

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**April 28, 1995**

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**PRESENTING PETITIONS**

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased this morning to present petitions on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to support Bill 31, An Act to amend the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code (Property Rights) which will benefit all property owners in Saskatchewan, and specifically firearms owners, in order to halt the federal Liberal government from infringing upon the rights of Saskatchewan people.

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

These petitions come from the Kelvington, Archerwill, Rose Valley, Saskatoon, Minton, Lintlaw, Okla, Porcupine Plain, Mr. Speaker. Many places across the entire province, Mr. Speaker, that wish to express themselves on this issue. I so present.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy this morning to present petitions on behalf of the people from Medicine Hat, Gull Lake, Hazlet area of the south-west corner of the province and area, and I'll read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to allocate adequate funding dedicated towards the double-laning of Highway No. 1; and further, that the Government of Saskatchewan direct any monies available from the federal infrastructure program towards double-laning Highway No. 1 rather than allocating these funds towards capital construction projections in the province.

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

And I'm happy to table these today, Mr. Speaker.

**READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS**

**Clerk:** — According to order, the following petitions have been reviewed and pursuant to rule 12(7) they are hereby read and received:

Of citizens of the province of Saskatchewan petitioning the Assembly to allocate adequate funding toward the double-laning of Highway No. 1.

And of citizens of the province petitioning the Assembly to oppose changes to federal legislation regarding firearm ownership.

**NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS**

**Mrs. Bergman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day 62 ask the government the following question:

Regarding Saskatchewan Water Corporation: (1) what was the cost of sending Bob Wheatley to the effective executive program at Waskesiu in 1992; (2) what are the names of all Sask Water employees who participated in the effective executive program at Waskesiu in 1994; (3) what are all costs associated with these employees attending this seminar; (4) what are the names of all employees who have enrolled in this seminar for the current year?

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day 62 ask the government the following question:

Regarding the Department of Health's recent brochure mail-out: (1) what was the total cost of printing the brochures; (2) what was the total cost of distributing the brochures; (3) what was the total cost of producing the brochures; (4) what was the total cost of advertising or communications consulting associated with any aspect of the production of these brochures?

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on Tuesday next move first reading of a Bill, An Act to Amend and Repeal The Members of the Legislative Assembly Superannuation Act, 1979.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**Ms. Murray:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a great, great pleasure for me this morning to introduce to you, and through you to my colleagues in the Assembly, a very fine group of young men and women sitting in the west gallery. I think this has to be one of the largest groups I've ever had the pleasure to introduce. Altogether there are 128 of them, and these are the provincial school safety patrollers who are here for the jamboree which is sponsored by the Canadian Automobile Association.

Now this, as I understand it, Mr. Speaker, is group B. Group A is presently touring the building, but there wasn't enough room to put all of them in the west gallery.

So we all know that these young patrollers take their responsibility for the safety of their fellow students very seriously, and I'm sure we've all seen them on the streets in good weather and in bad.

They are accompanied by 19 chaperons, and I know that they're going to have a great day today. So please join me in welcoming them here this morning. Thank you.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hagel:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, Mr. John

Nilson, who is seated in your gallery today, Mr. Speaker. Last night the Regina Lakeview New Democrats, Mr. Speaker, had a nominating convention with over 400 people in attendance, and three excellent candidates. And I'm pleased to advise members of the Assembly that the successful candidate and the representative for the New Democratic Party in the next election will be Mr. Nilson.

I would ask all members of the Assembly to congratulate him and to welcome him here today.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### Tribute to Injured Workers

**Mrs. Bergman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we observe a day of mourning to honour workers killed and injured on the job.

As has been traditionally done, we observe this day by flying the flags on the Legislative Building at half staff and observing a moment of silence in this Chamber. We mark this day of mourning on April 28 because it was on this day in 1914 that Canada's first workers' compensation program was introduced for injured workers.

To everyone who has lost a loved one in a workplace accident, I offer the sympathies of our caucus. To those who have been injured I offer the hope that your health is recovered and you have been able to return to your work.

I realize however that many injured workers, such as those injured in the Shand power site crane collapse accident five years ago, must endure not only painful and prolonged rehabilitation, but delayed action in having their rightful financial compensation resolved.

This is an important day on which we honour those who have been killed or injured on the job; but when we also pledge to work towards the goal of being a province completely free of workplace accidents.

I ask all members to join me in paying tribute to all our Saskatchewan workers and especially those who have lost their lives while performing their jobs.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Hagel:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seven years ago it was my honour to introduce legislation to declare in statute, April 28 to be set aside as a day of mourning for workers killed or injured on the job, making Saskatchewan the first jurisdiction in Canada, and this day now being recognized by governments across the nation.

This date was chosen, as has been said, because April 28, 1914 was the day that Canada's first workers' compensation program for injured workers was introduced. On this day, Mr. Speaker, we declare our sympathy to families and friends of workers who

have died or been injured during the previous year. We know that we can only recognize the pain of those who have lost a loved one. We realize that a workplace accident has created a permanent void in their lives.

But we can take this day to renew our pledge to work toward the total elimination of workplace fatalities. That is a goal we permanently seek. We've made progress in legislation, in education, in enforcement, and in improved workplace practice. The fact that this day exists means that there remains more to be done.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I urge that this Assembly continue its tradition of the past seven years, and before orders of the day observe a moment of silence in respect for workers and the families of Saskatchewan workers who have been killed or injured on the job, and to affirm the personal pledges of our heart.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition I would like to recognize the day of mourning as well for workers that have been killed or injured in the workplace. Tragically, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan public is all too familiar with the problems of work-related injuries.

I think there is scarcely a person in the province who is not either related to or acquainted with someone who has been injured on the job. The agricultural base of our province means that we have a lot of people working with a wide range of dangerous equipment under tight deadlines and high stress. On this day of mourning we should all take time to consider safety on the job.

To those who have suffered the loss or injury of loved ones, I offer my deepest sympathy and that of my colleagues. To those who have been fortunate enough to avoid tragic experiences, please take note and exercise caution on the job and in the workplace and, as well, in other parts of your life.

Our work environment has steadily improved throughout the years. When recognizing these important . . . improvements, rather, it is important to also commend employers who through their own initiatives and humanity have endeavoured to secure the safety of many of our employees.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important day and I ask all members to join me in remembering the workers that have been killed or injured across the province and around the world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Self-employment Assistance Program

**Ms. Murray:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this week I had the opportunity to attend the graduation of 25

students from the self-employment assistance program. This program is offered by the Canada Employment Centre and conducted by Prairie Financial Management.

It is geared towards unemployed people wanting to start their own businesses. The graduation this week was the fourth one under the program. Previously, Mr. Speaker, 55 adults and 10 young people have completed the course with an 80 per cent success ratio.

Though Saskatchewan has many large and medium-sized corporations, it is the small businesses who are the real backbone of the economy.

Those who take the course become a vital part of the small-business sector, create their own jobs, and often find it necessary to employ others. This course complements perfectly Saskatchewan measures such as reductions in business tax rates and JobStart programs that encourage new businesses. Together these efforts are driving the economy and leading to many new jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the 25 new entrepreneurs and wish them the best of luck. They will play an important part in Saskatchewan's recovery. I also wish to thank the Canada Employment Centre and Prairie Financial Management for their role.

Thank you,

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **International Sculptors Festival and Trade Show**

**Ms. Bradley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although this event will not take place for a few months, I want to give some advance publicity to a very interesting and worthy international event coming up — an event that is actually part of an ongoing project just south-east of Weyburn. I refer to the 1995 International Sculptors Festival and Trade Show.

An organization called Help International, or Health, Education and Livelihood Project, and Art Africa Incorporated, under the direction of Mr. Rodney Sidloski, has established itself with a double purpose — both of them admirable — of creating and marketing African soapstone sculpture, and of promoting artistic exchanges and communication between African and Inuit artists.

