unemployed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mining Week

Mr. Thompson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to bring to the attention of all members of this Assembly that the week of May 29 to June 4 has been declared Mining Week -- a time set aside to recognize the contribution of the mining industry to the provincial economy.

Mining could be called Saskatchewan's hidden industry by virtue of its location in remote areas of the province or underground. It generally attracts little public attention; yet mining and mineral exploration is second only to agriculture in terms of value to the provincial economy. Saskatchewan's deposits of uranium, coal, potash, and gold are world-class.

An interesting fact is that the Cigar Lake uranium deposit has 385 million pounds of high-grade uranium. This deposit alone could generate billions of dollars.

The mining industry contributes more than \$1 billion to the provincial economy in the form of wages, benefit, and purchases of goods and services. It directly employs over five and half thousand people and creates or helps support the employment of an estimated 15,000 more. Many of these jobs are in northern Saskatchewan where there are few other employment opportunities.

The purpose of the Mining Week is to bring to the industry the recognition it deserves as a major contributor to our economic well-being. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Tourism Awareness Week

Mrs. Teichrob: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would

like to take this time to inform the members of the House that this week is Tourism Awareness Week. This special week focuses on the important role tourism plays in Saskatchewan's economy and on the variety of vacation opportunities Saskatchewan has to offer. The theme will be, Saskatchewan Vacations: Take One!

The Tourism Industry Association of Saskatchewan and Tourism Saskatoon have kicked off the week's events with an industry luncheon in Saskatoon.

Special tourism employee banquets in Saskatoon and Regina have been said to honour more than 100 graduates of a certificate program offered by the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council. These employees have worked very hard and they are proof that this province is a leader in setting standards for the kind of professional service that keeps tourists coming back. Tourism here is built on a clean, attractive, natural environment, rich history, and vital culture.

Travellers spend some \$890 million a year in our province. Tourism also supports more than 38,000 full- and part-time jobs. This year tourist inquiries are being received at a rapid pace and seem destined to break last year's record of 200,000 inquiries.

The future looks bright for Saskatchewan tourism with events such as the Grey Cup in our province's 90th anniversary next year.

Tourism Awareness Week is a time to reflect on the role tourism plays in our province and to look forward, Mr. Speaker, to what we can achieve in the future. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Government Pensioners

Mr. Swenson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again we are very pleased to bring a series of questions to the Legislative Assembly from citizens around the province who have questions that they wish to have put on the record.

So today, Mr. Speaker, my question comes from a group of retired employees, government employees from the city of Regina. And their question is: Mr. Premier, will retired government employees be getting an increase in pension any time in the near future? Recent increases in the cost of living have left many superannuates in a tough position and our pension dollars are buying less.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- Thank you very much. In response to the correspondent, we would indicate that we have every sympathy for them, but these are matters which will be disposed of in the upcoming budget. And I can only say to the correspondent who wrote to you, that we'll be giving their needs every consideration, as we will the needs of others to whom the Department of Finance relates.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Rural Emergency Health Care

Mr. Boyd: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier as well. It comes from Mr. Orest Pobran of Hafford, Saskatchewan: recently several people in the Hafford area have prematurely died from heart attacks, either at home or on the way to the hospital. In one case, the ambulance driver lost his way and did not arrive till it was too late.

These situations suggest that our area has very poor emergency services. Our closest ambulance is 30 minutes away. Our local hospital is not equipped to handle such emergencies and the Royal University Hospital is at least 60 minutes away.

Mr. Premier, I'd like to know how quickly you can provide our area with a 911 service, a local ambulance, an emergency response team, and an air ambulance service.

Hon. Ms. Simard: -- Well with respect to the Hafford area, the ambulance situation in Hafford is as it was in the past. However, the province of Saskatchewan, the Government of Saskatchewan, has been looking at improving the response system throughout Saskatchewan.

We have established a first responder system and many communities have taken up the offer to put their first responder system in place. I don't have the information in front of me right now as to whether or not Hafford has done this. That may be something they will want to look at.

The province is also looking at the possibility of a number something like a 911, or something for a district area.

And I would suggest to this particular individual that he contact the district health board in that area and talk to them about how emergency services can be improved in that area, because the district board is looking at those issues right now and if there is a need for improvement, those improvements will be put in place. So my suggestion is he do that.

From my point of view, I will talk to the Department of Health about this individual's concerns and they will get in touch with the district board to see whether or not there is something that can be done to improve the situation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Problem Gambling

Mr. Neudorf: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Premier comes from Clarence Wiebe from Rush Lake, and he asks: I heard that the government has set up an 800-number to help people who have a gambling problem. Why are my tax dollars being spent to encourage gambling and then

more tax dollars spent to solve the gambling problems? Did we close our hospitals for this?

Hon. Mr. Calvert: -- Mr. Speaker, recognizing that gambling is prevalent in our society and has been for some time, this is the first Government of Saskatchewan to undertake a very significant program to try and, number one, prevent addictions to gaming and to offer treatment opportunities for those who may find themselves in that circumstance.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to underline that in establishment of casino gambling in this province, there will be no public dollars involved.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

TeleBonds

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning my question to the Premier comes from June Coakwell from Elrose.

Why is there no direct interest payment on TeleBonds instead of them just being deducted from telephone bills? I have no telephone registered in my name, but I would still like to buy TeleBonds.

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to respond to the question that was sent to the members and presented here. It is the approach by the government that investments in Saskatchewan and the recovery in Saskatchewan and the management of our debt is done through the Saskatchewan savings bonds, one central mechanism by which people can invest within the province.

The Saskatchewan savings bond has been a very successful program which has given people an opportunity to invest their dollars so that the interest we pay is paid to people in Saskatchewan. SaskTel bonds are a different vehicle, a different instrument, and therefore we just simply provide an opportunity for the customers of SaskTel to get the benefit of them by having it deducted from their bill when their bill comes due.

Casino Agreement

Mr. Neudorf: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister of gambling. Mr. Minister, recently your government announced a deal that was struck by your government and the Saskatchewan Federation of Indians. And because this deal was made behind closed doors, there's precious little information that we have been able to gather up. We have no idea how or why you came up with the agreement to divvy up this gambling booty, and in fact we may never indeed know.

But, Mr. Minister, there's one particular aspect of that deal that I want to explore. I notice that you gave the FSIN (Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations) one and three-quarters of a million dollars up front to -- and I quote -- "help cover the costs associated with developing the partnership."

Mr. Minister, what exactly is developing the partnership, and why is that going to cost the taxpayer one and three-quarters of a million dollars?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member from Rosthern for asking that question, because I've been attempting over the past months to articulate how these agreements will work and how our casino policy will impact on the province of Saskatchewan.

First of all, let me say to the member from Rosthern that the money that will go to the FSIN will be paid from casino profits. And I want to say, with respect to the details of the agreement, they are articulated in detail in the new Act that is placed before this legislature that we will be debating.

Why would we divide the money in this fashion? Quite simply, Mr. Speaker, to provide economic development and social development for first nations people. Why would we have a Metis component? To provide economic development and social development for Metis people. Why would we have a charity component? Simply because we understand there may be some good work that could be done with gambling dollars, as been done in the past.

With respect to the \$1.75 million, I would say to the member from Rosthern, the FSIN was wanting to be involved in the development and had asked to be involved in the expanded casinos, both in Regina and Saskatoon. During the process of negotiations we agreed to pay the \$1.75 million up front. The vast majority of that money will go to the reserve level for social and economic development, which is what we intend the revenue share for the first nations' profits to go to -- they have incurred some meeting costs and some administrative costs as we've been involved in these negotiations. And if the member has any further questions, I would be more than pleased to articulate in detail answers to his concerns.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Minister, there are a great deal of other organizations within the province that have also had these development costs and I fail to see and recognize any amounts of money being turned over to them, Mr. Minister.

But how did you arrive at \$1.75 million? That's a pretty specific number, and so therefore there must be a fairly specific accounting procedure, I would suggest to you. Now I would like you to table a complete breakdown of where that money is going and how it will be spent. It's taxpayers' money -- every penny of it. I'm sure that you have done your due diligence by now, and so therefore that breakdown is available and will you table that for us this afternoon, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, let me say to the member opposite, if he had taken the time to read

the legislation that was put before this House, he would know exactly how the accounting procedures work. The money will be accounted for through the Consolidated Fund which is a process that he's well aware of, having been a member of this legislature for a number of years.

I want to say with respect to the accounting that will go the charity and the Metis, it goes through the Consolidated Fund in a similar fashion to what the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations revenue-sharing portion goes for. In terms of the breakdown of the expenditures, when the money has been spent, quite clearly we will be asking for an accounting, and it will be provided and it will be accountable to the legislature.

In terms of, Mr. Speaker, the member's inability to understand the partnership. The agreement that we have reached is one for social and economic development for aboriginal people. This is an agreement that can provide peace and avoid the kind of a situation where the Quebec government faces with Oka, that's in the paper on a daily basis.

Now I say to the member from Rosthern that you can oppose this Bill and you can oppose social and economic development for Indian and Metis people; that's your prerogative. But I say, Mr. Speaker, we have put together an arrangement that works in the best interest of all Saskatchewan people, and I will defend this Bill in the legislature. I'm anxious to know where he stands.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: -- Well, Mr. Minister, Mr. Speaker, let me tell you one thing. You're going to have ample opportunity to defend that Bill in this legislature. You will have ample opportunity for that, Mr. Minister, because quite frankly I don't know what you're trying to hide. You're hiding something because you will not give me the answer.

You've taken \$1.75 million, but you will not tell the legislature, you will not tell the people of this province, the taxpayers of this province, what you're going to be spending it on. You're giving us just a run-around here, Mr. Minister; that's all that's happening.

But since you won't give me the what, then let's continue on with the question of the why. I'm wondering if you can tell me why the taxpayers are paying \$1.75 million for the FSIN to form a partnership with this government -- a partnership that's going to see them, see them getting a net 25 per cent return on or from the province. They're automatically going to be getting 25 per cent return from the province and that amounts to some \$20 million, Mr. Minister.

And now to form that partnership you're saying they are also going to be receiving \$1.75 million to help defray some of the costs, as you mentioned before. So what about the other organizations within the

province that are also exploring those same kind of costs in their exploration of this partnership deal.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, I want to again thank the member for the question. It's quite clear that he hasn't listened to my answer, and I indicated that the money -- part of it -- would be for administrative, but the bulk of it would be going for social and economic development for first nations people.

Now I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that he will have ample opportunity to question in great detail where these dollars go, how they will be funnelled through to the band level, and I look forward to those questions.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I think this is a partnership unique anywhere in North America. It's a partnership that's based on cooperation. It's a partnership that's based on a new way of dealing with first nations people. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, it gives them hope, but it also gives them the opportunity to deal with the provincial government not in the spirit of paternalism that was evidenced by the Conservative and Liberal governments over the last hundred years in this province -- this is based on looking at the future, looking at new ways of dealing with first nations people.

And I say to the member, he'll have all the opportunity in the world to question in detail during the discussion of this legislation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Neudorf: -- Mr. Speaker, I want you to note how that member has avoided answering the question -- and not skilfully at that, I might add.

Mr. Minister, you forget that there are other people that wanted to get in on your high-stakes game of poker here. These were the charities, the exhibition associations, the Metis association, and they had to sit on the sidelines waiting for you to throw them some scraps, Mr. Minister -- that's what it amounts to. They also incurred costs and they are also part of the partnership, I would remind you.

If you're giving 1.75 millions of dollars to the FSIN to help them get started so that they can get 25 per cent of the stake, what about the exhibition associations? What about the charities, Mr. Minister? Where are the specific breakdowns? Table the breakdown of where that \$1.75 million is going to.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, let me say to the member from Rosthern, we are going to be -- in all the detail that he would care to be involved in -- we will be discussing the details of the Act, which he quite clearly hasn't read because in the Act he would understand how the revenue-sharing flow works. He would understand that there is in fact a Metis component; that there is in fact an exhibition component; and if he had been listening, he would also understand that there are some variables with respect to the 25 per cent that's set aside -- one being whether or not the exhibition associations will be

involved in the management. And if they won't be involved in the management, we've given the commitment that their revenues would be maintained whole.

Now the member from Rosthern may disagree with that, and he may disagree with forming partnerships with first nations, Metis. That may be all part and parcel of an agreement that he doesn't believe in, but I say to the member, if I have the choice between striking a deal with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, and thereby attempting to avoid a confrontation, I'm going to tell you, Mr. Member, I will choose the partnership every time, as does Chief Crowe and all of the members of the FSIN, who sat in this gallery in support of the legislation on Friday. And I ask you to go out and explain to them where you come from. Is it the 25 per cent that bothers you . . .

The Speaker: -- Next question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the minister of Gaming as well as some later for the Premier.

Mr. Minister, I see it as my responsibility to ask questions that will ensure the viability of any projects that your government undertakes, and the failures of the Conservative administration demonstrated that it is imperative to ask the tough questions up front.

Mr. Minister, when the casino partnership and your new Crown was announced last week there was a statement that three members of the board of directors will represent the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, which is understandable since they are 25 per cent partners in your deal.

But we did hear no endorsement at all of the partnership from the exhibition boards, from the Metis Nation, and the charitable component to which you have referred so often. They have not signed a deal with you, Mr. Minister, and they in fact have not even been asked to meet with you, as of today anyway.

Who exactly are the other partners? What share will they get? And will they also have three members appointed to the board of directors of this new Crown?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, let me answer the member from Greystone in this fashion. If she had read the Bill she will understand that there is a 25 per cent component for the exhibition associations, charity, and the Metis. Now she may not agree with that percentage figure and that's fine. That's her prerogative.

But I'll tell you what hasn't been heard in this legislature, Madam Member, there has been no endorsement from you with respect to the 25 per cent of the revenues that we have earmarked for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. And I want to say to you that during the course of this debate we are going to demand that you stand in this legislature and

tell Chief Crowe and the chiefs of this province where you stand. Do you support them or do you oppose them? And I'm going to ask you to stand and indicate whether you support a Metis and a charity component and whether you support the exhibition component.

I say to you, Madam Member, the time has come when you're flushed out of the woodwork. You're going to have to make a decision and you better make it soon because, Madam Member, we're going to be counting on you to let the people of this province know exactly where you stand. We've indicated through the Bill where we stand. Where do you stand?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister still lives in fantasy land. I was the only member to speak for an hour on this topic during private members' day and not one of the 53 members of this Premier's government had enough courage to put on record what they thought of this.

Mr. Premier -- and by the way, the jurisdictional issue has not even been settled yet so you, sir, have a lot to stand and talk about as well -- Mr. Premier, overnight your government has proposed a Crown corporation that has the power over almost \$100 million per year, and the Act empowers the board to build buildings and operate almost a limitless range of businesses.

The minister, and Mr. Premier, restaurants, hotels, parking lots, ad agencies, food suppliers, equipment manufacturers, cleaning companies, and accounting firms are all, in quotes, "related to operating a casino." The board also has the power to, and I quote: "promote and market its casinos and related businesses and activities."

Mr. Premier, this Act has the potential to build a very powerful empire . . .

The Speaker: -- Order. Will the member please put her question.

Ms. Haverstock: -- Particularly if the minister in charge had direct connections with Economic Development.

My question, Mr. Premier, is, whether or not you feel it necessary to replace the current Gaming minister, will you assure us today that the casino Crown will be strictly regulatory and will stay under liquor, gaming and horse-racing, and not be moved to Economic Development?

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, on some things I can agree with the member from Greystone, many I can't. One I do agree is that she did spend an hour in this legislature speaking to the casino issue. And I want to tell her what she said. She said some of my friends support gambling and some of my friends oppose gambling and I support my friends. That's what she said, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- And I want to hear, Mr. Speaker, if she's going to repeat her position when we're in clause-by-clause debate on this legislation that establishes a Crown corporation to give accountability to the revenue that will come from casinos, accountability that will come before the members of this legislature. I want to know if she'll support that. Or I want to know, Mr. Speaker, if she'll support some of her friends who oppose the Act and some of her friends who support the Act and stand directly in the middle.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Premier, the trepidation that people are feeling in Saskatchewan happens to be because of the friends of the Minister of Economic Development, the minister of Gaming, the friends of yourself, who in fact are directly and indirectly involved in gaming.

The creation of a new Crown corporation to administer casino gaming leaves a lot of people with a feeling of pause. And I respect the commitment, any commitment, to tight control and regulation, but I have grave concerns about seven government appointees, at least three of whom are partners in the business, having control over the disbursement of almost \$100 million annually.

Mr. Premier, I know that we will be getting into further examination, detailed examination later today, but I want to have your answer as the Premier of Saskatchewan that this Crown will not be open in any way, shape, or form to manipulation of its income or diversion of its resources to projects that would give the board or the minister responsible any untoward powers.

Mr. Premier, can I have your word today that this will not become an economic development corporation that builds hotels or restaurants or its own little government empire? Will it stay under the liquor, gaming, and horse-racing as a regulatory body -- yes or no? And that's it.

Hon. Mr. Lautermilch: -- Mr. Speaker, let me give a short answer to the member. The answer is that the corporation will not be under the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority; that is a licensing and a regulatory body. We are establishing the development of two casinos which is separate and arm's length from the regulation. And you can't be the regulator and the operator at the same time. And the member might not understand, but members of this government do.

With respect to the establishment of the Crown, Madam Member, there are four members appointed by the Government of Saskatchewan, three members who will be appointed by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. It will have the same accountability as SaskPower, SaskTel, or any other Crown corporation that has been established in this province. And if the member doesn't like the way we

deal with accountability, what she might want to do is have a look at what other people are saying about the accountability of this government.

Mr. Speaker, I want to quote from *The Bottom Line* by Deana Driver: the government adopted most of the recommendations of the Gass Commission and now produces one of the best financial statements in the country.

And I want to say, that's the kind of accountability you can expect from this new corporation.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Labour Legislation

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Labour. Mr. Minister, I guess you feel that you haven't done enough to insult and alienate the Saskatchewan business people over the past few months, so you had to haul in a real pro, your old friend Bob White, to give you a hand. I guess it's not enough that you think that all business people are greedy and ruthless extremists; we now have to listen to an Ontario union leader tell us that Saskatchewan business people have no commitment to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Minister, do you share Bob White's views about Saskatchewan business people? Why don't you tell Bob White to go back home to Ontario where he belongs, and go back yourself to work on this legislation and change it so that it will work in a way that will make the Saskatchewan business people as satisfied with what you're doing as Bob White is?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- I am quite prepared to respond to the member from Maple Creek on the actions and the comments of this government. The head of the CLC (Canadian Labour Congress) is a little beyond the jurisdiction of the Minister of Labour for Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Johnson: -- With leave, to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Johnson: -- Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and the members of the Assembly, 25 grade 8 students from the Turtleford School that are in your gallery. They're accompanied today by Colleen Roper, Jacquie Gerwing and Cheryl Macnar, teachers and chaperon.

They've made the trip down from Turtleford to look at the things that are taking place in the Assembly and to do some other touring in the Regina area. And I would ask the members of the Assembly to welcome them here this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Upshall: -- With leave, to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

Mr. Upshall: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the member for Quill Lakes, I'm pleased to introduce a group of 22 grade 10 students from Muenster, seated in your gallery. Mr. Speaker, they're accompanied by their teacher, Paul Reist, and chaperons Mary Thoen and Glen and Susan Taphorn.

I hope that they have an enjoyable visit to Regina, seeing the sights, and a very safe trip home. I'd like to ask all members to join with me in welcoming them here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Canada Remembers Program

Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to make a statement to the Assembly about the Canada Remembers program and the 50th anniversary of D-Day. This afternoon each member of the Assembly has a Canada Remembers pin on his or her desk, provided compliments of the Regina office of the Department of Veterans' Affairs of Canada. Members have received the program for the D-Day anniversary events in Regina from June 4 to 6. There will also be events in Saskatoon and Moose Jaw and other communities across the province.

Mr. Speaker, this first item in the 1994 throne speech was the 50th anniversary of the D-Day landings and the end of the Second World War. Members will be glad to know that we were able to follow up on this by establishing a Saskatchewan-Canada Remembers Committee chaired by my department.

This committee includes representatives of the Department of Veteran Affairs' Canada, veterans' organizations, the Canadian Forces, and the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police). The committee is coordinating 50th anniversary events in the province during 1994 and 1995. The committee decided to focus on Regina for the D-Day anniversary. I think members will agree that this is appropriate, given that the only formed Saskatchewan unit to take part in the Normandy landings was the Regina Rifle Regiment, now the Royal Regina Rifles.

I would like to acknowledge the cooperation and the support of Mayor Archer and the city of Regina as well as Veterans' Affairs Canada in making our D-Day events possible. The soldiers of the Regina Rifles showed courage and daring and tenacity on that pivotal day of June 6, 1944 and many of them gave their lives. Others were wounded. All of them suffered the discomforts, indeed the terrors, of combat. But

they carried on through France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany until the liberation of Europe was achieved, and I salute them and I know all members of this House join me in that salute.

I encourage members to take part in the D-Day anniversary events. I know that all members will join with me in expressing our thanks and admiration to the veterans who helped preserve the liberties that we enjoy today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think that most of us have been observing, over the last few days, a number of programs that have focused on the courage of so many Canadians in the Second World War and D-Day.

It is with great regret that I can't participate with everyone on Saturday during the D-Day memorial service at St Paul's Cathedral in Regina, as well as the Canada Remembers service at City Hall.

But I do want people to know that, as the Leader of the Third Party, our caucus has been looking at the incredible contribution that was made, and especially now that many of our people have gone overseas to relive and remember some of what they did during their time in the Second World War. It's brought to the fore the role that such a small and unpopulated country did for world peace.

So we would like to join with the minister today in acknowledging what a tremendous role we played, and to applaud all of those people who took risks on our behalf for our freedom.

Mr. Swenson: -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the hon. minister and the Leader of the Liberal Party in congratulating those in our province that have put forward the effort to be part of this celebration which obviously is one that we have a great deal of pride in.

Many of us in this province had relatives who served in that particular conflict and have heard the stories that went along with it. An uncle of mine was with the 8th recce's. They landed two days later, behind where the Regina Rifles had gone in, and I've heard many times personally about the courage of those men who went ashore that early morning on June 6.

And I congratulate the Deputy Premier for heading up the committee and garnering all Saskatchewan people together in an effort that we all appreciate. And our hearts go out to the families and members of people who actually served that day, and hope that this remembrance by our province stands them very proud as they remember those days long ago.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- I will be tabling the response

to question no. 62 with the assistance of a page.

The Speaker: -- The answer to question no. 62 has been tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 70

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Lautermilch that Bill No. 70 -- An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (No. 6) be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of Whole at the next sitting.

Bill No. 72

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Lautermilch that Bill No. 72 -- An Act to Establish the Saskatchewan Gaming Investment Corporation and to enact certain Consequential Amendments arising from the enactment of this Act be now read a second time.

Mr. Neudorf: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to make a few comments pertaining to this particular Bill and they will be somewhat restricted simply, Mr. Speaker, because we have the opportunity to, in great depth and detail, ascertain as to why this legislation is necessary when we get to the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, I may say that I am astonished that the member for Prince Albert Northcote and his colleagues would think for one moment that it is an acceptable procedure of this legislature to bring forward a Bill of this magnitude on day 76 of any sitting, Mr. Speaker -- day 76. Many people thought we were going to be out of here last week. Now of course, many people recognize that we'll be lucky to get out of here next month, Mr. Speaker.

Simply because a Bill like this thrown in at the last second demonstrates a number of things. Firstly, it demonstrates to me that this government, in spite of its apparent success in some legislation, is totally abominable and dismal in its record of coming forward with meaning legislation that has been properly thought out.

We see examples of this on a daily basis, Mr. Speaker, where we have to have succeeding legislation that is changing previous legislation. A good case in point is the court case with the judges where the members opposite had to do a lot of scrambling around trying to make last-moment changes. But in the case in point in Bill 72, what it demonstrates clearly is a lack of direction and a lack of understanding of members opposite of how to set up this new gaming industry of

Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker

And it is rather abhorrent to most people to recognize that it this government with this type of mismanagement that is now purporting to lead this province in a totally different direction than we have ever had before. We are finding, Mr. Speaker, with this legislation that we have a government that is adamant in its view that the only way it can achieve success in its goal, its primary goal, the goal upon which all of its action are premised on, and that is the fighting of the deficit and the reduction of the debt, Mr. Speaker . . . As I have accused the Minister of Justice on times repeatedly that as far as they are concerned the end justifies the means.

It doesn't matter what means we need; it doesn't matter what means we have to use to accomplish the goal. And if the goal is wrestling the monster of the debt, as they would like to refer to it, to the ground and we have to use a method that is almost foreign to this province, Mr. Speaker, to accomplish that goal, then so be it; it is justified.

And we have the member from Moose Jaw, who had all the ministers of Moose Jaw around in a parade down Main Street demonstrating against the evils of gaming, is now one of the strongest proponents of the gaming procedure, Mr. Speaker. And I think that is reprehensible.

(1415)

And I don't think that he is very comfortable with this new direction that his government is charting, and I don't think that very many of those members are very comfortable with this new direction. And I certainly know that a lot of people are expressing this type of concern to me that what is happening in our society -- what is happening in our society when, granted, we have financial problems and fiscal restraints, that we have to turn to the remedy, Mr. Speaker, to a system that is probably and very likely going to create more problems than it will serve and settle. And I know the Minister of Social Services must be extremely, extremely concerned about the impact that this kind of strategy is going to have on the citizenry of Saskatchewan.

The minister of Gaming from Prince Albert, during his second reading speech made much ado -- and he spent a whole page of **Hansard**, I notice -- trying to legitimize the course of action, that what this government was doing now and proposing now is just a next logical step in a sequence that had already been begun back in 1971 by the Liberal government. And that this was just a natural progression, that there was nothing particularly unique about it.

But I want to say to that minister, and I want to say to the Minister of Health -- who runs the 800 line that we have been talking about, the Associate Minister of Health -- that you folks I do not think have a full comprehension of the negative impact of what you are proposing to do.

Now you say it's going to raise money for the coffers of the people of Saskatchewan. Look at what it's doing right now already before you've even begun this process. Look what has been initiated. We have a squabble -- we have a squabble being established by the people of this province as to who's going to get what share of the booty.