Art Africa Incorporated and Help International have already sponsored an international sculptors festival in 1994, which brought together sculptors from East and West Africa, the Denes and Inuvait from Canada's far North, and from southern Canada as well.

This was a very successful event — so successful in fact that it is being repeated and expanded this August. Fifty stone sculptors from the High Arctic, from South America, Africa, Asia, Europe, and southern Canada, will carve their way through 10 tonnes of soapstone and granite.

This is an exciting development on the plains of southern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and I invite all members to visit it this summer, as visitors, artists, school groups, and the curious, are all welcome.

Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **Northwest Airlines Flies Into Saskatchewan**

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm still mad as heck about gas prices, but today I have the happy task of saying that there will be a new international scheduled air service to Saskatchewan inaugurated Monday by Northwest Airlines.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trew:** — I'm pleased to welcome Northwest to Saskatchewan. This latest announcement, Mr. Speaker, shows that the *Partnership for Renewal* economic strategy is helping to enhance the business environment in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan exporters are constantly travelling to develop distant markets and foreign trade delegations regularly come to visit Saskatchewan.

In addition to that, of course, we've been drawing more and more international attention and visitors to conferences and international sporting events as well as tourism events and attractions, such as the coming Grey Cup '95 festival right here in Regina and of course the Big Valley Jamboree, Wanuskewin Heritage Park, and the Tyrannosaurus rex fossil find in the south-west. Our rapidly expanding film industry is also generating its own flow of international travel.

All this means that scheduled global air links are increasingly important — more so than ever — to the economic development of our province, and I'm very pleased to see a major international airline like Northwest making a decision to establish service right here in Saskatchewan.

An example of the benefits already being felt from Northwest's new service is the announcement today by Prince Albert-based Athabaska Airways of an agreement for joint fares with Northwest. This is expected to provide a significant boost to northern tourism.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

#### **ORAL QUESTIONS**

##### **Balanced Budget Legislation**

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions this morning are for the Madam Minister of Finance. Madam Minister, the reviews on your balanced budget legislation are in and it's two thumbs down.

University of Saskatchewan economics professor called your Bill a waste of time. He says your legislation is nothing more than a political gesture, Madam Minister. It's clear that your Bill is carefully designed to allow you and your government the maximum number of ways out of a balanced budget. It protects your hide instead of protecting the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

Madam Minister, very simply, why did you refuse to put any provisions for taxpayer input into tax increases? Do you basically disagree with this concept? Or is it your intention to once again promise no increases before an election and then turn around and implement another massive tax grab, should you win.

We've seen this movie before, Madam Minister. Why not put some assurances in the Bill so that we don't see this same sad ending as we've seen in other legislation that you've done? Would you do that today, Madam Minister?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. MacKinnon:** — Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, I welcome that question. As I've said before, referenda are expensive. And if you look at what's happening today in the province of Quebec, governments can very easily manipulate referenda to their advantage.

But what I say to the members opposite is, why are we debating this? This government has already come out with its four-year plan for the finances of this province. And what are in there are no tax increases. In fact what's in there is tax cuts. So the people of this province know what they're going to get for the next four years.

But the members opposite say the reviews are in on our legislation. And I will say yes, the reviews are in on our legislation. And I have a review here by a group hardly known to be friends of this government — this is the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce. Their own press release is headed by the, quote: Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce welcomes balanced budget legislation. They say it is an extremely positive step for this province. And I quote, again — I will read it all if you want. There is not a negative comment in here. The chamber president said:

Certain checks and balances in this legislation also meets with Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce policies. For example, the government cannot change accounting methods mid-term, any monies from the sale of Crown corporations cannot be used for general revenue purposes, and any budget surpluses must go toward debt reduction.

They like it and so do the people of Saskatchewan — thumbs up.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Madam Minister, we've heard those kind of hollow promises before from you people — pre-election budget types of promises.

The Premier promised everyone that the PST (provincial sales tax) would be gone October 21, 1991. Trust me, the Premier said. That was his promise to the people of Saskatchewan.

The Associate Minister of Finance said on May 21, 1991, and I quote: The NDP . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. Order, order. Order. Will the members please come to order. We can't have the constant interruption on both sides. When the minister was answering, there was interruption on this side. And now we're having interruption when the Leader of the Opposition is up.

I would ask members to please give respect to the members that are asking the question and those that are answering.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Madam Minister, the Associate Minister of Finance said on May 21, 1991, and I quote: The NDP won't raise any personal taxes for four years. That was his commitment during the last election campaign, Madam Minister.

That's the kind of thing that we can expect from this government. That's why people don't believe in your balanced budget legislation, Madam Minister. That's why the taxpayers of this province want strict controls on the politicians — to make sure they adhere to balanced budgets, Madam Minister. They don't believe you. They don't believe anybody. And that's the reason why, Madam Minister, there has to be assurances in legislation. That's why there has to be controls in legislation.

Will you support, Madam Minister, an amendment that will entrench taxpayer protection into your piece of legislation? We'll bring this forward this afternoon, if you like, to entrench taxpayer protection into your Bill.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Ms. MacKinnon:** — Mr. Speaker, I've already answered that question. But it's so amusing. Obviously the Leader of the Opposition has to keep reading his script no matter what I say. I say: the chamber likes the legislation; he says: don't worry, everybody doesn't like this legislation.

But you've got to have a sense of humour to have the Tories here talking about finances. It's so amusing. These guys talk so tough and mean and miserable. I mean as the songster says: who needs actions when you've got words? But what did they actually do when they were in government? They racked up huge deficits.

And what . . . and I won't even get into that, I won't even saddle the new leader with their legacy. But I'll say this: they're trying to tell the people of Saskatchewan that this is not a tough government — a government that took this province from the brink of financial ruin; a government that when we inherited this province could hardly borrow money, and now have balanced the books of the province and have had the first upgrade in our credit rating of any provincial upgrade in five years. We're not tough enough?

We don't talk tough — we don't talk tough. What we do is we take the tough choices that have to be made to balance the books of this province and to plan for its future.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### The Battlefords Constituency Office

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister responsible for the Board of Internal Economy. Mr. Minister, about eight years . . . for the last eight years, the member from The Battlefords has been running his constituency office from a non-profit corporation run by two prominent New Democrats. The member pays the highest rent of any MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) — over \$2,000 a year higher than any other member — even though he shares his space with a federal MP (Member of Parliament), Mr. Speaker.

As a result, the non-profit company, PDN Ventures — which for those that can't spell is NDP (New Democratic Party) backwards — has been able to turn a healthy profit and has built up nearly \$36,000 in equity to the end of 1993, Mr. Speaker. The non-profit company has never stated its corporate objective other than a vague promise to donate the money to some unnamed charity. As far as we know, Mr. Speaker, not one dime has ever been given to charity.

Mr. Minister, clearly this is not an appropriate way to set up your office rental agreement. Do you have any plans for dealing with this manner in the Board of Internal Economy?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Anguish:** — Well the member opposite is a member of the Board of Internal Economy and I'd be quite happy if the Board of Internal Economy dealt with the situation as to who I rent my constituency office from, and how I rent my constituency office.

The member opposite and others have been trying to create something out of this for approximately a year now. There is no violation of any directives of the Board of Internal Economy. There's no violation of the rules of the Legislative Assembly.

I'd be more than happy to have this dealt with by any body that you would see fit. I would suggest that if you feel it's a pressing issue that you should take it forward to the Board of Internal Economy and I'd be happy to answer any questions that you might have that are specific to my rental arrangement on my constituency office.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Minister, getting a Board of Internal Economy meeting scheduled has been about the same as you picking a charity, which you promised to do way last year. You said you'd have one picked by the first of the year — January. It is now the end of April; we still haven't had a charity pick.

Mr. Minister, what people don't like is you being able to go into

an election campaign and act like the sugar daddy of North Battleford by making a big donation to a charity, even though this is all taxpayers' money. And, Mr. Speaker, people don't feel it's appropriate that the member from North Battleford can, just before an election, turn over this money that he's been stockpiling for eight years and appear to be North Battleford's gift.