And you trumpet loudly and hail with a great deal of fanfare the agreement made with the FSIN and Chief Roland Crowe. Now I've spoken to Roland Crowe since this agreement was announced and I give the Indians of this province full credit for making a deal at 25 per cent of the booty. I don't blame them, Mr. Speaker, I don't blame them at all. Because they are desperate; they have waited for two and a half years now on this government to live up to their promise that there would be job creation, that indeed the quality of life of all of the people of Saskatchewan would be enhanced by your job creation strategy. And you have failed dismally, folks, you have failed dismally.

What do we have now, Mr. Speaker? We have a minimum of 6,000 jobs fewer than you had when you were elected. That's your job creation record. Is it any wonder that the Indians are saying, it's time, enough is enough.

And the Premier says, well we had to do this because we wanted to avoid an Oka in Saskatchewan. In a second reading speech, the minister of gambling said if we didn't do this, we'd have an Oka on our hands in Saskatchewan. Now I don't know about Chief Roland Crowe and the rest of the Indians in this province, but I would not take kindly to that kind of a discussion that we're going to go out there and we're going to start fighting and we're going to start shooting and we're going to start killing people like in Oka.

I don't think the Indians in Saskatchewan are like that. I know Chief Roland Crowe, I worked with him for two and a half years. He's a gentleman of honour. And for you to use that as an excuse I think is abominable and I think you should be ashamed of that.

I'm not saying that they're happy; I'm not saying that some of the folks might not get a little bit disturbed and do some things that they shouldn't do. But that's only in response to the fact that you have not lived up to their expectations of the promises that you made which encouraged them to vote for you and to elect you. And now when there's no recourse, when you have not been able to improve that quality of life for these people, you fall back upon something that seems to you to be the answer of all of your problems.

And I say to you again, members opposite, that your legacy as this government and the Premier's legacy of this government is not going to be like that of a fellow whose bones you like to dig up from time to time, namely Tommy Douglas. When we think of Tommy Douglas, we think of great accomplishments -- and rightfully so. Not that we agree with everything that he did, but that's almost taken for granted.

But your legacy is that you were the government that tried to answer the problems, the ails of this province, by institutionalizing gambling. Oh, not gambling like at the exhibition park here in Regina where you go to the casino once a year when you go to the exhibition, or the bingos, or what the charities do. But you have institutionalized that to the point where the minister is going around . . . the minister of gambling is going around saying, we haven't got enough of it, we have to encourage people to come out and gamble more. He said that, Mr. Speaker, in a second reading speech on Bill 33 where the Horse Racing Commission now is being taken out of the Department of Agriculture and then put into the gaming and alcohol commission. Then he said we've got to get more people out to the tracks so that they bet more. Of course you want them to bet more because you get 50 per cent of the kitty -- 50 per cent is automatically going to be turned over to the Consolidated Fund.

But what does this 50 per cent . . . what is it comprised of, Mr. Speaker? That 50 per cent is taken out of the individual people's pockets and is it necessarily revenue that is expendable? Is it expendable revenue that the people don't need, that they can afford to lose? Of course not.

What it's going to do is encourage people to go for that pot that is at the end of the rainbow. We have a lot of poor people in Saskatchewan. We have a lot of people in Saskatchewan that are making it, but just barely. And so what better chance is there for them to escape from this world of boredom and mediocrity than to go and buy a lottery ticket, which is what they're doing now and that's always that possibility of winning that pot at the end of the rainbow; or simply going into gambling casinos that are . . . the proliferation of which is what I'm concerned because it makes it so darn easy for anyone to go and gamble at any time. And so there are going to be concomitant problems that are associated with this new venture.

And every time I get up and ask you, well what has your study shown, what is the impact of this gambling venture going to be on the average citizen out there, how are they going to be affected, how many people are going to become addicts, addicted to gambling, there's no answer -- there's no answer.

We know for example that the police in the city of Windsor said to their city council and to their government: listen, we suspect that there is going to be a wholesale increase in crime, from drug trafficking to prostitution to whatever you would want to consider and to name; so therefore, we need more resources in terms of men, in terms of equipment. And they were promptly given what they felt would be necessary.

In Saskatchewan, have we arrived at that state? No, Mr. Speaker, we have not. In fact, in Saskatchewan the minister said: oh by golly, maybe we should have a look at that.

And that's the problem. I come right back to the specific problem of Bill 72. Listen, folks, you came up

with this Bill on day 76 when the legislature should have been done, finished, because you don't know what you're doing. You just realized now all of a sudden that oh, by golly, we're going to have to be accountable for this \$80 million a year. And the lawyers are telling you now, dream up something or form another Crown corporation so that you can do this legally.

And you're flying by the seats of your pants. And that's not good enough to give any degree of comfort and any degree of confidence to the people of Saskatchewan as to how you are handling this situation. Because if you've done that with this aspect of the gambling innovation, you probably have done it with many others. And case in point is your 800 line. Great fanfare announced. We've got this 800 line; if you've got any trouble with gambling, please phone in. We phoned in; it didn't work. Ten minutes after the announcement was made.

And so what I'm going to do now is just simply say: here we have a White Paper that, as far as I'm concerned -- in this Bill 72 -- it's a good starting point. Now what we should do is lessen our haste, acknowledge the fact that maybe this is premature, and let's spend the summer months, and perhaps the fall months, Mr. Speaker, going out and ascertaining first of all whether indeed and in fact this is the direction that the people of this province want to have their government heading them.

Do we want full-scale casino gambling in Saskatchewan? Do we want that? That's never been proven. That's never even been suggested. I think it's a given by many people. Take, for example, the scramble that's out there right now to get a piece of the action. And I don't blame those folks out there. I don't blame them at all. But fundamentally there has never been the question asked of the citizenry of this province: do you want us to head down the road of gambling, so where gambling will become a major source of revenue for this government? They've never been asked that.

If they would be asked that I am sure they would say, hold on now, let's have a second look at this. Let's give it some second thought. Because what are the implications? You can't answer that. You cannot answer what the implications are. But I do know, as looking over some of you members, I see those shining dollar signs. That's your motivation. That's your motivation.

And I would just say, let's pause, let's give this some thought, let's take this Act out and bring it to the people of Saskatchewan so they can look at it, so that they can have some input into it. And let's not just talk to the players in this game. Let's not just talk to the groups that have a vested interest as to how this turns out. Let's take a look and ask the biggest vested group in this province, which is the taxpayer and the citizenry of this province, what they believe. And then if you can come up in here with any kind of show of support, then you will see that you have an opposition here that will be willing to play ball and work at it the

way it's supposed to be worked at.

But under the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I say to members opposite, you do not have a mandate for this. There is no mandate for you to go out and fundamentally change the course and the tenor of this province by putting all of your bets on the gaming industry.

Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks of admonition and with those pleas to have some second thoughts before we pursue blindly on this course, I take my seat. Thank you.

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I wish to rise and speak on this Bill as well this afternoon. I want to express first of all, my disbelief that we are actually being asked to examine, to speak to and, no doubt, pass a piece of legislation to create a new Crown corporation with literally hours to go in a session. A piece of legislation that seems to have come out of nowhere and has come to great surprise to substantially many people throughout Saskatchewan, including I'm sure, the NDP (New Democratic Party) caucus.

The minister has indicated that the Criminal Code of Canada obliges the government to establish a corporation that has the legislative authority to involve itself in gaming. I really question whether this legislation creates legislative authority or whether it creates a new empire for the NDP government.

I have made it very clear that I am uncomfortable and our Liberal caucus is uncomfortable with the government's approach to expanding gaming and the way it's gone about this from the outset. There is overwhelming evidence that this has been very piecemeal at best.

And I am simply not giving my opinion, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes it takes people a while to catch up on what the government is doing. We have seen evidence of that with the labour Bills. Once people realize the potential dangers inherent in the course of action that the government is taking, they begin to question things and they end up calling their local MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly). They call me. They call the opposition caucus because they have genuine concerns. And it is our responsibility as representatives of the people to raise their concerns in this House and hopefully the government will feel responsible enough and accountable enough to them that they would provide real answers.

And we all recognize that the government has become very, very good at one thing, and that is stringing people along and reassuring them that their concerns are being addressed somehow. It's a sort of "don't worry, be happy" school of advice. Well, Mr. Speaker, people are worried, and they are not happy about the way that this particular deal in particular is proceeding.

(1430)

Now I do want to be on record for giving credit to the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. The leadership of the federation has known from the outset what they have wanted. They have known what they've wanted to achieve through negotiations and, with credit to them, they have gotten exactly what they did set out to achieve. That is something that they set about to achieve for their people, and they are to be given credit for representing their people -- something which I think should give pause to this particular administration when people remain unconvinced that they are representing them well.

For the sake of those in FSIN and for the future of the province and all of its people, I hope that they have gotten . . . and what they have gotten will prove to be beneficial to them in the ways that they expect.

To this date however, Mr. Speaker, there are no accurate projections of jobs. There is no answer to the jurisdictional issue of whether or not there'll be on-reserve gaming. There are no questions and answers specifically to the true projections, no actual answers to the numbers of visits that will be necessary to make these casinos sustainable. It's an astonishing way to go about attempting to participate in something that will have a reflection on the well-being, the financial well-being of the province.

But, Mr. Speaker, and to the Premier as well, hope is not a strategy; it is simply hope. And one cannot build a future or a province or even a casino on wishful thinking, which is regretfully what there appears to be happening here.

As I said, the FSIN seems to be very satisfied with their end of the deal. And not only have they received a promise to share in one-quarter of the profits, they have received the \$1.75 million advance toward the cost of establishing the partnership, as was laid out in question period today by the official opposition.

Now one cannot hold Chief Crowe or any of his negotiators or criticize them for pursuing this or accepting it. I am not here to challenge the FSIN; I am here to challenge the Government of Saskatchewan and to hold them accountable for any of their actions on a wide range of issues including this, as well as their future plans that will have an impact on the people of Saskatchewan. That is my job and I take it very seriously.

I have enormous concern and considerable suspicion in my mind about the process in the way the government has gone about the gambling issue overall. I find it very curious that the minister would engage in months and months of negotiation with the exhibition boards in Regina and Saskatoon, with the exhibition boards around the province of Saskatchewan, with both Indian and Metis people, and would talk about these people as if they were partners all along, but would then proceed to make the announcement of the agreement with only one portion of all of the people with whom they have consulted, having no representation of the other individuals who have been involved in this process.

What kind of a partnership is it where 25 per cent interest is left hanging in limbo while the other partners are able to establish their relationships, their partnerships, and ultimately establish a Crown corporation? What is the urgency of the situation is the question I pose yet again, Mr. Speaker, the urgency of the situation that dictates that all of this must be done at the 11th hour to the exclusion of all of the different players in the partnership?

Or is it to say that the government considers itself to be an important partner, that it considers itself to be the most important partner, and then because of the very excellent leadership of the FSIN, they too were able to focus and bring about their partnership.

But they've given less consideration as a government and no consideration as far as respect to the current stakeholders in the gaming industry -- the exhibition boards and the Metis Nation and the charitable organizations who have been promised to be treated fairly and equitably but at this point have not been engaged in any serious conversations since this announcement has taken place.

What message would it have sent to the government for the government to negotiate the deal with the exhibition boards and the charities, appoint three of their representatives to the new Crown board of directors, and not include the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations? What message would that have sent?

And I think that the leadership of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations would agree that this would have been totally unacceptable to them and it should have been totally unacceptable to them if it had transpired that way. So why should it be any less unacceptable to the other potential partners who appear to have been left twisting in the wind?

Those are just some of the questions that we expect the minister to have answers for before he gets any leeway to proceed with this Act.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Act itself. I am certain that the manner in which this Act was presented to Saskatchewan people through its legislature is unprecedented. Just a few days before the anticipated end of a session we find out, through a news conference, no less, that we will be asked to pass an Act to create a new Crown corporation, a baby brother for our family of Crown corporations. Just a few days before the Assembly plans to adjourn, we receive a photocopied Act that appears, on closer examination, to have been prepared in the greatest of haste. It would appear that this indeed was a last-minute political decision, to avoid the fallout that could have arisen from creating this corporation through an order in council.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the government may feel that it is following proper process. But regardless of their motivation to avoid political fallout, there is no good reason to be rushing into this kind of legislation in

advance of all of the considerations of potential partners who have been able to and willing to participate in working out the partnership.

In a media scrum on May 26, 1994 in this very Legislative Building, the minister in charge indicated that the Liquor and Gaming Authority would be the regulatory arm of the corporation, but the casino corporation would be more the developmental side of it.

The minister said, and I quote directly, Mr. Speaker:

In order to have the partnership and have the board of directors where we have direct involvement by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and other appointments that the government may make, we needed to establish a corporation, we needed to have this process in place as soon as we possibly could.

I think it indeed curious that if the minister wanted the corporation in place, and the process in place, that he never mentioned it once, Mr. Speaker, not once during all of the questioning about providing a plan and a strategy during this entire session. Nowhere at any time, during questioning in question period, any comments, any news releases, anything made by the minister in charge, has he raised the issue of setting up a new Crown corporation.

I also find it unbelievable that the minister would say on one hand that he wants partners involved on the board, but would go ahead and make the announcement, the formal announcement, that the deal was signed, sealed and delivered without the other 25 per cent of the partners being involved at all. And I underline the "at all," Mr. Speaker, because the exhibition boards and the Metis Nation and the charitable organizations have all contacted us, and they're confused. They're confused because they have not been able to meet with the minister, they have not been approached by the minister, ever since all of these particular issues have come to the fore.

Mr. Speaker, the minister talks about accountability. This Act provides very questionable accountability. Not only does the Act empower the board to build buildings, to operate businesses, to hire people, it speaks of turning over the net profits of the casinos to the Consolidated Fund.

But where is the term "net profits" defined? Does the Bill tell us how much the operators will get? No, it does not. Does it tell us whether net profits are before or after the operators receive their monies? Is it after they get their cut? Well no, the Act does not define this. Does the Bill tell us whether net profits include the current 9 per cent casino tax the government currently takes on casino revenues? No, it does not.

But credit to the government, they are getting things done in a hurry. But on this occasion, I very much disagree with Shakespeare. This is not a case of if it 'twere done, 'tis well 'twere done quickly. In fact I

think the opposite applies. If this is going to be done at all, it is in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan that it be done cautiously, that it be done carefully, and that it be done sensibly.

To date we have no evidence that the government is prepared to take its time and to do this right. And that in and of itself poses great questions. In fact, I'm surprised . . . not surprised actually; I was going to say I was surprised that when the members of government had an opportunity to speak on the issue of gaming in the province of Saskatchewan -- very broad reaching, including all different possibilities for them to talk about the aboriginal component, the research and development side, the studies that have been done, all of the projections, everything -- they had not one word to say, as if they don't have an opinion on this, Mr. Speaker, which took me then by great surprise. I cannot believe that the members opposite actually support the introduction of a new Crown corporation on such short notice, and then actually support the view that no time be taken to examine this fully.

To date we have no evidence that the government is prepared to take its time and to do this right. Simple questions still remain unanswered. Who says we should build two casinos? Who has determined the amount of jobs that are available? How will The Trade Union Act affect the government's commitment to provide 50 per cent of the casino jobs to aboriginal workers when their own legislation, Bill 54, says those jobs must go to union employees?

Mr. Speaker, there are many, many questions to ask and many to answer. I want to reiterate that the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations has done a masterful job of negotiating on behalf of their people. And I believe that they have done not only a good job, but they should be commended for the work that they've done for their people.

I support their aims and objectives and I've made that clear on many occasions, although I do have concerns that perhaps they may end up being disappointed, that in fact their confidence that the results be achieved will be the results that they anticipate. And the reason I question that is because we've been provided with actually no solid information from the government on the numbers that are backed up by evidence. I would like to be provided with the evidence that would support the anticipation of all of the people who are ultimately going to be partnerships in this.

I think it is unfortunate that the minister would be so political as to imply that anyone who questions the viability of these projects or asks to see the hard evidence that the government has done its homework, it is unfortunate that the government would be so anxious to proceed with its ill-thought-out plan, that it would try to paint anyone who asks responsible questions as someone who opposes jobs and opportunities for aboriginal people.

Surely after sitting for nine and a half years in opposition to a Conservative government that did work sliding by deal after deal without legitimate

economic impact studies, any cost/benefit analyses, surely the members opposite would have more respect for the people of Saskatchewan and aboriginal people and the rest of the population than that.

What sense is there in promising aboriginal people 1,000 jobs when they have no evidence as to how many jobs there will be? What sense is there in ignoring the implications of Bill 54 on that promise by telling people that the government will simply fine-tune the regulations to look after that little glitch?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am tired of retroactive planning on the part of the government and in particular this department. This ministry has demonstrated that all it really knows how to do is make up the plan as it goes along. This particular government is placing the viability of this project in jeopardy through their ham-handed approach to negotiations. And throughout the course of the gaming discussions there has been little evidence that this government knows what it is doing.

There is no doubt, no doubt at all, that casinos will make money. There is no doubt that they will create some jobs. This agreement ensures that half of those jobs will go to aboriginal peoples. But there are some doubts, doubts about how the overall gaming strategy of this government will have an impact on the province and the future of its people.

This Act is a dangerous move toward putting power and control of a tremendous amount of money and influence into the hands of very few people to the exclusion of many. There are many clauses in the legislation that open a virtual Pandora's Box and we intend to pursue those issues in Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the agreement with the FSIN commits to establishing this corporation this session or next. What I must question in all sincerity is the wisdom of doing this with inadequate planning, incomplete information, and lack of endorsement by all of the partners. I will conclude my remarks with the commitment to pose extensive questions to the minister in Committee of the Whole.

(1445)

Mr. Thompson: -- Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Thompson: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure today to introduce a group of students from Stony Rapids, Stony Rapids School, 15 in numbers from grade 4 to grade 9, and they are accompanied by their teacher Janet Simpson and Martina Cain. This group of students, Mr. Speaker, come from Stony Rapids, which is on the very east end of Lake Athabasca, just approximately 50 miles south of Northwest Territories -- they've had

to fly out.

And I just want to indicate to the group that I sincerely hope on behalf of myself and all the members here that your trip to southern Saskatchewan is enjoyable and that you have a safe journey home. Thank you very much.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 72

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Lautermilch that Bill No. 72 -- An Act to Establish the Saskatchewan Gaming Investment Corporation and to enact certain Consequential Amendments arising from the enactment of this Act be now read a second time.

The division bells rang from 2:47 p.m. until 3:17 p.m.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division.

Yeas

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Romanow | Bradley |
| Van Mulligen | Lorje |
| Thompson | Pringle |
| Simard | Lautermilch |
| Tchorzewski | Hamilton |
| Shillington | Serby |
| Teichrob | Sonntag |
| Johnson | Scott |
| Atkinson | Crofford |
| Kowalsky | Kluz |
| Cunningham | Jess |
| Upshall | Langford |
| Hagel | |

-- 25

Nays

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| Swenson | Goohsen |
| Muirhead | Haverstock |
| Neudorf | McPherson |
| Boyd | Bergman |

-- 8

The Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

**General Revenue Fund
Labour
Vote 20**

Item 1

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, the time we have taken with the labour Bills is long, and hopefully somewhat productive in that you have suggested that you are making some changes as we go along. Unfortunately though, when we have as important an issue as this that will affect all of our

province, it's natural that more and more concerns will arise.

I bring to you today a serious situation that has developed, that I need to have your response and reaction to. I have here a transcript, I guess you might say, of a taped show that was on CBC Radio with the Barry Burgess show. Now I'm going to read you the questions and then I'm going to allude to the tape, after which I will table the taped material in words so that you can peruse them and make your comments. Because, quite frankly, I believe we have a conflict of interest here, Minister, that you will have to resolve by asking for some resignations.

Now we have been informed that John -- the man who is identified on this tape -- is a member of the Labour Relations Board. Now, Mr. Minister, this tape calls into question the impartiality of the Labour Relations Board itself. And we will be asking you, Minister, will you not agree once we read you this tape, that it will clearly illustrate a bias in favour of the unions by the Labour Relations Board itself and its members and that the businesses who challenge a certification vote haven't got a chance of any kind.

We verify this document through the efforts and contribution and call to our office by Bill Stuart of Merit Construction and he is assuring us that he has identified this individual, John, as a member of the Labour Relations Board.

Mr. Chairman, without further to-do, I will allude to the taped transcript so that I can table it for the minister. Very quickly it begins:

John: (just like a script from a movie) Hi, I just want to make a couple of comments. First comment -- I'm sorry I missed the Minister of Labour. I know he had to rush back to question period.

So there, Minister, you might note the fact that you had already left the studio and may not be totally aware of what happened here. It goes on:

Barry: yes.

John: But I'm glad I didn't miss Mr. Botting. I didn't realize that he was going to be on the program or . . .

Barry: Well Barb Byers is coming up in about 10 minutes.

John: Well, yeah, well, I really think that if we're going to have Mr. Botting on we should have representatives of the trade union movement and so forth, not just that he calls in and monopolizes the conversation.

Anyway, let's deal with a couple of his points.

So injunctions by the Labour Relations Board . . . the injunctions of the Labour Relations Board . . . was in fact told by the courts and Mr. Botting

should know that, that they did have the right to issue injunctions. In fact the Labour Relations Board in the province of Saskatchewan was not exercising that right. In fact it wasn't a right, it was a duty and the court ruled that they must exercise that right so it's really nothing to do . . . The injunction has absolutely nothing to do with any amendments to the new Trade Union Act as far as the powers of the Labour Relations Boards. I think the minister has stated quite clearly the Labour Relations Board gets no new powers under this Act.

What it does get of course is the right to enforce its rulings which is really interesting in the courts. They can enforce their rulings and that's the only change to this.

Barry: Isn't that a power?

John: Well, it may be a power, Dale . . . I didn't interrupt you, I hope you won't me because . . .

Barry: Sorry, that was just me. I was just asking you a question.

Dale: No, I'm respecting your . . . I'm listening very carefully, sir.

John: Okay. Really, it's a power, but it's a duty and an obligation which the courts told the Labour Relations Boards that they had. Not only did they have the right to do it, but they had the duty to do it and that was put onto the Labour Relations by the Court of Queen's Bench. I understand the ruling that came from . . . so it's nothing new in The Trade Union Act.

Now in certifying and decertifying, Mr. Botting seems to think that I notice that he talks about democracy and he would like a free and open voice . . . votes everywhere.

Well it's interesting that he would make that point. The only points that change in this Act is that under where the Labour Relations finds that there has been blatant interference by one party or the other and the blatant interference would make the taking of a vote amongst the employees, either way, by the way for certification or decertification, if they held that, if they find that that is the case, then the original intent was then they could order an automatic certification.

That right has been taken away from the Labour Relations Board, but the board does have the right to fine, I guess, either a union or an employer who blatantly interferes with the free wishes of the employee. And some people should realize in this province that it's not the employer that becomes unionized, it's the employee that make that choice, not the employer that makes the choice. And if there is a blatant interference in making that decision, then the Labour Relations Board could rule that

there was unfair labour practice charges. But they cannot order, under these recent amendments, an automatic decertification.

Barry: John, can I ask you how you know all of this?

John: Because I'm the business manager for the building trade in the province of Saskatchewan and I've been involved in the trade union movement for about 30 years.

This is where I think, Minister, that he started to be identified. It goes on and Dale interjects and says:

John, I acknowledge that last point. In fact I said it myself. I acknowledged the recent amendments and indicated that the government had come to their senses and moved back from their original requirement even a month ago to go to automatic certification. We still wish that, though, like the people's electoral process, likewise, if there is a choice to be made in a workplace, is that everything always be done in secret ballot. People should recognize that intimidation and . . . (inaudible) . . . can happen not just by employer to employee, but by a union to worker as well, and people can be harassed and intimidated on both sides of the street.

So the idea would be to have a . . . or our proposal was to have in all circumstances, a government scrutineer on sight, much like a scrutineer during an election and have the privacy, the dignity of a private, democratic, secret ballot vote, and then respect the will of the people that way.

John: Well that's interesting but those involved in the certification know that it's not quite that simple. For instance, right now when an employee signs a card, that's done in secrecy. An employee signs up, signs a card, and that card says he wishes to be represented for the purpose of the collective bargaining by whatever union that employee names. And then after that certification those cards are filed with the Labour Relations Board.

(1530)

That's when we find that there is all kinds of to-do and all kinds of petitions being taken up by the boards not only in Saskatchewan, but across Canada and the U.S., I might add, have found that the taking of those secret ballot votes that it would really lead to is when a person signs the original card. And by the way, in this province, nobody knows who signs those cards, and an employee can sign that card in secrecy. The only ones that know, of course, is the union that person is attempting to join. The Labour Relations Board won't tell anybody who signed the card, nor should they, and after the fact.

And I think it's interesting that we talk about democracy. There is a secret ballot vote all over the place. And in fact I hold shares in many companies and I have never been afforded the privilege of holding a secret ballot vote every time some decision is made in a boardroom. If we're going to extend that, let's really go the whole hog.

In a way it sounds like you're really supporting a fairness and democracy image when we have found in most people in many jurisdictions and, in fact, most jurisdictions in Canada, other than Alberta, find that once a person signs that card, the person has made up their mind they wish to belong to the union of their choice. And all of the petitions in the world and employer interference isn't to be allowed.

If we're going to allow the employer in, I think there has been too much of that. I doubt very much if there is a mass number of employers that voluntarily say, gosh, I'd sure like to have a union shop. I don't say, by the way, that every employer is not fair, or in fact, I would suggest that most employers are fair and impartial.

What we hear from, though, is the ones who are represented by Mr. Botting who really aren't the mass of employers. For instance, nobody who belongs to the chamber of commerce.

Barry interjects and says:

John, let Dale Botting have a chance to respond.

Okay.

I will table this for the perusal of the press as well as yourself, Minister. And I will ask you very simply the question. What action are you planning on taking against this member of the Labour Relations Board who has clearly conflicted his interests by allowing himself to be heard on public radio defending only the union side of issues when he is supposedly to be in a quasi-judicial responsibility, to be impartial and fair?

Mr. Minister, I will table this now and ask you for your response.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- On a quick reading of this, and I have reread it quickly, there is nothing in this which is improper on the part of any one of the Johns. This could be any one of three Johns. There is a John Hobbs, who is a current board member; as an alternate member, there's a John Forsyth, and there is a John MacLeod. It could be any one of those Johns.