Mr. Minister, you have found a loophole in the rules by using a non-profit corporation. What actions are you planning then — seeing as you've chosen to answer the question on behalf of the government — what are you planning to do to close the loophole that allows you to use a non-profit when other members of the Assembly obviously can't do that?

**Hon. Mr. Anguish:** — Well I don't know that your statements are accurate. There is very little in the way of who you can and who you cannot rent your constituency office from. As long as it's not rented from a family member, it's quite legitimate to chose who it is. Would you rather that New Democrats would do like many Conservatives have done in the past, is to pick some of their friends in the real estate business and rent from them so they can put it in their pocket as personal profit? I don't know what the member is trying to get at.

I think your getting pretty bankrupt of ideas when you accuse me of being able to do some sugar-daddy routine prior to an election campaign. I want to make it very clear to the member opposite that it's not up to me what a non-profit corporation does to conduct their business, and you'd be more appropriate to address those questions in the Board of Internal Economy and ask the landlord, if you want, to appear before the Board of Internal Economy.

It's not my decision to make. I'm a tenant in the building. I've paid the same rent since 1986; I pay the same rent today. And I think that you're trying to make a mountain of political controversy where there is nothing there.

If you feel there's something there, take the appropriate action. And I'm sure that the landlord, or myself if you want, or both, will appear before the Board of Internal Economy. There's been a meeting set, I understand, for next week. If you want me to be there, I'm more than happy to be there. Those meetings are open to the media and so we'll have full disclosure.

I think you're getting very bankrupt of ideas when you're trying to smear people's . . . legislature to cover up for your own inadequacies.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well let's go through this one more time for the minister's benefit. Let's put the fairness quotient to it here. The member pays the highest rent in the whole province. The money goes through an arm's-length company run by two prominent New Democrats. It's supposed to be a non-profit company, but it's making huge profits. It's supposed to give money to charity, but it hasn't given out one dime in eight years.

Now the member stands on his feet, Mr. Speaker, and he gets very defensive about that. The simple fact is, Mr. Speaker, that every other member in the legislature was told that they could not use a holding company to run their office. That was changed years ago. The member continues to have this loophole that allows him to do all of these things, and then he says that the question is not one that members of the Assembly should deal with.

I say to the member, do you believe it's fair that all of those things can happen and that you should not have to answer for it, Mr. Member. Going into an election campaign, you have tens of thousands of dollars put there by the taxpayer which you then are going to turn over to the charity of your choice at the appropriate time.

Mr. Minister, let's say nothing else, whether politics . . . but is it fair? You believe that that is a fair system for the taxpayers of this province to allow you to do?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Anguish:** — Well I'll deal with just one of those issues to point out the inaccuracies of what the member alleges, Mr. Speaker. The very first thing that he said when he got to his feet on the last question is I pay the highest rent of any member.

That is absolutely false. I would ask the members of the press gallery, I'd ask the members opposite, to go to the *Public Accounts* of the province or go to the Legislative Assembly Office. Because of the controversy that the member opposite caused to the media, the Premier has also questioned me in regard to whether or not there was any problem with the rental of my constituency office.

And I've assured him in writing that there is none. The members can check that out as well. In some of the years there are at least 11 to 13 members that paid more rent than I do. So I'm not going to dignify the member opposite by going through the long list of other inaccuracies that he brings out.

Again I stress to you that if you want to throw around inaccurate information to cover up for your own inadequacies for your caucus, I would ask you to call this before the Board of Internal Economy and we'll deal with it in a forum where I have the opportunity to respond with the accuracy of the true facts and not the innuendo and the untruths that you put forward on the floor of this Legislative Assembly.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### **Crown Construction Tendering Agreement**

**Mr. McPherson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a letter dated March 23, 1995 from CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan) to contractors informing them of various aspects which have to be adhered to in order to qualify under the new Crown tendering agreement.

The letter states, and I quote:

It is CIC's intention to monitor how well the new Agreement works during the 1995 construction season, and review it for the purpose of making any required adjustments. Your comments would be appreciated.

We know you've been asked to make some adjustments already, Mr. Minister. Can you tell us in the House today how many complaints CIC has or the government has received regarding this union tendering policy.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I can't give you a precise figure. I can tell you that they have been few in number from individual contractors. Most individual contractors . . . in contradistinction to members in this House, most individual contractors are prepared to give the policy a season, see how it works, and then revisit it with CIC and the Crown corporations thereafter.

I know there are groups who are lobbying noisily against the policy, but our impression is the vast majority of contractors are prepared to see how it works, and if there are adjustments to be made, CIC is more than prepared to do that. We think the policy will work well and we think most contractors are prepared to give it a chance.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McPherson:** — Mr. Minister, I dare say the people of the province would like to see that list and I'd ask you to table that list today.

Mr. Speaker, this proposal will come at a definite cost to the people of Saskatchewan. There is almost \$825 million budgeted for Crown construction projects. The Saskatchewan Construction Association believes that about 575 million of that will fall under this Crown Tendering Agreement. Estimates from various groups believe the extra cost for each project will be between 15 and 20 per cent more under the tendering agreement. This NDP government could waste \$115 million on this ill-conceived plan.

My question to the Minister: why would anyone in their right mind devise an agreement that could cost the people of Saskatchewan \$115 million more — money that could be used to be spent on health care or education or paying off the debt?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Liberals in this House use facts with wild abandon, I must say. What is an undeniable fact is what Liberals when they . . . in those rare occasions when the public make the mistake of trusting them with office, what is a fact is how Liberals dispense contracts when in office. I'm not going to remind the member of what's happening in Ottawa, where the Prime Minister's son-in-law has been awarded a very lucrative contract, which is scandalous. That's what Liberals do in office.

What New Democrats do in office is attempt to define policies which provide a level playing-field in which everybody can play equally. That's what we've done. We don't believe when the season's over this is going to cost the taxpayer anything. We think we'll be able to prove that.

That, however, is for the future. What is clear and evident now is that when Liberals get into office they treat it as a licence to rifle the treasury. That's not what we've done. We have set out a policy which is fair and even and fair to all concerned.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McPherson:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite made mention that he didn't have many complaints as far as this tendering policy. I'll table several letters today that we received, and I know he's received, Mr. Speaker.

Rural municipalities that represent tens of thousands of people are concerned about the agreement, and I would like to quote from letters sent to Mr. Bill Hyde, vice-president of human resources at CIC.

The RM (rural municipality) of Duck Lake states:

Small . . . contractors are the job creators of our province and constant interference in the free-market cannot be tolerated. This policy will decrease competition for crown work and substantially increase costs to the crown.

The RM of Enniskillen states:

It is not a fair tendering (policy) because tender is Union only.

The RM of Mankota states:

You have asked Saskatchewan residents to sacrifice and (they) have. We have for the most part accepted the tough decisions that were made. However this policy initiative is so discouraging. Why are we now embarking on a policy that will inflate costs.

My question to the minister in charge of CIC: will you commit to repealing this agreement before any long-term damage is done to the contractors across the province, and ensure that a fair, equitable, and fiscally responsible system is restored?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Speaker, we believe that this policy will prove during the upcoming year that it costs the taxpayers nothing; that it provides apprenticeship training for Saskatchewan workers; and that it provides work for Saskatchewan people, in contradistinction to what happened when the former administration were in office, and in contradistinction to what happened in that long ago period when Liberals were in office in this province.

What happens during those periods is that out-of-province contractors do most of the work. Our skilled labour force is depleted; they move out of the province.

One of the challenges, Mr. Speaker, in this period of increasing prosperity, is to rebuild a skilled workforce. That's one of the things we now have to do since you people drove them out of the province.