Whichever one it is, there is no indication from what you read that there's any conflict of interest or anything improper in what they've done. The law requires only that a member be impartial about a matter coming before it. There is no requirement and no practical way, indeed, there's no requirement that

the members be impartial on the general issues of labour relations.

I might point out -- this is not currently before the House -- I might point out that this is one of the problems which the new Trade Union Act, if it be a problem, this is one of the things which the new Trade Union Act will resolve because we are doing away with alternate members and we'll have full-time members. But at the moment though that is the system.

The Labour Relations Board operates as much like a board of arbitration as it does a judicial court, and it is operated in kind of a no man's land. We are resolving that and we will be . . . if that's a problem, and I think it is, we'll be correcting it. But as it currently stands there is nothing improper in this, what was said.

Mr. Goohsen: -- So what you're saying, Minister, is that new board members will be appointed and likely this individual will no longer be there. And I think that's proper that he shouldn't be there. He obviously is in a position where he should be impartial and he obviously has compromised that position. And he is obviously being identified by Bill Stuart and there is no recourse other than that you remove this individual from that board and never appoint him again to a position of responsibility in quasi-judicial form.

Minister, we have other important issues that need to be talked about. The other day you, once again -- and you have done this many, many times through the course of this past session -- referred to The Workers' Compensation and The Occupational Health and Safety Acts. You have referred to them saying that nobody really worries about them any more, that you've got them all into place and everything like that.

So my question is very simply this: Minister, you have many regulations that really form the working guts of the Bills in question -- The Workers' Compensation and Occupational Health and Safety Acts are really enactments of regulations that you have put into place after the legislation was passed and during the past sessions -- have you finished all of the regulations for those two Acts?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- The member is partially right. There is no amendments being planned pursuant to the changes in the Workers' Compensation Board. There aren't any amendments which follow upon those legislative . . . there aren't any new regulations which follow upon those legislated amendments. There are very . . . you are certainly right with respect to occupational health and safety. There is an extensive series of amendments which will be . . . which will follow, which will provide safety standards in . . . fine-tuned to each industry.

The member asks when those will be available. I would expect that the regulations will be in final draft form probably by the end of June, and perhaps in effect within a reasonable period of time thereafter.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Well, Minister, that sort of rings hollow. All of the words and all of the arguments that you've used in this Assembly where you say people are so happy with your past legislation, when in fact you haven't even finished it yet and nobody knows exactly what the results of that legislation will be; how can you stand in this Assembly and honestly say to people that they're happy with legislation, when you haven't even shown them what the regulations and the rules are going to be yet? You haven't even finished what you started a year ago, and you're almost through this session of the Assembly and you're standing up in here saying how happy people are.

Minister, I think that you had better rethink your position because it is blatantly clear that people of this province, with the exception of a handful of union leaders, are not happy with you. You even find yourself embarrassed over the weekend by not being able to rally your troops after I challenged you last week to do so.

All you could get out to rally the troops in favour of your labour legislation was Bob White from Ontario and a handful of select union leaders from the province who couldn't even amass enough of a crowd to make a decent television picture. They had to zoom in on them, on the lady that was talking, in order to make sure that they didn't show how empty the area was where there weren't any people there to support you. Because the workers of this province do not support your legislation, and that's the bottom line and that's what's important here.

They have recognized that you are going to cost them their jobs and their livelihood and their futures. And they are certainly not in support of you and they evidenced that by the fact that they simply stayed home and they don't support you. And the business people who are busy people are able to bring out 500 in one city of Saskatoon with only a few days notice. So I say to you, sir, that is indication, clear and precise, that you must now withdraw this legislation and do it over and this time consult with the business community.

Minister, in the process of the Labour estimates we have to talk about a few things that we missed earlier. And you can comment on my remarks when I get my questions on the road here. We have what we call I guess our package of questions and answers that you supplied to us last year and this year, and apparently it's here. And we've come up with a little bit of research on it that indicates that we need a bit more preciseness in the answers.

Now we need to know the details of any travel undertaken by yourself as minister including the costs, mode of travel, who accompanied you and destinations and the people of each trip. Apparently in our research as we have discovered here that that is not positively identified.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- I certainly intended to supply it. If the member has . . . we certainly intended to

supply that information. If the member has some specific question we'd be happy to answer his specific questions. We did supply the information about it though.

I may say as well it's been very modest. My travel as Minister of Labour has been extremely modest. This is not a portfolio which takes you out of the province actually.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Minister, these global questions, as we refer to them as being, do not clearly identify the travel undertaken by yourself individually and including the costs, the mode of travel, and who accompanied you and what destinations and the purposes for each of the trips. At least I couldn't find them in mine so maybe you will tell the people of Saskatchewan here today what exactly you did.

If the minister chooses not to answer I guess I'll just have to report to the people of the province that he refuses to answer.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- No, I would invite the member from Maple Creek to observe a bit of patience. Well okay, I can read this for the member. May 4 to 8, destination Edmonton, Alberta. Attended a meeting of labour representatives. Total cost was \$971. May 18 to 20, 1993, Quebec City; was a guest speaker at the Canadian convention of pension fund administrators -- well received, I want to say. Total cost of that was \$1,766.75.

On July 27 there was a trip to London, England, which was . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes. This was in my capacity as minister in charge of SaskTel. SaskTel has extensive holdings in England and they're getting larger. In a decade's time, SaskTel's holdings in England may be larger than those in Saskatchewan. And that was the purpose of that visit.

I did visit with . . . I did spend a portion of the time meeting with representatives of the Department of Labour of the national government in England, and thus -- the people who try to unravel such problems -- ascribed \$469.27 of the total cost of the trip to the Department of Labour. The rest went to SaskTel.

Finally on August 12, 13, I went to Winnipeg, Manitoba, to attend a meeting of labour representatives; the total cost was \$668.66. That was all the out-of-province travel.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Minister, much better. Now what I need to know is how you handle the payments when you're travelling around and how you handle the money of the taxpayers. Could you give us a detail of any kind of expenses that might be paid by the minister and you might be reimbursed for, or how do you handle payments when you're travelling abroad?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- Travelling abroad in the sense of overseas, okay . . .

An Hon. Member: -- Outside the province.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- Just out of province . . . Air fare is billed to the office and paid by the treasury. All other expenses we pay and claim back. I hope that's the question the member asked. Air fare is billed directly to the department and paid. It may be billed to Executive Council. Air fare is billed directly to a department and paid directly. All other expenses we pay out of our own pocket and then claim them back.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Would those all be receipted expenditures that you would claim back?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- All except the out-of-province per diem intended to cover miscellaneous expenses. All others are paid on the basis of a receipt only.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Minister. So if you had a sore foot from standing up talking too long, as you sometimes do, you'd buy some Absorbine Jr. to put on it, you'd pay that yourself and claim it back. So I understand how that process works, and I want to thank you for that direct answer.

I want also to know then, Minister, the details of all the travel undertaken by your staff including the total cost, cost per employee, mode of travel, destination, and purpose of each trip.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- I was accompanied in the Edmonton trip of May 4 to 8, I was accompanied by a ministerial assistant, Heather Padfield. On the Winnipeg trip I was accompanied by the same ministerial assistant. I was unaccompanied in the other two trips.

(1545)

Mr. Goohsen: -- And the funding for the expenses, is that handled the same as you handled your own?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- That's correct, yes.

Mr. Goohsen: -- We have a note here that says that senior ministerial assistant, Heather Padfield, received a salary increase of close to \$5,000 a month, an increase of 13 per cent, if that information is correct, over her last year's salary. Did she receive this increase? If this was due to the Executive Council reorganization, we'd like to know if that was the reasoning for it or if there was something else. Or why did the other staff get zero increases, as seems to be indicated in the global question?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- She was put in a new range and that was why the increase was awarded. When she first came -- I'm trying to recall this from memory -- when she first came, it was not contemplated there would be more than one ministerial assistant. Then my duties changed and with it the . . . let me just back up a step. I began as associate minister of Finance, had very few contacts with the public; my role involved very little contact with the public. That was done almost entirely by the minister of Finance, Ed Tchorzewski. My responsibilities were far more

administrative than public . . . than interfacing with the public.

After changing portfolios and going to Labour, we detected a rise in the amount of letters which we got, visits which we got, and we went from being one of the . . . having probably as little contact with the public as any minister in the cabinet to probably having as much contact . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . probably more. That's right -- probably more contact than anyone else except the Premier.

That resulted in an expansion of the staff and accordingly a reclassification of Ms. Padfield's duties.

Mr. Goohsen: -- The Minister of Economic Development wanted to brief me on a few things here, so I apologize for being a little late on my feet, Mr. Chairman.

But, Minister, we do have some important things we have to discuss here with regards to the way that people get increases in this government of yours. People in the province of course have always and will always watch government increases in pay and assess their own merit and their own results in life by the way that you treat people under your jurisdiction directly.

An awful lot of people have been asked to take no increases in this province. Many have been asked to take very marginal increases. I expect there are even some that might claim that they've been asked to take roll-backs. But not the people that work in your department. So we need to pursue this just a bit further to find out how you justify this.

Now one of the common explanations we've heard from these sorts of increases is that the jobs have been redefined and new duties have been added. What specifically is the difference between a ministerial assistant 4 -- Ms. Padfield's previous designation -- and a senior MA (ministerial assistant), her current designation? What specific new duties is Ms. Padfield doing in your office that she wasn't doing before? Who was doing those tasks previously that she is now doing extra?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- I just finished explaining that to the member. While I was associate minister of Finance I dealt directly with the department and had very little contact with the public either by way of letters, visits, or interviews. I dealt more with the public . . . and the member from Regina North East dealt primarily with the public. After I became Minister of Labour that changed dramatically, and thus when the contact we had with the public increased dramatically, her workload and her duties changed very dramatically when we went from associate minister of Finance to the Minister of Labour.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Well, Minister, we'll let the people judge your words and I hope it sounded better the first time when I was visiting with the Minister of Economic Development, because it didn't sound all that convincing the second time around.

Now you also have a junior ministerial assistant, Mary McGuire, who was hired last February as a temporary employee. Why was this done? What are the conditions of her employment that make her temporary? And do you have a projected date as to when her work assignment will be completed?

And in order to facilitate some time -- I know you can handle two questions at once -- so I want to ask you also, Minister, your department hired 8.6 new in-scope permanent employees this year. Can you tell us what these people do as well as what Mary McGuire does?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- Bill Davies is a . . . he has a doctorate in English literature; has written some works which are respected in academic circles, and is eminently qualified for what he does, which is primarily writing. He's both eminent and it is imminent. I think the answer is imminent and he is eminently qualified.

Mary McGuire, the third person, works handling a job which has really proved to be very difficult. She has been interfacing between my office and the Workers' Compensation Board.

When I was first appointed as Minister of Labour we received an enormous number of complaints about the Workers' Compensation Board and she had the job of taking those complaints, going to the Workers' Compensation Board, providing explanations and so on and so forth. That has really remained her job. She's also assisted us with casework in other areas. Most of the casework, however, comes from Workers' Compensation Board.

It has been a very, very fertile source of work for my staff -- the Workers' Compensation Board.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Minister, we have several questions that have arisen as a result of our researches into the global answers that you've provided with us, but realistically I have, for the purpose of the record here, made my point that your department is very generous with employees that do very little more than they did previously.

You're setting a bad example for the community at large, especially because you're the Minister of Labour and because you are responsible for the workers of this province who you are telling shouldn't have increases and yet you are justifying huge, massive expenditures for your own personal employees to make them happy within your office.

I have here several pages of questions that I will ask you to make a commitment to answer, in which case if you do, I will simply table them. They will photocopy copies and have them sent to you and you can answer them for me because my point will be just repeated in the next seven or eight pages of questions here that you are spending far, far too much money trying to make yourself look like a good guy in your own office, while at the same time setting a bad example for the

people of the province that you represent.

Could I have that commitment, Minister?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- You've got to admit that's a tall order. I say seriously to the member from Maple Creek that I will answer those written questions to the best of my ability, as I would have if you had asked them orally here in the House.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Minister. I accept that commitment and I have passed these on to the page to be tabled for you and for the world to see.

Now Minister, I want to know: were the amendments currently proposed in The Labour Standards Act factored into the 1994-95 budget?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- Yes.

Mr. Goohsen: -- How much is that going to be?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- If I were to refer the member to vote 3, you will note that there is an increase of \$162,000. That is in the labour standards subvote. The majority of that would relate to the additional cost of implementing and administering The Labour Standards Act.

If you refer the member to . . . If I can refer the member to subvote 7, you will note that the total for labour relations and conciliation increases from 366,000 to 701,000. The majority, but not all, of that increase of 335,000 would relate to the changes in The Trade Union Act, some of which are one-time only changes, some of which are ongoing increases. We just mentioned one of them. We talked about the Labour Relations Board and the move to permanent members; that is factored into this.