Mr. Speaker, I'll end by saying that there may well be an opportunity for the people of this province to decide whether they want Liberal tendering policies, whereby the Prime Minister's son-in-law gets the contract, or whether they want NDP tendering policies, which attempts to rebuild a skilled labour force in this province. They're going to get a chance to decide.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — And I want to say to the member opposite, I've not yet heard you . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. next question.

#### Treatment for Hepatitis C Victims

**Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Wednesday in the legislature I raised the case of Vicki Lissel whose drug program funding for interferon has been cut off by your government. The Minister of Economic Development promised to check back on the matter and report back to the legislature. I was wondering, Mr. Minister, if you could provide that answer today.

Mr. Minister, Vicki Lissel doesn't have a lot of time to waste. After her remaining drug supply runs out, she said and I quote: I won't be able to fight off anything after that. Death will happen a lot quicker. Mr. Minister, do you have an answer for Vicki Lissel today?

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — I have not received a report to bring to the House from the Department of Health, but I will take upon myself to ask the department to hurry up their response and we'll get something for you as early as Monday.

**Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Minister, I think you have to recognize the urgency of this situation. Vicki Lissel needs an answer today. She doesn't need an answer some day down the road. She needs an answer from you and your government soon. Today would be the commitment that you should be giving.

Mr. Minister, on a broader issue, what is your government going to be doing to compensate people like Vicki Lissel who contracted hepatitis C through the blood supply? It's over a year since we first brought this up. Nothing has been done and people like Vicki continue to get sick and continue to get even sicker as time goes. Mr. Minister, when are you going to address this tragedy?

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, the member asks about the broader issue of health care in the province of Saskatchewan; I might say the broader issue of medicare across Canada. And while I will agree with the member opposite and agree with the Liberals who bring individual issues to the House on medicare, that there are obviously many issues in health care under the present changes, under the old program before the changes, and will be in the future . . . There's no doubt about it. Because when people have difficult health issues, whether it's cancer, whether it's HIV (human immunodeficiency virus), obviously all the needs will never,

ever be met.

But what I want to make the point to the member opposite on the broad issue of health care, the New Democrats and CCF (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation) established and gave birth to medicare in this country. And for you to come to this House and say that the members opposite in the Tory caucus would do a better job, or worse yet, members of the Liberals, whose leader at the time medicare was being established, Ross Thatcher, said he would fight with every ounce of effort he had to keep medicare out of this province . . . have no right to come here and claim that they would do a better job of delivering health care services in this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Minister of Highways' Travel

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Highways.

Last week I asked this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, where the Minister of Highways was over the past few weeks. While many communities in Saskatchewan are facing floods and are in need of emergency assistance, it seems the minister responsible for Highways is more concerned with getting re-elected than with taking responsibility for emergency measures required in the "Red Sea" zone.

I would like to ask the Minister of Highways just where he was last week when the town of Englefeld was almost under water. When the residents of that town were faced with almost six-foot-deep headwater heading for their town, no one could be found that would take the responsibility of cutting the highway to allow that water to escape.

Mr. Minister, it required eight huge pumps to pump water for 24 hours in order to alleviate that situation because the railroad company took the initiative and cut the railroad through and put three culverts in immediately to relieve the water pressure, while the highway was left intact and pumps had to be used to divert that water around that highway. Now that's unnecessary.

And if you would have left some . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, order, order. If the member has a question, I'd like the member to put his question, please.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Why were you out of touch during that period of time, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to say first of all that the member is right, that the town of Englefeld was having problems last weekend. Two things happened: part of Schulte Industries head office burned to the ground; and the other thing was, at the same time, there were problems with potential flooding.

Mr. Jim Carnago, who is the CEO (chief executive officer) at Schulte Industries, phoned me on Tuesday morning, I believe it was, to congratulate us for two things. One, that the Minister of

Highways opened up the highway, cut an opening in the highway to allow the water out.

The information you have is absolutely false and misleading, and I would ask you to apologize to the people of Englefeld because Mr. . . . the individual who called to our office congratulating us, Mr. Jim Carnago, who was acting on behalf of the town during that crisis, both taking care of his industry where the head office had burned . . . and also called us. And we immediately opened the highway, along with CN (Canadian National) opening their tracks.

He congratulated the Minister of Highways for paying attention and immediately responding to the needs of the town. Your question is misleading, wrong, false, and I would use stronger language if I weren't in the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — Order.

(1045)

### TABLING OF DOCUMENT

**The Speaker:** — Before Orders of the Day, I think members are aware that yesterday I met with the delegation from Jilin Province in China and I think it's incumbent upon me to table in the legislature the letter that was handed to me. But in order that members . . . I will table of course the original members for those who are able to read the Chinese language, but I will now read the English version of the letter that was handed to me as the president of the Legislative Assembly.

To: The Speaker of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly:

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Jilin and Saskatchewan have had a twinning relationship since 1984. The two sister provinces have made progress in personnel exchanges and technical cooperation in the economic, trade, science/technology, and culture and education sectors.

Last June a Saskatchewan delegation led by the Hon. Ed Tchorzewski visited Jilin and signed the "Fifth Plan of Action", and celebrated the 10th anniversary of our relationship.

The year 1995, the beginning of the second decade of our relationship, signals a period of even closer relationship between our two provinces. This year is not only Saskatchewan's 90th Anniversary, it is also the 50th Anniversary of the anti-fascist movement in China.

The Jilin People's Congress wishes to move toward greater cooperation with Saskatchewan. To this end, the Standing Committee of Jilin Province People's Congress now wishes to establish a new working relationship with the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. This letter invites you to visit Jilin at your convenience to discuss the possibility of cooperation between our legislative bodies.

Highest respect.

Standing Committee, Jilin People's Congress, April 21, 1995.

For the edification of the members, I did indicate to them that I would not be running again, but that I would take it upon myself to make sure that the new Speaker would be aware of their invitation. I will now table the letter.

Why is the member on his feet?

**Hon. Mr. Goulet:** — I'd like to ask leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**Hon. Mr. Goulet:** — Mr. Speaker, seated in your gallery are 10 students and two chaperons on the interchange of Canadian studies. What this is, Mr. Speaker, is that grade 11 students from across Canada and the Territories will be meeting at Stony Plain, Alberta on a conference this year.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to therefore introduce, first of all, the chaperons, which are Brent Toles and Pat Fergusson. The students, Mr. Speaker, are from Kipling, Mankota, Plato, Regina, Kronau, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert.

Mr. Speaker, they're here visiting the legislature. They will be meeting with the member from Qu'Appelle-Lumsden later. So I ask all guests . . . all members to please welcome the guests.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — I ask for leave to introduce guests as well.

Leave granted.

**Mr. Kowalsky:** — I just want to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to welcome a former teaching colleague of mine, Brent Toles, who is one of the supervisors along with Pat Fergusson and the students. Brent and I spent many times discussing education matters — and a few political matters on occasion. And I want members to welcome Brent to the Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Anguish:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd ask leave to make a brief statement concerning the day of mourning.

Leave granted.

**STATEMENT BY A MEMBER**

**Day of Mourning**

**Hon. Mr. Anguish:** — Mr. Speaker, as the member from Moose Jaw Palliser noted earlier, it's the annual day of

mourning for workers killed or injured on the job. I want to take some time today to remember the 31 workers who lost their lives as a result of workplace accidents in the past year — workplaces that were registered with the Workers' Compensation Board.

These names are: Alvin Holowachuk, Carl Mintkawetz, Bradley Belcourt, Leo Soucy, John Sickel, Lloyd Sickel, Wayne Harpold, Jack White, Brian Liesch, Bryon Birdsell, Pablito Orcajada, James Schneider, Jerry Baiton, Ray Shearer, Glen Shiplack, Allan Waterhouse, William Gelowitz, David Amberson, Bernard Loef, Samuel Pawluk, Andrew Fedoriuk, Wayne Schmidt, Patrick Fisher, Darcy Armstrong, John Gillies, Brian Hood, Jakob Weibel, Gerald Rein, Bill Gawrelitza, Donald Irvine, and Andrew Robillard.