And we have . . . I'm told as well that we have factored into this the cost of The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act and the JAP (jurisdictional assignment plan) plan. We do not have the JAP plan in effect at the moment, and it is not inevitable that we will. But if we should, there's money budgeted there for it.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Minister, the last phrase that you alluded to might have eluded some folks, and would you explain what that reference is and why it might cost more money?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- Are the members referring to the jurisdictional assignment plan? The jurisdictional assignment plan is a plan which attempts to resolve disputes in construction workplaces, as to which of a number of trades should do a given job. This is an irritation to both the contractors and indeed the workers. And sometimes the workplace can be shut down in a dispute though as to whether or not boiler makers or iron workers do a given job. The jurisdictional assignment plan is intended to resolve those disputes as to the jurisdiction of the trades, and do so quickly and cheaply.

It has proved to be an easier . . . it has proved to be

easier to conceptualize than it has been to get it into effect. We've had the Labour Relations Board . . . we've had the Act in effect now for over a year; we've not yet been able to get this working. So I cautioned . . . I attached a caveat to my earlier comment, that the money is there budgeted. It is not inevitable we will in fact have a jurisdictional assignment plan.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Well, Minister, I'm not surprised that you would attach caveats to some of your comments. And being a lawyer, I'm surprised you haven't used those kind of terms to opt out sooner of your responsibility to the people of Saskatchewan. Not getting this plan into effect might save the taxpayers some money. But really I want to finish with these questions that I have here before I get into that new area.

I have about another seven pages of questions here that I think I would table if you would once again give a commitment that you would answer them for us within a reasonably short period of time, and we could have them on record for the people. I think I've made my point with the first few questions, which I will expand on after I get your answer.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- Yes, I'll respond to those in writing as I would if they were asked in the House. I'll do my best to provide as complete and full an answer as is possible.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Minister. I'll ask the page to please table that for your perusal and for anyone else that wants to see what kind of questions we have on our minds.

Having done those first few though, I have made my point that would have been more emphasized by asking the rest of the package. And of course the point that I'm making is that no matter how you cut it, we're going to spend an awful lot more money in the Labour department this year than we have in the past.

We're spending that money as a result of your decision and your government's decision to transfer power from the people of this province, through the democratic process of government, to the trade union leaders in this province. It's as simple as that. And these taxpayers of this province should know that that's what they're paying for.

(1600)

They're not paying for the creation of jobs; they're not paying for the creation of work; they're not paying for the protection of workers to have jobs. They're paying for new legislation that transfers power -- transfers power in a major way -- from government to the trade union leaders. And that, I think, the taxpayers of this province will find to be not only objectionable but unacceptable.

And I say that the test of course will have to come when we have perhaps a by-election or a regular election sometime down the road. But clearly, clearly you are costing the people of this province many

hundreds of thousands of dollars in order to meet a political agenda that the business community has outrightly objected to, has outrightly come out against. Where you have yourself, through your union leaders, gone all the way to Ontario to find a spokesman for you, have brought him into the province only to find that you couldn't get any rank-and-file workers out to support him in numbers on the lawns of Regina.

And a dismal failure it is and I hope that you will take that into account when you force through this legislation and bring in your regulations as time goes by. The reality is that if you don't tone down your regulations, business will flee this province and other businesses won't come in.

Someone said to me the other day, what will be the result of all of this when a week or two's gone by and this legislation is law? I told him, quite simply, as I'll tell you now, life will go on in Saskatchewan. The sun will still come up in the East, but people will leave. And the population will not grow, and the job numbers of 16,000 short now from what you had when you started in power -- 16,000 less jobs now than you had then -- that number is bound to grow.

If you can live with the record of having destroyed the province in that way, then you are justified to continue and meet the electorate in the next election. But reality is that I don't honestly believe you want to destroy the province. Surely you must have some feeling towards what you are doing in terms of destroying the business potential and the job potential in this province.

Everything that has been talked about politically in the last year has been jobs, jobs, jobs. You could almost tell me who said it over and over again. And it certainly hasn't been the rank and file of your government, especially not the cabinet, because you chase away jobs and you destroy the potential.

And we want you to know, Minister, that the people of Saskatchewan are going to hold you accountable for the treasonous acts that you do with this labour legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Minister, I wanted to ask you several questions this afternoon, particularly beginning with the broad and becoming much more narrow and specific. For the consideration of time, what I have done is to ask the page to copy my 22 pages of questions. I'll pose but three to you directly today, if you'll agree to respond in writing to the questions that I am sending to you.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- I give the member from Greystone the same undertaking I gave the member from Maple Creek. I will do my level best to answer your questions in writing, as I would have done if they'd been asked orally in the House.

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you very much. I'm wondering as well if you would be willing to send

your responses to questions that would be posed by the official opposition. Since there may be some that are similar, what I'm suggesting is that rather than answering them both, you can say this is a similar question as posed by the official opposition and provide it to us.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- That seems to be a common sense approach; yes, we'll do that as well.

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you very much.

I have a copy of a letter, Mr. Minister, addressed: "Dear Constituency of Greystone Resident", on Saskatchewan New Democratic caucus letterhead, dated April 1994. This letter is about current amendments to The Labour Standards Act. It was distributed to my constituency, together with a brochure that was produced by the Department of Labour, which began, and I quote: Important news for Saskatchewan workers and employers.

Now I want to know from you how many copies of this brochure were produced at your department's expense, which of course is funded by taxpayers' dollars. I want to know how many were provided to the New Democratic caucus office for distribution in my constituency or any other constituencies who do not have a sitting NDP member.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- That actually came up in an earlier series of estimates here. We have gone through a very large number of those. Our approach has been to make available to anyone who asks the number of copies for which they ask. So if the caucus office asks for a number to make available, we've made that available. We would of course make the same number available to the member from Saskatoon Greystone.

Our approach has been to make available to anyone who asks for as many copies as they ask for. They're relatively cheap to produce.

Ms. Haverstock: -- Thank you, Mr. Minister. I guess one should add that there were several people in my constituency who were quite interested in knowing about this particular practice . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, they were actually much more interested in the practice undertaken by your department to supply something that would be attached to something that was not only blatantly partisan, but unbelievably erroneous -- something about how I commented that I didn't think such changes were necessary to The Labour Standards Act because, quote: she'd consulted with officials from a mining company in Calgary who said they were not necessary.

Interesting how incompetent the New Democratic caucus is, since I've never consulted with anybody in Calgary from any mining company about any such things.

Were there any arrangements made for your department to help fund the mailing costs or any other

costs associated with the distribution of this information about your department?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- No.

Ms. Haverstock: -- So I take it from your earlier comments then that you actually consider this to be acceptable use of the department's budget, their own communications budget, is to copy as many copies as is necessary to accompany any kind of information necessary; in other words, printing brochures and nauseam that are to be distributed by any political agent of your government?

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- Yes, we have made . . . these things are relatively inexpensive to produce. Our policy has been that we will make as many copies available to anyone who asks for them. That's what we've done. And yes, that's been standard policy in various government departments actually for a long time. There's nothing unique to the Department of Labour about this.

Ms. Haverstock: -- Well thank you very much, Mr. Minister. I will now be able to pass your comments on to those in my constituency who raised this as a question. And since they did feel that this was their tax money that helped produce this information, they found it quite ironic the way in which it was used. So I appreciate your explanation of it and I will forward it on to them.

Without belabouring the issues, we know precisely where my concerns, and the concerns of people who have come to my office, have been regarding The Trade Union Act, The Labour Standards Act, as well as other pieces of information that have come forward from your department. I think what I will do is simply thank you and your officials and look forward to the responses that you provide to our written questions, which are quite extensive I know, but I appreciate the time that will be taken to answer them.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- We have nothing better to do than to answer questions put by hon. members and we'll get them back as quick as you can.

I gather that . . . wait, I should let the Chairman go through the votes first.

Item 1 agreed to.

Items 2 to 7 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 20 agreed to.

Supplementary Estimates 1993-94
General Revenue Fund
Budgetary Expense
Labour
Vote 20

Items 1 to 3 inclusive agreed to.

Vote 20 agreed to.

The Chair: -- That concludes estimates for the Department of Labour and I would invite the minister at this time to thank his officials.

Hon. Mr. Shillington: -- Yes, I would like to thank the officials who have been here. I think this is the fourth occasion they've been here and I'd like to thank them for the help they gave me.

Mr. Goohsen: -- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I too would like to join with the minister in thanking the officials for their help in the estimates of the Labour portfolio and we truly hope that they will be diligent in their work throughout the next year and keep track of all the taxpayers' dollars. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Revenue Fund
Executive Council
Vote 10

Item 1

Hon. Mr. Romanow: -- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wish to introduce to you and to the members of the House, seated first of all to my left, the deputy minister to myself and the Executive Council, Mr. Ron Clark; to my right is the chief of staff to myself, Mr. Garry Aldridge; seated directly behind me is our director of administration, Don Wincherauk. To his left is the policy adviser for policy and planning, Jim Nicol; and behind Mr. Wincherauk is admin, budget and personnel officer, Bonita Heidt.

Mr. Chairman, while I have the floor, I want to just give a few opening remarks to the members of the committee. As we all know, or at least as we suspect, the government is coming to the conclusion of its third legislative session fairly shortly and I think none of us would say, certainly from this side, that the past two and a half years have been easy. In fact they have been very difficult and we have faced many heart-wrenching choices.

But, Mr. Chairman, I want to report to the House that again and again we've been inspired by the willingness of Saskatchewan people to make sacrifices today in order to build for a better tomorrow for their children, their children's children, and above all, for the good and well-being of this province. And because of this sacrifice by them, to which I pay full tribute and acknowledgement, we have made remarkable progress.

In 1991 we said that our first priority would be to get the fiscal house of the province in order, and we're well on the way. The projected annual budget deficit in November 1991, when we were first sworn to office, was \$1.3 billion. The actual deficit for '93-94, the year just closed a few days ago, saw a deficit of \$294 million or a billion-dollar turnaround in less than three years. We're on target to present Saskatchewan taxpayers with a balanced budget in 1996 as promised.

(1615)

In addition, we have kept faith with our commitment

to review and to renegotiate, where possible, taxpayer-funded megaprojects entered into by the former administration. A brief recapitulation of these successful renegotiations: \$190 million cash settlement from Weyerhaeuser and release from another \$40 million in loan guarantees; a reduction of the taxpayer exposure in the HARO-Crown Life deal by approximately \$80 million.

We reached an agreement with NewGrade to relieve taxpayers of sole responsibility for operating shortfalls and established a workable arbitration procedure. And for the first time, NewGrade has contributed \$75 million to the project. I might report to the House that discussions with the federal government are ongoing to finalize this particular aspect.

Fourthly, we eliminated the \$22 million commitment to Promavia and launched court action to recover \$2.3 million of taxpayers' money with respect to that arrangement. For the price of \$500,000 we escaped a potential liability of up to \$15 million on a previous Agdevco drainage project in Pakistan. We removed \$39 million in loan guarantees to PCS (Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc.) and are in process of removing yet another \$39 million. We also removed guarantees of more than \$4 million to the Vitality Health Science Corporation which, as it turns out, has proceeded with the project in any event.

In sum, Mr. Chairman, there have been in excess of \$400 million renegotiated from these and other projects which I have not named.

The policy of this government is to reverse what we call the massive megabucks strategies for megaprojects and it puts development strategy squarely on the shoulders of local business and local communities first.

We think it's just common sense that it is easier and cheaper for taxpayers to encourage local business to expand than to try to entice non-Saskatchewan firms with huge investments. We're still out to entice them where it makes sense and where we can afford it. But by and large, the strategy is Main Street focused.

For the first time, as members of the House will know, we have a written, long-term, comprehensive game plan for job creation and growth entitled the **Partnership for Renewal** plan. This plan is geared to supporting Main Street, Saskatchewan through the following ways: regional economic development authorities to bring the communities together, prioritize what the region can do and what it cannot do, pool scarce resources and get on with the job of pursuing economic development; secondly, a newer, simpler regulatory system; thirdly, new trade and tourism authorities; and finally, a new Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation which will replace SEDCO (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation), which also is in desperate financial circumstances and is in the process of being wound down.

The partnership blueprint also guides our budget

measures such as: 1) elimination of the tax on direct agents used in manufacturing as of July, 1994; 2) elimination of the 9 per cent tax on 1-800 phone services; 3) a lowered small business corporate tax rate, down from 10 per cent in 1992 to 8.5 on the way down to 8 per cent for next year; 4) a revised royalty structure for the oil and gas industry to encourage new investment.

Now all of this, Mr. Chairman, is beginning to pay off. To name just a few, the Sears' western Canada call centre is up and running with about 800 new jobs. The Royal Bank's western Canada payroll telephone centre is up and running with 60 jobs. Hitachi has expanded in Saskatoon, 25 new jobs; the Majestic Paper relocation from Winnipeg to Tisdale, 17 jobs; Can-Agro, coming to Saskatoon as part of a burgeoning biotech activity, 15 jobs, just to name a few.

So carefully targeted, limited incentives plus a climate which encourages growth is bringing new investors to Saskatchewan. Moreover, Mr. Chair, members of the House may be interested in knowing that our economy is growing. StatsCanada's preliminary estimates show that our province's gross domestic product measured at factor cost -- that is, excluding government activity in the economy -- grew by 1.7 per cent in 1993. Now that's not rockets and red flares, but the trend line is in the right direction.

But measured at another scale, namely actual market value, our economy grew by 6.1 per cent. That's the strongest growth of any in the country. This growth was driven by a near record crop year last year and an overall 4.2 per cent increase in consumer spending.

StatsCanada also notes that personal income in Saskatchewan was up last year by 2.9 per cent and personal disposable income up by 3.2 per cent.

Some other statistics I find very encouraging, and hope the members do as well, are as follows: retail sales were up 6.3 per cent in 1993 over '92 -- I might add, Mr. Chair, higher than the national rate and higher than the province of Alberta where there is no sales tax. Retail growth continued into January when sales were up another 4.5 per cent compared to January of '93.

Crude oil production increased by more than 11 per cent. Uranium sales are up by 25 per cent. Crop receipts were up 13.7 in '93 over '92. And livestock receipts during the same period were up 11 per cent.

Housing construction improved in 1993, and CMHC (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation) is predicting a strong housing growth period in 1994. And the economy diversified and Saskatchewan companies shipped more machinery, clothing, textiles, wood products, transportation equipment, and other value added products, especially in the food sector.

Now with respect to jobs, there is also some encouragement here too. Comparing April '94 to

April '93, the following statistics are important to this House: (1) employment in manufacturing, a key wealth-generating sector, was up year over to year over by 2,000 jobs; in construction, up 2,000; in wholesale and retail trade, up 7,000; in service industries, up 6,000; overall in non-agricultural employment year over '84 to '83, April, up 12,000 jobs.

Now if you really take a look at these numbers, what we're seeing here is a shift -- a shift to small, young, new, technology-driven and export-focused companies which are rooted here in the province of Saskatchewan. And these are companies which are forming in communities across the province to try to respond to the new global economy.

Saskatchewan continues to have, as a result, the lowest unemployment rate in the country at 8.9 per cent in April 1994.

Now a word about farming. In agriculture the six-year leaseback program has helped to keep farmers on their land through these troubled years. And while there are trouble spots, to be sure, overall there is reason here too for hope.

Farm cash receipts were up 3.8 per cent in '93; and in '93 overall, higher crop volumes, better quality crops and better prices resulted in a 41 per cent jump in realized net farm income over '92 levels and an increase in net cash income of 21 per cent.

We're continuing to work on other issues which are important to the farm agenda, such as income security and new income security plan; intergenerational transfer of farm land; keeping the Crow benefits to the benefit of this region; maintaining trade with the United States; and preserving and improving the integrity and the functioning of the Canadian Wheat Board.

And all of this, as members will know, is also documented in our **Agriculture 2000** paper, which is a comprehensive strategy to diversify and value add to our products, as a complement to the **Partnership for Renewal** paper. They fit together.

A word about health, Mr. Chair. We're also, I think, on the leading edge of health care reform. In less than three years -- actually in less than 1,000 days of office -- 400 hospital boards and various other government boards have now been replaced with 30 health care districts and all of the administrative savings that that kind of integration implies. These districts are now looking at providing a whole new range of health care services in their areas.

Now people around the world have recognized that our reforms are leading the way, just as medicare did right here in Saskatchewan in 1962 as we led the way then. In fact, Health minister of this government is becoming a choice guest at major international symposia to discuss the reforms undertaken.

For example, at a recent conference on health care

cost control, jointly sponsored by Montreal's Institute for Research on Public Policy, and the Brookings Institute of Washington, D.C. (District of Columbia), the Health minister's presence was considered to be essential.

For the May 18-20, Royal Society of Medicine foundation's annual American-Canadian meeting, she was the unanimous choice of the steering committee to speak on the lead subject -- public policy issues and health care governance and management.

And some members may not know this, but there's a very recent book out called, **Strong Medicine: How to Save Canada's Health Care System**, written by Michael Rachlis and Carol Kushner. And I have not yet read all the book myself, but I'm working through it. I think members might be interested in this quotation at page 321. Quote:

There's nothing more gratifying to a politician than being acknowledged as a good leader. In this respect, Saskatchewan's Health Minister, Louise Simard, has been outstanding. Since her appointment by Premier Roy Romanow in 1991, she has moved quickly to:

-- regionalize health system management and service delivery, and

-- provide the thirty new district health boards with pooled funding.

None of this was easy (the authors write). It took courage to wipe out existing boards and replace them with a consolidated structure for governing the entire system. But Ms. Simard didn't blink or back down. Instead, she participated directly in a careful political strategy to win support. In dozens and dozens of community meetings, she talked up the ideas of reform, bringing people to a positive vision of a better system.

And unlike some other health ministers, who are using slash-and-burn tactics to cut hospitals and community care, Ms. Simard is taking the long view by putting in place two of the key mechanisms for shifting the way resources are allocated. In 1992-93, Saskatchewan's hospital budget **decreased** by over 2 percent, (but) . . . home care . . . **increased** by over 10 percent. Simard has also announced that the system will move to capitation funding in 1995. The Ministry of Health has been working with McMaster University researcher Dr. Stephen Birch to develop a funding formula that will base . . . (this situation).

Ms. Simard has also been quick to recognize and correct mistakes. The province now has a labour adjustment strategy -- a key element that was lacking when her reforms were first implemented. In fact, throughout the reform process, Saskatchewan's Health Minister

(above all others in the country) has shown extraordinary fortitude and a willingness to exert prowess -- key Guardian characteristics.

Perhaps I should just give one other quote which has a touch of immodesty in me so quoting it, but this will give you a flavour of what's happening, and I will read it very briefly.

The authors write finally as follows:

Provincial premiers, too, will discover that health reform can be a political plus. In the summer of 1993, Prince Edward Island Premier Catherine Callbeck introduced legislation to set up locally elected regional authorities to replace the existing boards of hospitals and community service agencies, without substantial outcries.

I might add, she did this after we introduced it in our legislature and we're pleased to see people following.

Saskatchewan's Premier, Roy Romanow, (the authors write) stood behind his . . . Minister as she proceeded to regionalize the system. He withstood a lot of criticism for cutting off fifty-two hospitals from acute-care funding. And, as the system began to produce savings, he didn't grab all the money -- he allowed some of it to be reallocated to improve district services. In consequence, he's managed to retain much of his popularity. A much more responsive and efficient health care system will be in place before Mr. Romanow has to face another election. Other Premiers should take note. Health reform done properly can be a political winner.

End quote, from Rachlis and Kushner, **Strong Medicine: How to Save Canada's Health Care System.**

I think it will be a political winner because it is the right thing to do, because what we're doing here is a system which is to be renewed based on the principles of better communication, better integration, appropriate and affordable service, new services like palliative and respite care, all of these and others which will be implemented in the next two years as we head to an election period. The wellness model and the election reform will succeed, and in the long run will mean a health care system far superior to any in the country.

Still, Mr. Chairman, not a week goes by that someone on the opposition benches fails to ask: what is your vision for Saskatchewan? So let me state it once more for the record, if I haven't already in revealing the balanced budget, the partnership paper, the Ag 2000 paper, and the health care paper. Let me restate it for the record as follows. Our vision is stronger families; stronger Saskatchewan communities; a stronger, more prosperous Saskatchewan. My vision includes freedom from debt, opportunities for our young people, equal access for all our citizens, the public

services like education and health care, safety, security, and respect for the dignity of our people.

(1630)

That's why even in difficult times we've increased assistance for families in need. That's why we have the children's action plan to meet the needs of children and families within their communities. That's why we've introduced the ground-breaking Victims of Domestic Violence Act. That's why we've introduced the ground-breaking Victims of Domestic Violence Act; that's why we've introduced the labour legislation.

In just two and one-half years we've made major progress in putting substance to our vision of stronger families, helping ordinary people, stronger communities, a more prosperous Saskatchewan. We're putting this province's financial house in order, Mr. Chair, helping to create new jobs and new economic development, looking to the future in farming and health care, and helping people find real solutions to their problems.

Now, Mr. Chair, and members of the committee, let me close with a very brief word on democratic reform. In 1991 we said that we would restore open, honest, and accountable government to the province. To date, we have implemented the following: regular sittings of the legislature, predictable; secondly, a new conflict of interest Act and freedom of information Acts; thirdly, regular presentation of annual budgets so that the people and our third-party partners know exactly what's in store; fourthly, mid-year financial reports; fifth, timely tabling of **Public Accounts** and annual reports; sixth, mandatory by-elections within six months of a vacancy; seventh, open meetings of the Board of Internal Economy; eighth, measures to strengthen the Crown Corporations Committee and its operations; ninth, improved public accountability of the Crown corporations through a new Crown Corporations Act; ten, an end to such fiascos like GigaText; eleven, a 5 per cent pay cut for cabinet ministers, frozen until the budget is balanced, MLA compensation frozen as well; and a 40.2 per cent drop in public funds spent on advertising between 1990 and '91 and the years 1993-94 -- 40.2 per cent drop.

There are others as well, but these are major steps in the process of democratic reform of this institution, and they've been taking in less than a thousand days.

Mr. Chair, this being the Committee of Finance, I know that I will shortly be answering a variety of questions and criticisms and I'd tell the members I welcome them. We've all heard it said as follows, quote: to escape criticism, do nothing, say nothing, be nothing.

But as the session comes to a close and we each head off to fulfil our constituency obligations, I would encourage all members of this committee and of the Assembly to join us in rebuilding Saskatchewan, perhaps taking some criticisms but doing things,

acting in the interest of the people of our province and to join the people of this province in the optimism that we all should share, that I have, in the great future of this great province and country. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Swenson: -- Well thank you, Mr. Chairman. I must say I've awaited the opportunity for some time to have this particular set of estimates come forward and listened with great detail and a slight bit of amusement to the comments just made by the Hon. Premier, the member from Riversdale, and his view of the world and how he sees the world unfolding.

And I must say, Mr. Chairman, that when you stack up what the Premier has just said against the promises that he made to Saskatchewan people back in the fall of 1991, you have a very clear understanding of why he likes to fictionalize the account to the degree that he has, because what we see today in this province, Mr. Chairman, what we see as reality, what Saskatchewan families see as reality is not in the least bit the way the Premier has just described his first three years in office.

The simple fact is that what we have, Mr. Chairman, in this province from the Premier and his government is a litany of broken promises -- a litany of broken promises that the Premier full well knew back in October of 1991 he could not live up to.

And I don't have to run back through the documentation of that. We all saw it for ourselves, Mr. Chairman, as we watched the leaders debate in the last week of the '91 election campaign, when the member from Riversdale clearly stated that he understood the state of the Saskatchewan economy; he understood all things about the Saskatchewan economy.

And the result of that, Mr. Chairman, has been that Saskatchewan has seen itself sink into the morass of unemployment, of welfare, and unjust legislation as never before presented to the legislature of Saskatchewan.

It's why, Mr. Chairman, we have 16,000 fewer people today with a job than when the Premier took office three years ago. It's why we have 82,000-plus on the welfare rolls. You know, Mr. Chairman, that that's over 25,000 more people than when the Premier took office, on the welfare rolls of this province.

They tell me, when he took office there were eight people working in this province for every person on welfare. Today there are five and a half working people for every person on welfare. Mr. Chairman, something is wrong.

I remember the commitment so well made that we would eliminate poverty in the first term of our government. That was another promise made by the Premier of this province, the current Premier, the member from Riversdale. And it's simply not true. And in fact we see the food banks expanding all over the

province, expanding, telling us that fully 10 per cent of our population -- a great deal of the people that live in the Riversdale riding -- now depend on the food bank for their sustenance.

We have the spectre in Saskatoon of houses being condemned because the economic situation is so poor -- this riding that has been represented by a premier or a deputy premier for tens of tens of years. And, Mr. Chairman, that is because the promises that were made have not been fulfilled.

So we had a legislative session come along, Mr. Chairman, with all of these problems, and what is it dedicated to? Is it dedicated to creating jobs? No. Is it dedicating to taking people off the welfare rolls? No. Instead what we have is a dedication to bring forward legislation that helps out and looks after our political friends.

Why else would we have this entire session devoted to two pieces of labour legislation which neither the Premier nor the Minister of Labour, time after time, have been able to show us one new job because of that legislation? Neither one of them can. Can they take one person off of the welfare rolls because of this legislation which has dominated this Assembly? No, they can't take one more person off the welfare rolls.

Can they take one person out of the food bank line because of this legislation? No, they can't take one person out of the food bank line, Mr. Chairman. For the simple reason is that this government, through its history, has been more concerned with breaking existing contracts, with settling its political scores, and helping out its political friends. That's what we've seen over the course of this Premier's 1,000 days that he likes to brag about.

There is hardly anyone left in our society, Mr. Chairman, who hasn't, by the force of this NDP majority, had the rules of their life changed. That's farmers and civil servants and judges and exhibition associations. And now we are going to see business men and women all across this province also have their lives dramatically changed because that is the agenda that has been brought forward to this House.

The Premier talks about his commitment to remaking Saskatchewan, Mr. Chairman, and what we in effect have seen is one part of our population shoved off to the side. The Premier says there is no rural agenda and yet we simply look at the facts.

He brags about health care. Where has the majority of hurt been felt in health care? In rural Saskatchewan -- not in urban centres. Time after time the concerns of rural people are brought to this House because they feel now they are second-class citizens and they are ignored.

We see it in the field of education. We see it in health care. We see it in representation in this Legislative Assembly where the Premier magically pulled the number 58 out of the air. When asked for a reason, he said it sounded good. Instead of having a process in

place for Saskatchewan people to determine the type of democratic representation that they would like, it was imposed by this Legislative Assembly and by that New Democratic majority over there.