Mr. Speaker, 31 families have gone through the pain of having someone go to work and not come home again. Today we recognize their loss and remember the workers who have died.

The list is actually longer, Mr. Speaker, but does not include those killed on farms, that have chosen not to register with the Workers' Compensation Board. In terms of farm fatalities in 1994, there were 28 farm fatalities in 1994 that would make that list even longer, Mr. Speaker.

We also acknowledge, this day of mourning, the heavy price which has been paid by workers who have suffered serious illness or injuries as the result of hazardous conditions or accidents at work. Many of these workers have been left with disabilities they will have to cope with for the rest of their lives.

This day of remembrance, it is also a time to rededicate ourselves to prevent workplace injuries, illness, and death. We have the best legislation in Canada, Mr. Speaker. A great deal of effort is going into enforcement, education, and promotion, and many workers and employers who are dedicated to the cause of health and safety. But we must do more so that every year we have fewer and fewer workers to remember on this day of mourning.

Following the statements that have been made by other members in the House this morning, Mr. Speaker, I would now ask that members rise in a moment's silence for those workers who have been killed on the job.

The Assembly observed a moment of silence.

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

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, as it would relate to question no. 66, I move it be converted to motion for return (debatable).

**The Speaker:** — Question 66, motion for return (debatable).

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

SECOND READINGS

**Bill No. 62 — An Act to Maintain Financial Stability and Integrity in the Administration of the Finances of the Province of Saskatchewan**

**Hon. Ms. MacKinnon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very please today to rise in this Assembly to move second reading of The Balanced Budget Act.

Mr. Speaker, this administration has a solid record of sound financial management. We have a sound financial plan for the future and the determination to see it through. We have eliminated the annual deficit and have begun to pay down the debt.

As I've emphasized many times before, our financial management achievements are not just those of this government. Above all they are the proud achievements of the people of Saskatchewan. This legislation builds on those achievements and demonstrates the government's commitment to continue sound financial management in Saskatchewan.

Accordingly this legislation addresses three key fiscal policy objectives — long-range financial planning; stability, which is so important to Saskatchewan's families and businesses; and the government's accountability to the public. Mr. Speaker, this legislation builds on our record and it is an integral part of our financial plan for the future.

We promised the people of Saskatchewan that we would provide more open and accountable government. We are proud to have delivered on that promise. We made a commitment to eliminate the annual deficit and balance the budget. We are proud to have delivered on that commitment.

We said that when the annual deficit had been eliminated we would begin to reduce the debt. Saskatchewan people are justifiably proud, Mr. Speaker, that we have delivered on that promise. In the fiscal year just ended, we reduced the total debt of the province by more than \$500 million.

Mr. Speaker, when this administration took office in November 1991, a decade of financial mismanagement had produced a financial position for the province that was gravely alarming and simply not sustainable. The annual deficit was \$842 million and rising sharply. The total debt of the province had increased by a billion dollars a year on average, throughout the previous government's years in office.

The province's credit rating had deteriorated significantly, and critical accountability improvements were required in order that the legislature and the public could be better informed and better able to hold government to account.

Faced with that financial situation when we took office, Mr. Speaker, we acted. We acted with a plan, a sound financial plan, which we presented to the public and tabled in this legislature. We acted with compassion and we acted decisively. And because of the courage, determination, and hard work of

all Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, together we have achieved results. The annual deficit has been eliminated and a balanced budget achieved.

The annual deficit that had been \$842 million has been eliminated. And the budget has been balanced not just for the last year, not just for this year, but for four years into the future.

The total debt of the province was reduced, and by the end of 1998-99, the total debt will have been reduced by \$1.2 billion. The province's credit rating has been stabilized, and indeed, has been upgraded.

And we have significantly improved public accountability. Beginning immediately in our very first months in office, Mr. Speaker, this administration has implemented an important series of measures to significantly improve accountability to the people of Saskatchewan.

Our approach emphasized the fundamental principles of long-term planning, stability, and accountability. Those are the central principles embodied in the legislation here before us today. And they are the principles that have characterized this government.

What Saskatchewan people want for the future, Mr. Speaker, is the assurance that their government's approach over the months and years ahead will be based on exactly these same principles. They want a practical and realistic plan.

They want vital public services protected and sustained to improve the quality of life in Saskatchewan. They want stability in government policy in order that individual families and businesses can make their own sound plans and decisions. And they want their government to be fully open, honest, and accountable, with respect to the province's finances. This balanced budget legislation now before the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, addresses those legitimate demands and expectations of Saskatchewan people.

This legislation imposes significant requirements on the government. It requires the presentation of a four-year financial plan, the presentation of a debt management plan, the achievement of at least a balance in the General Revenue Fund over the planning period.

It requires presentation to the legislature of annual update reports, annual mid-year financial reports, and a special report if a major event or set of circumstances has had a dramatic impact on revenue or expenses. Mr. Speaker, these are obligations and requirements that are being imposed on the government by law.

This legislation also recognizes that Saskatchewan's public finances may be subject to sudden, unanticipated shocks such as those which may affect a resource-based economy. No one can accurately predict, for example, the price of oil a year in advance. No one can accurately predict what is going to happen to our crops. It therefore allows the government to avoid the need for sudden, sharp, temporary policy shifts which would be very destabilizing for families, communities, and businesses.

It allows the government to respond to a major, unanticipated,

identifiable event or set of circumstances which has had a dramatic impact on revenue or expenses by exempting the resulting revenue losses or expense increases from their requirement to balance over the four-year period.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this legislation contains two further distinctive provisions which will help protect the public against any future irresponsible government.

First, the Act will prevent the government from manipulating accounting practices in order to meet the balance requirement. Provincial governments should not be allowed to meet the requirement to balance by simply changing its accounting practices and thus taking certain expenses off budget. Such practices will be prohibited.

Second, the Act will prevent the government from using the proceeds from the sale of a Crown corporation in order to increase operating expenses. Such proceeds are clearly not financially sustainable. No government in Saskatchewan should be able to increase operating expenses by simply selling off or privatizing a Crown corporation.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's Balanced Budget Act is based on the same fundamental principles which have guided our approach to financial management from the outset — sound financial management; stability and sustainability; full, open accountability to the legislature and to the people of Saskatchewan.

(1100)

Mr. Speaker, The Balanced Budget Act now before this Assembly builds on our record of sound financial management. We have set out a solid financial plan for Saskatchewan's future and this legislation is an important element in that integrated financial plan. And while these financial goals are important, it is essential to recognize that they are not ends in themselves. Instead they are means to an end. Means to help ensure that working together we are able to achieve the ultimate objectives we seek for our province — sound finances, but also a high quality of life.

Mr. Speaker, I will be pleased to respond to any questions from the opposition when this Bill is in Committee of the Whole, but I will urge them then, as I urge them now, set aside your partisan political interests and cooperate in passing this legislation.

This Bill is about sound financial management and improving public accountability. It is about securing Saskatchewan's future. I urge that its passage not be delayed.

Mr. Speaker, it is therefore with great pleasure that I move that The Balanced Budget Act now be read a second time.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the comments being made by the Minister of Finance in presenting second reading regarding her balanced

budget legislation that she introduced into the Assembly yesterday.

And there's no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that people across this province, and certainly across this land, have indicated that they feel it's time government had some restrictions placed on it regarding spending in order to protect the taxpayers from exorbitant spending that may put governments in a deficit position that has to be addressed sooner or later.

And to that extent we can certainly agree with the intent — and I say the intent — of the current Bill that is before the Assembly. However, Mr. Speaker, I think the words by the Finance minister speak very loudly of the reason for the piece of legislation. Because some of the comments that she made about governments rigging the books or governments juggling figures, I think we don't have to look too far back to find out exactly where that process was taking place.

Take a look at 1991 — take a look at 1991, the fall of '91 or '92, where the government inflated a deficit so that they could look better come election time. And I think if you took the time to really review the auditor's report you would find that the government basically moved debt out of the Crowns into the general fund, inflated the deficit, to make it look better.

And they were fortunate, and the minister acknowledged that, that certainly resource revenue and agriculture revenue this past year actually allowed them to achieve a balanced budget even a little quicker, although how did they achieve that? They achieved that balanced budget this year on the backs of individuals across this province, whether it was the agricultural sector . . . and the agricultural sector certainly has paid dearly, and unfortunately some people in that agricultural field may even pay more dearly come this fall as we see the weather conditions that are facing us. Mr. Speaker, for the minister to indicate that they haven't increased taxes and managed to balance the books, is ludicrous.

I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that while Crown corporations like SaskPower and SaskTelephone and SaskEnergy continue to make exorbitant profits, they have also continued to tax every one of us across this province for the past four years. This past year was the first time we haven't had increases. And that is also a noted convenience in the fact that a general election is on the way and the government didn't want to offend the taxpayers of this province any more than they already have.

And, Mr. Speaker, this government can talk about what the former government may have done in trying to close the books or hide the books — the fact that they needed to open the books. I remember . . . and I just went back and did a review of an interview that Donald Gass, who was the commissioner of the open-the-books commission, just following the last provincial election . . . And his comments on an open line were, never at any time did it appear that the former government attempted to hide the books. The books were wide open for anyone who wanted to take the time to review them.

The unfortunate part, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that while the

government talks a good line, the government continues to just talk about one issue of expenditures in the province of Saskatchewan. They continue to talk about the general expenditures in this province; they forget about the total expenditures. They forget about the fact that Crown corporations are a part of the expenditures and the financial accountability of the province of Saskatchewan.

They forget about the fact that unfunded pension liabilities play an important part in the expenditures of the province of Saskatchewan. And we know within this Legislative Assembly that the unfunded portion of the pension plan within this province, there are seven or eight members in this Assembly who are under that unfunded pension plan who are going to receive very lucrative pensions when they retire or are retired by the electorate of this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, I must also point out to the individuals and to people across this province that while we were facing difficult economic times in the '80s, while we were facing conditions of drought that persisted for a number of years rather than one or two years, the former government took an unfunded pension liability from a \$5 billion unfunded position in 1981 to a position of \$2.8 billion unfunded.

And now what have we seen over the last years? We've seen that unfunded portion has now again increased to \$3.2, which means, Mr. Speaker, that this government continues to take from other portions and allows them to grow while at the same time looking good in one portion.

So I think it's time this minister and this government finally came clear and showed the total picture of debt in the province of Saskatchewan. And I go back to the report that was released by the auditor just back in November, where the auditor took the time to go back and show the progression of debt for the last four years. And in his report showed how the debt has actually increased over the last four years.

And the fact is if you'd look at the total debt in the province of Saskatchewan, taking the general revenue, the Crown corporations, and the unfunded pension plans, and lumping them all together, there's over \$20 billion — some \$6 billion more than it was in the election year of 1991.

So for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, yes we do need legislation that basically holds governments and ministers, like the present Minister of Finance, more accountable for their actions. And as the Saskatchewan taxpayers have indicated, certainly while they agree with the balanced budget legislation, the unfortunate part is this legislation does not address the total aspect of balanced budgets and what do you really mean by balanced budgets.

This legislation appears to have as many loopholes in it that some of the rules within the Board of Internal Economy have, as we heard in question period today.

And it's for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, why our opposition will bring out and point out to the present minister and point out to this government, that there needs to be a little more teeth, as my colleague, the member from Kindersley, the Leader of the

Official Opposition, has indicated. There has to be a little more to this legislation that we have here.

And while we continue to debate the legislation and the balanced budget legislation, Mr. Speaker, we will also take the time to bring forward amendments to address the concerns of individuals, and of the business community, and of the taxpayers across this province, and of the Saskatchewan taxpayers' association, that will indeed address the concerns of individuals who feel that this legislation still does not have the teeth that will be needed to make sure that governments and elected representatives and ministers are responsible for expenditures in this province regardless of whatever party should form the next government — are totally held accountable for their actions.

And so, Mr. Speaker, while we say in principle we can agree with balanced budget legislation, we can agree that it's time governments basically laid out a plan for a term as to what they hope to accomplish, and we can also agree that you basically set out an understanding of what you may achieve for net income to indicate how you'll balance your books, it's also important that when a government doesn't take the appropriate measures to do work within the avenues that are available to it.

And where it would abuse the loopholes that may be available, it's important that we bring forward some firm amendments to this piece of legislation that really hold the government accountable for the type of legislation that they are bringing here today and making a government, any government, responsible indeed to the taxpayers so that the government represents the people and is the servant — indeed the servant, not the master.

And so therefore, Mr. Speaker, while I've raised these points, we have a number of points we want to raise in the future and as we get into discussion. And therefore at this time, to allow the process to work appropriately and to allow for the appropriate term of consultation, I would move adjournment of debate.

Debate adjourned.

## COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

### Motions for Interim Supply

**The Chair:** — Before we deal with the motion, I would ask the Associate Minister of Finance to introduce the officials who have joined us here today.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Two of the three people who are with me were here Wednesday on last . . . part of last week when it was here Wednesday. We had the honour of welcoming Bill Jones, the new deputy minister of Finance. Seated behind him, Wednesday and now, is Larry Spannier, executive director of the Treasury Board branch. New today, but certainly no stranger to this Assembly — he has been here many, many times — is Gerry Kraus, the Provincial Comptroller.

(1115)

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now, Mr. Chairman, I have two points of view that I'd like to express to the minister. First is my grave disappointment with the Minister of Finance not choosing to deliver answers to us about the needs for this money and where it's to be spent. My disappointment that yesterday when we discussed the very important issue, we were not given the answers to the questions that the taxpayers are demanding to know about.

And of course I have some other mixed feelings, Mr. Chairman, because I'm happy to say that — and I have this mixed emotion, because I'm really happy — that after the minister predicted yesterday that the world was going to come to the end and that the universe would stop because we didn't pass this motion, I'm really happy this morning that here we are, all still alive and well and ready to ask some more questions. And the world kept on turning and the universe didn't come to a stop and the sun probably came up in the east above the clouds.

So, Mr. Chairman, it's with a great deal of pleasure that I am here today to ask the questions that the minister more or less predicted we would never have another opportunity to do, because the world was definitely going to come to an end, and we were definitely going to report to all of the constituents how the opposition had destroyed the potential for the province to continue to finance itself and continue to pay the bills that were necessary in order for people to survive.

Well here we are. It's now Friday and we are still alive and well and haven't heard of anybody yet passing away as a result of not having gotten this Bill finished yesterday.

So now that we've gotten past that immediate kind of urgency of necessarily having to pass it in order to save the world, maybe today, because we're past that crisis, maybe, Mr. Minister, you won't mind actually getting down to business and answering some of the questions that we've asked and some of the new ones that have come up as a result of further deliberations in the community around us and out in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Chairman, I would like the minister to explain to us something about the process of the way that the Department of Finance handles the monies of this province. We asked yesterday, is all the one-twelfth apportionment of money, one-twelfth of the budget that we allowed the government through interim supply last month for the month of May . . . Towards the end of March we passed a Bill in this Assembly, allowing the Minister of Finance to spend one-twelfth of the money without having a budget passed. And that was to cover the bills for the month of May, which isn't yet over but soon will be.

Now has all of that one-twelfth apportionment of money been spent? Is there any left over? And we believe that you should be able to answer that kind of a question. We don't think there's any reason why you wouldn't know whether or not the money has been spent or has not been spent and how much money is involved that is or isn't spent.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — It has nothing to do with how much money we've got and whether or not there's a little bit left in the bank account. That's not the issue. The government has money; what the government lacks is authorization to spend the money. And there's quite a difference.