And the Premier talks about democratic reform. He talks about democratic reform which all Saskatchewan people would like to see. And I would quote, Mr. Chairman, from an article from the **Leader-Post** from Friday last, which was devoted to the topic of democratic reform in this House. It says:

Similarly the NDP takes its cue from three or four big gorillas in its front bench -- (The Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Economic Development, the Minister of Labour).

And it says:

Having learned their politics in the 1960s and 1970s, all would be classified as old-style politicians. And in the position they are now in, all are incredibly influential on the rest of the NDP caucus of the 1990s.

It also seems to be here where much of the old-style politics is generated.

There is no democratic reform, Mr. Speaker, that is meaningful; it is simply rhetoric. It is a continuation on of the style which the NDP practised in this province in the 1970s and the early 1980s, and we continue to see it here today. This House on the 76th day of its session sees a major piece of legislation, a formation of another Crown corporation, brought forward. The very end of a session, a piece of legislation which will deal with hundreds of millions of dollars.

And like we've seen from the member from Riversdale in the past when it comes to the family of Crowns, most of these deals are cut in the back room; they are cut without consultation with Saskatchewan people; and they are going to be taken through this Legislative Assembly by that massive NDP majority, the same as the rights of farmers were overridden in this Assembly, the rights of judges were overridden in this Assembly. And if co-op members had not stood up and fought, they would have had their rights overridden in this Assembly the same way, Mr. Chairman, as we now see the Premier and his government operating at the end of this legislative session.

And it's sad, Mr. Chairman. And I'm glad the Premier touched on so much ground because it certainly will make for a very well-rounded debate during his estimates and the direction that his government is setting.

He touched on so much ground and added so much fiction that we will have a very, very interesting debate. He talks about his commitment to debt reduction. And I would remind the Premier -- and this is according to the Provincial Auditor -- that in 1991 at the end of the year there was \$7.738 billion in the

accumulated provincial deficit. At the end of 1993, there was \$10.218 billion in the provincial accumulated deficit.

When you roll everything else in we're now up -- the auditor tells us -- to about \$17 billion. That's an even bigger number than the members of the government are wont to throw around in question period. When they respond to questions, some say it was 14 when they took over, some say it's 15, some say it was 16; but the simple fact is, Mr. Chairman, today it is 17. It is 17. And the Premier and his government have continued to add on to that deficit at a faster pace than anyone previously.

He talks about the economic renewal that is going on, the few jobs that have been created. And I'm glad he mentioned biotech . . . and where does he think biotechnology would be today in the city of Saskatoon without the new ag college and some of the preparation that was done previous to him taking over office? I hear him talking about Hitachi, the turbine plant and its expansion. Well who put Hitachi here?

I see his Minister of the Environment talking about how wonderful Millar Western is. They won an award. The forestry capital of Saskatchewan, I believe it was termed, with the wood products up there. All because someone else took some initiative to put some jobs in place in this province, so that through the tough times there would be the opportunity for people like the member from Riversdale to add on to it. Because they certainly weren't put here during the 1970s.

(1645)

He talks about PCS. Well, Mr. Chairman, we spent hundreds of millions of dollars in this province for used holes in the ground and we didn't create one new job in the 1970s. That was a great legacy to leave this province, wasn't it?

And today, when we have so many either fleeing the province . . . they tell me today that the job numbers, the total workforce in this province, is at its lowest ebb in 15 years.

You know why that is, Mr. Chairman? It isn't because the government has been able to maintain that low unemployment rate; it is because Saskatchewan people flee. They go to Alberta. They go to British Columbia. They go to United States. They go anywhere there is economic opportunity. If they're bright and they're educated, which Saskatchewan people are want to be, they aren't going to sit around in this province while the Premier and his government dither, bringing in legislation that in fact will increase the number of unemployed, which will increase the number on welfare, which will increase the level of taxation which the rest of us in this province must bear. That is the legacy that we have before us today.

Saskatchewan people, if not the highest taxed, are very close to the highest taxed jurisdiction in this country, and there are fewer and fewer of us paying

taxes all the time.

I would have thought midway through my mandate that a legislative session dedicated to creating taxpayers would have been on the agenda. To reverse the economic stagnation which we see in this province, that would have been the agenda to bring forward. And instead we see Draconian labour legislation and we see the formation of more Crown corporations without Saskatchewan people knowing what is going to happen after its formation.

The Premier talks about agriculture -- agriculture -- and what is going on out there. And the price of cows and the price of grain and the price of lentils and everything else that is going on, Mr. Chairman, has absolutely nothing to do with that Premier or any of his government. And you can take all the credit you want, but the simple fact, Mr. Chairman, is that it has rained and with opening up of trade, Saskatchewan people have more opportunities to market their products.

And the only thing that the Premier should do, Mr. Chairman, is come to this Assembly and thank the previous Conservative administration in Ottawa for keeping interest rates down and for signing a trade agreement which opened up a good part of the world for Saskatchewan products to be traded in, and everyone in this province understands, Mr. Chairman, that we either trade or we die. And it's about time that the Premier and his government gave credit where credit is due because none of that is a result of any government policy that we've seen emanate from those benches.

And they can talk about Ag 2000 all they want; the simple fact is, Mr. Chairman, that we in this province are tied to a world economy and we had best get out of the road of the producer instead of piling on the roadblocks, like we've seen this Premier and this government do.

The Premier raised the point about Sears and other large concerns in this province who are going to do well. And I say, bravo. Bravo for bringing them here, and we all understand how they got here. They got here because there was an incentive put in place that was lucrative enough for them to choose this jurisdiction over somewhere else.

So don't be fooled. They didn't come here because they liked the Premier's labour legislation; they didn't come here because they totally agree with the way the economy is being run; they were brought here, and they're staying here because the proper incentives were put in place.

And you know what, Mr. Chairman? That isn't a whole lot different than what the previous administration did. A different style, different verbiage, different semantics, but it's basically the same.

And I know they like to talk about the deals that they do with various large concerns. But what really

concerns me, Mr. Chairman, and what I want the Premier to comment on, is the fact that 500 small-business people gathered together in Saskatoon, his home city, last week -- 500 people who are concerned about their livelihood, about their employees, about the families that have invested in their livelihood and their future. And they are dismissed summarily by members of his cabinet. Those 500 have no special deal or arrangement. They don't get free telephone service like Sears does. They don't have access to large amounts of grant money through the growth fund like other companies do.

They don't have the promise of buildings or other incentives put before them. These are people that will make it or break it because of their ingenuity, because of hard work, and because their families have contributed to the society for generations. That's how they'll succeed, Mr. Chairman.

So perhaps the best place to start, keeping in mind that these 500 said: where are the jobs going to come from, where is the profit margin going to come from, where is our ability to compete in a North American market-place going to come from with this agenda of high taxes, restrictive labour law, and an inability to influence government; perhaps the Premier could start there and then we can work back through the presentation that he made to us today here with all of the points that are involved. And we can see how the Premier is spending the taxpayers' money and whether it's wise or we are simply going to be subjected to a litany of more broken promises that will never be fulfilled in the term of this Premier.

Hon. Mr. Romanow: -- Mr. Chairman, it's difficult to know where to begin with the rambling -- how should I describe it? -- dissertation of the Leader of the Opposition, but I'll try to just make two or three points and hope to focus the debate a little bit more specifically.

Most latterly, the Leader of the Opposition talked about the 300 or so people who were at a rally in Saskatoon respecting The Labour Standards Act amendments and The Trade Union Act amendments. And I want to say to the Leader of the Opposition that the history of both of these pieces of legislation is a history of consultation, extensively involving both employers and employees.

Now I understand how consultation goes in public life. If you meet, but your point of view is not accepted, very often the person says that he or she was not consulted. It's when you meet and the point of view is accepted, that you are consulted and you understood and you accept the change.

The nature of the process would be that both the trade union movements and some sectors in the employers' sectors -- not as many as the hon. member would have the public believe in his doomsday scenario -- would be happy with some changes and unhappy with some other changes.

I want to tell you that for the first time -- I've gone

through, I think, three or four Trade Union Act revisions in my political career -- for the first time in that period, I dare say since 1944 when we introduced The LSA (The Labour Standards Act) and The TUA (The Trade Union Act), the amendments, and the amendments that were introduced subsequent to consultation in this House, they were done to the benefit, if I could put it that way, from the employer point of view. I don't like to categorize it as employer or employee; I think it's to the benefit of the entire economic view.

In 1983 when you were part of the government that introduced The Trade Union Act amendments -- the last comprehensive amendments from that point of view -- the trade union movement was not even allowed inside this Legislative Building, let alone inside the Labour minister's office or the premier's office. There wasn't one change to one t or one i; everything was cast in stone.

Now do we have a perfect solution here? I think the answer is we do not. We have told the business community that we want to work with them and the trade union community to further develop the improvements of The Labour Standards Act. The minister has given the details of that announcement; I need not to repeat them.

With respect to The Trade Union Act, we're going to set up an industrial relations council to look at outstanding issues which need to be reviewed, whether it's the issues of notice to terminate or other considerations such as the powers of the Labour Relations Board.

I believe this process will be transparent, it'll be open. It'll be dominated by people who are respected in the community, arms length from the government, and at that point the progress will take place from these changes. That is what responsible business leaders see. That's what I think the Leader of the Opposition sees, except for what he has to do as a politician.

And that is a marked contrast -- talk about democratic reform -- a marked contrast from the way things were done from 1982 to 1991, albeit it is not as perfect as people, depending on your points of view, would want it to be achieved.

The second point that I want to make is the fundamental contradiction that the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Third Party always find themselves in. It is this: you should have devoted this session to tax reduction, no cut-backs, and balancing the budget. And by the way, no 24 . . . and a 24 per cent increase for judges.

Now you know if you can believe that, if you can square that circle, you'd believe -- with the greatest respect to Doug Henning and the Natural Law Party -- you'd believe in yogic flying.

If you tell me where you want the tax cuts and the loss of revenue, and you tell me you want to achieve a balanced budget, you have to tell me and the people

of Saskatchewan where you're going to make up the revenue.

Now don't get up and say, oh well we're going to make up the revenue by growth in the economy. There simply is not enough growth in any provincial economy anywhere, let alone Canada, to make up the deficit, as the federal government is finding out and as our Liberal government friends are finding out in Atlantic Canada. Huge protests of people that have been involved with respect to cut-backs in P.E.I. (Prince Edward Island) and New Brunswick . . . well New Brunswick not so badly hit, but P.E.I., Nova Scotia with Premier Savage is going through, Premier Wells in Newfoundland -- can't do it.

I mean you can debate this all you want, but this is common sense, and the voter knows this. And that's why it is a fallacy; it's a contradiction. And without getting into old-style/new-style politics, it is the oldest of old-style politics, walking both sides or all sides of the street. You can't do that.

And as a consequence I'm not going to get into it except to say one thing. I draw to the attention of the hon. members' interest an editorial in the Saskatoon **Star-Phoenix**, a paper I do not read very often and whose editorials I do not read very often but somebody forced this to me today. It says: "Taking (the) next step." Quote:

A report by the Toronto-Dominion Bank provides the Romanow government -- and Saskatchewan residents -- with a reason to smile.

I'm smiling. I wish you'd smile.

It found that Saskatchewan was 10th among provinces when it came to per capita deficit. The Saskatchewan figure, according to the bank, was \$290 a person. Only a year earlier, it stood at \$587 and the province was seventh on the list.

The Romanow government remains on track to eliminating the deficit within the next two years, making the provincial debt more manageable.

By the way it then goes on to say what we should do. And there's some interesting ideas there which I would not dismiss out of hand. That's a priority. That's the record.

I won't belabour the House but I can give you quotations from Nesbitt Thomson, Wood Gundy, RBC Dominion Securities. I can give them to you from Moody's. I can give them to you from Standard and Poor's. I can give them to you from the Canadian Bond Rating Service, the Dominion Bond Rating Service.

They're saying this is a time to smile. What's wrong with you folks in the opposition? I mean the face doesn't crack if you smile. This is good news. We've come through a

hard time and we've done it through a credible, credible approach, an approach which is balanced and is responsible.

I'll make one last point if I can before I sit down and that is the business of broken promises. I know that time is really . . . I'm sorry to eat up the time but I may as well take the remaining minute and a half. This is what we promised in 1991. "Let's do it . . . The Saskatchewan Way". "First Things First" was the first promise -- "Common Sense Financial Management".

(One) Open the books. A public, independent audit of the province's financial affairs to cut government waste and mismanagement.

I mean, it can be said done -- Gass.

(Two) A comprehensive review of all PC privatizations and business deals, to determine if they are in the public interest.

Almost done, or we're doing it.

(Three) A balanced budget in our first term of office (not yet done), and a 15-year plan to eliminate the accumulated Devine deficit.

We'll seal that; it's on track.

Next heading: "New Directions, New Priorities -- Jobs, Fair Taxes, and Wealth Creation."

(One) A commitment to save 7,500 jobs threatened by the expanded 7% PST. We will repeal this unfair tax (done).

(Two) Work with local manufacturers and businesses to increase the value-added processing of our resources and commodities for both the domestic and export markets.

We're doing it.

The Chair: -- Order. It being 5 o'clock, the committee stands recessed until 7 o'clock p.m.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.