The previous interim supply authorized the expenditure of one-twelfth and no more. Before we can spend any more than that one-twelfth, we need the authorization of the legislature. So thanks to — if I may be forgiven for using the using word — conservative prudent management, we have money to spend. We don't have authorization to spend it. And that's what we're here for today.

I know the members opposite are undeterred by the difficulties they're causing, but you . . . unless this is passed and passed relatively quickly, there are going to be important institutions . . . and there's going to be a good deal of hardship starting Monday when we're unable to make payments which institutions and which the public depend upon. Your gamesmanship, whatever your goal may be — and I must say, I wish you'd enlighten us — whatever your goal in all this may be, you're going to cause a good deal of hardship.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, Minister, I will explain it to you what exactly the point is. The point is grievance before supply. Long-standing tradition of democratic parliamentary process is that the government and the Minister of Finance is required to answer the questions of the taxpayers, before that money that the taxpayers puts into the general fund, in this case, is allowed to be spent. You are to explain yourself to the people.

That's why we have a democratic process that works so well, is because we have certain fundamental rules that have been tried and tested. And the ones that have worked well in the past are the ones that we have kept in the system. And the ones that didn't work are the ones of course that we threw out and changed and experimented with other things.

Now this is a history of hundreds of years. This is not something that I dreamt up yesterday or any other time before that. This is a time-tested approach to democratic government that has been put into effect throughout the British Empire and throughout the world for many generations.

So, Mr. Minister, grievance before supply. That means you tell us why you're going to spend the money and where. And then we say, okay that's fine; you can spend the money in those places.

The other point you make is that . . . and it's not correct, sir. You make the point that the issue is that you need to have permission in order to spend the next two-twelfths. Well the issue is not that. The issue is that I asked you a question: how much money is left from the last apportionment that we gave you permission to spend? How did you spend that? To justify, we want to know those answers so that we can see if you are justified in asking for the next two-twelfths.

Do you have any legitimate right to getting the next two-twelfths? You have to explain to the people of this province, to the taxpayers, whether or not it is justified for you to come and ask for more money. You haven't told us how you spent the last amount we gave you on good faith. We were trying to be fair with you. We let you away. No big questions, no big hassle. But we said we were going to hold you accountable. Now we're holding you accountable. So how much is left?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — The member's question is legitimate. We have spent at this point in time, approximately two-thirds of the one-twelfth which was authorized. However, the entire one-twelfth will be . . . almost all of the one-twelfth will be exhausted at the end of this month. And beginning in May, there will be payments which we would normally make in May which needs additional authorization.

So at this point in time about two-thirds of it is spent. By the end of the month it'll virtually all be gone and cheques which would normally go out in May require additional authorization.

**Mr. Goohsen:** — Well thank you, Minister, and thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we're probably starting to get through to the members that it is responsible government to answer questions that the opposition puts. So let's get into this a little further so that we can resolve these problems.

Now you talk about hardships, and before I get away from that area, I want to take you back to that before you get it out of your mind on other issues. What exact hardships are going to be caused on Monday morning or Tuesday morning, whenever May 1 is, if you don't have this two-twelfths' allocation passed today?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Okay, since the member asked, let me name a sampling of institutions which will be harmed by delaying the Bill.

In the area of Education, Training and Employment: University of Regina, University of Saskatchewan, Campion College, Luther College, St. Thomas More College, St. Peter's College, National Institute for the Blind, Emmanuel and St. Chad's, St. Andrew's College, Canadian Theological Seminary, Central Pentecostal, Lutheran Theological Seminary.

In the Environment and Resource Management area: Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres; reforestation activities are actually going to be physically delayed. It's not that it's hurting somebody but the reforestation activities will be physically delayed.

In the area of Health, we will be hurting district health boards. We will be delaying physicians' payments. And members opposite, I hope, are listening to this. We will be hampering Whitespruce Youth Treatment Centre. A number of NGOs (non-governmental organizations) — let me pick the Metis Addiction Counselling and the Louis Rehabilitation Centre as a couple of representative groups. The U of S student health care. We're going to be hampering community clinics.

In the area of Municipal Government: rural, urban, and northern municipalities will not get their grants under revenue sharing. The members may appreciate that it encompasses most of the province — rural, urban, and northern. Social housing programs and clients under Saskatchewan Housing Corporation will be affected. Public library grants to all of Saskatchewan's libraries. Provincial grants through the Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation.

In the area of Social Services: group homes for abused and vulnerable children and youth, payments to them will be delayed; to transition houses, which assist abused women; sexual assault treatment centres, who assist and work with and treat those who've been sexually assaulted; family counselling centres and services for teen parents; group homes for mentally challenged adults.

Some of these institutions might have some cash flow upon which they can carry on; some of them clearly do not. Members wanted to know who you're hurting. This is who you're hurting. I don't know of a way of making you act in a responsible fashion.

I spent 10 years trying to do that in opposition, without success. Now spent virtually four years in government without success. I don't know any way of making you behave in a responsible fashion. I do want to tell you that there's going to be some real pain if you don't pass this.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, I was really hoping I wouldn't have to stand up and do this again.

You know I thought after we had the discussion with the Finance minister yesterday that we wouldn't see another New Democrat get up in here and chastise us and lecture us about holding . . . I mean as if the opposition are the ones that determine when interim supply comes to this Assembly, Mr. Chairman. What a bunch of garbage.

You know, Mr. Minister, if you were so concerned about all those people out there, why didn't you tell the House Leader to bring it in last week? It's your agenda; you're the one that always puts it up. I mean what is this? Is this a charade or something? Why do we have interim supply? Why don't you just take it off the order paper if you don't want to talk about it. What's the point?

You come in and you're going to spend one-sixth of the entire year's budget, but you don't want to talk about it, so therefore why bring it forward? When you were in opposition, Mr. Minister, it was your God-given right to stand in here and ask questions infinitum on interim supply and you reminded the House of that time and time again.

Why is it New Democrats don't have to answer questions in interim supply? Tories and Liberals and whoever else should have to answer questions in interim supply, but New Democrats don't. If you don't want the exercise, then do away with it. You obviously don't believe in it. You don't believe it's necessary. Why bother? Why take up the time of the House?

Just to have your Finance minister come walking in here from on high and say we're going to spend X millions of dollars and that's it — it's done.

That's what you just told the House. If we don't do it your way, all these people are going to get hurt. Mr. Minister, you know full well that that twelfth that you got last month hasn't all been spent. You know it. I don't know how many . . . Answer this question then. What's the volume of cheques that go out on May 1 and would go out normally on May 1 each and every year. Tell me what the volume is.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — We don't have a precise count, but the number of cheques which go out on May 1 would number in the tens of thousands. And the amount of money would be at a minimum in the tens of millions of dollars. This is no trifling matter that you're toying with.

**Mr. Swenson:** — I'm not toying with anything, Minister, and you know darn well. You know what the practice of this House has been over the last 90 years — 90 years, and you know it.

You asked questions in this House for days on end on interim supply. And if you don't want to answer questions on it, that's fine. Why don't you just come in from on high and say you don't want to answer questions on it and be done with it. Change the rules like you've changed the rules around here for the last four years.

You haven't hesitated to change the rules for your own benefit before; why not change this one? Then you wouldn't have to answer any questions in front of anybody. Just go ahead and spend it. That's what you'd like. That's what you've indicated. That's what your minister's indicated. Why stop now?

You were the one that raised it, Minister. You were the one that raised it. What's the volume of cheques that go out at the end of the month? Maybe you can tell me that?

(1130)

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — The same number.

**Mr. Swenson:** — So some of these organizations get paid on the first of the month and some get paid at the end of the month. Are there any that get paid in the middle of the month?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — There are certainly some that are paid in the middle of the month and this will vary from month to month to some degree. The fact is that will exhaust what we have at the end of April. Starting in May, we do not have the authorization to spend.

The member talks about bringing this in 10 days before the end of the month. In any field of human activity, we always rely upon the past. We assume the practices in the past will continue. At no time in the past 20 years has interim supply taken longer than three days. And it is almost always done in a single day. It sometimes stretches into two. At no time has it ever taken more than three days.

If we'd have had the faintest warning that this is where you people wanted to squander your time, we'd have brought it in a lot earlier. There was no indication this was going to take longer than three days. And certainly past practice would lead us to believe it would take a lot less than three days.

But don't give us this nonsense about bringing it in earlier. You people are breaking with past practice; there's nothing that can be done. You can go on. But you are going, I think, you are going to pay the price in public respect, whatever modest amount of it you people have left — there's very little. Whatever is left, I think you're going to squander it if this goes on past today. I think you've squandered some of it already.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well, Mr. Chairman, if it'll make the member feel better, he can stop the issuance of my pay cheque for a few days to help somebody out. I'd gladly do that for the minister if things are in a real bind. I mean if he wants to hold my pay cheque until the middle of the month, you go right ahead.

But I'm telling you that as an elected person in this province, when I ask legitimate questions about the expenditures of this province, especially seeing as the budget may not be passed . . . that this money may be all that takes this province through an election writ to the end of June.

I see yesterday the Premier of the province announcing the expenditure of \$6 million minimum, outside of anything that we've seen, with the promise of more to come. I asked the minister some simple questions about Treasury Board process because there is a megaproject on the go in downtown Regina involving Crown money and a different borrowing practice or a different spending practice than we've seen previously in this House. And I get no answers.

A matter of fact, the minister, at the end of day yesterday, just more or less said, I will not answer another question; it is none of your business how the Gaming Corporation spends its money. None of your business. Okay? I won't tell you what Treasury Board agreed to or didn't agree to, so therefore I'm some kind of a . . .

I mean I'm only asking questions that any member of this Assembly, when faced with millions of dollars of expenditures, when this may be the only financial document available to the members of the House if the budget doesn't pass . . . and yet I'm foolish. I have no right.

I mean the month before your interim supply went through in probably less than an hour because you only asked for one-twelfth and there was no danger that that was going to be the money that would run the province through an election campaign — none whatsoever. So why wouldn't we grant it you? It's one-twelfth. There's no ability to move money much. This time it's two-twelfths and this could be it. No budget passed.

That wouldn't be the first premier had ever walked out of here and pulled the pin without having a budget passed, would he? You were part of a government in '82 that did that. You went to the polls. You said, I'm not going to pass it. So you wouldn't . . .

that's not unprecedented.

I am faced with special circumstances here, sir, as the Finance critic. And I'm asking you legitimate questions about expenditures that go to the tens of millions of dollars that aren't accounted for in this two-twelfths. You say I'm out of line. I don't understand that.

And I'll tell you, I got a few phone calls last night from people that were very, very sympathetic to the questions I was asking yesterday and thought it made a great deal of sense that those questions should be asked on behalf of taxpayers, especially if you don't pass your budget. And yet you say those questions have no legitimacy and they shouldn't be in this House. That I don't understand from the Associate Minister of Finance — I don't understand that.

You have given me no assurance that the agencies you named do not have money from the previous one-twelfth to at least get them through today, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. That's what you're alluding to and that's what you're telling this Assembly. Are you absolutely firm on that, that those agencies don't have money for today, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Of course I'm not. Your question's absurd. I do not know what the situation at the . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Then why say it?

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I wonder if the member is going to let me finish. I do not think I interrupted you and perhaps you'd let me finish before you respond.

I do not know what the situation at the University of Saskatchewan is, but I could guess. My guess is they've got little cash flow. I do not know what the situation at some of the NGOs are, but I can guess. They've got no cash flow and no ability to borrow. So some of these institutions will get along okay; some will be hurt.

The member talks about stopping his pay cheque. Of course you have the resources to carry on. Of course you do.

I ask the member opposite if you think all social service recipients also have the resources to carry on? Do all the NGOs who live from one cheque to the next have the resources to carry on? Are they going to be able to meet pay cheques and bills that come in at the beginning of the month?

The member opposite is not the most needy of the groups that we deal with. There are many in society far needier than you. We could stop your pay cheque. And frankly it wouldn't bother my conscience if we stopped it for a few days. Does it trouble the member's conscience that we're stopping the cheques from other, far needier groups? Does that trouble your conscience at all?

**Mr. Swenson:** — Well, Minister, if you were so bothered, why haven't you changed the format to make sure that doesn't happen? He says, you know precedent in this House . . . I mean

the Tory precedent was that you didn't come in till two or three days before the end of the month. Well every other thing about Tories I have ever heard in this House coming out of that member's mouth or anybody else, was wrong. So if you thought it was wrong then, why isn't it wrong now?

I mean you didn't hesitate to take away bell ringing in this Assembly. It's been here since 1905. But you, the New Democrats, took that away. Boom, gone. There's never been members' statements in the House till recently. New Democrats did that — bang, change the rules, like that. Used your big majority, ram her through.

Okay, you haven't hesitated a bit to change the rules of this House from past precedent. If you thought it was going to further your political agenda, you do it, sir. You do it.

But all of a sudden we're faced with interim supply. No, we don't want that precedent changed. No, sir. Tories and Liberals did that in the past. We can hang our hat on that one. We can hide behind that. We can go to the NGOs and say, oh these awful Tories are holding up your pay cheque. We're just going on past practice, past precedent. We wouldn't want to change that rule now, would we? That would leave us open to some kind of political embarrassment. Oh no, we wouldn't change that rule.

Same old stuff from you guys all the time. Pick and choose, double standard, here we go. Well it doesn't wash any more, Minister. People are getting smarter all the time. It doesn't wash any more. You set the agenda. You're the government. If you're worried about it, then you do something about it. Don't hide except when it's convenient for you to hide. Do something about it.

I think it would be proper, if you were going to come in with that prepared list, and I presume your officials prepared the list for you, that they would also have a list of how many of those agencies still have some of the one-twelfth available to them. And you would have that and I think you should table that in the House so we clearly see who's got money and who doesn't have money.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — They're not required to report their financial situation to us. There's no way we'd know. The member knows that. We're only speculating. I said that.

I would speculate that the University of Saskatchewan's got some cash flow, although I may be wrong. I would speculate that a goodly number of these NGOs have no cash flow, and there I don't think I'm wrong.

**Mr. Swenson:** — So what you're saying is, no, I haven't got any lists; I'm not going to give you anything; I speculate. I come in here and I make all of these accusations, but I don't have anything to back it up with. Just go away; get out of my road; let interim supply go through. Don't bother me any more. That's a great attitude. You're going into an election campaign, sir. This may be it, but the taxpayer isn't supposed to ask you any questions. Mr. Chairman, I agree with the minister — it's a charade. Maybe we should let him do what he wants to do and

simply get out of his road.

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I move the committee rise, report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

**The Chair:** — I wonder, before we do that, if the minister has another motion that . . .

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — I thank the chairman for his acute observation. I hereby move resolution no. 2:

That towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1996, the sum of \$701,474,000 be granted out of the General Revenue Fund.

Motion agreed to.

The committee reported progress.

#### FIRST AND SECOND READING OF RESOLUTIONS

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Speaker, I move the resolutions be now read the first and second time.

Motion agreed to and the resolutions read a first and second time.

#### APPROPRIATION BILL

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That Bill No. 63, An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Year ending on March 31, 1996, be now introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to and the Bill read a first time.

**Hon. Mr. Shillington:** — By leave of the Assembly, and under rule 55(2), I move that the Bill be now read a second and third time.

Motion agreed to and, by leave of the Assembly, the Bill read a second and third time and passed under its title.

#### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 58

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Shillington that **Bill No. 58 — An Act to amend The Income Tax Act** be now read a second time.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This particular

amendment to The Income Tax Act deals with the government's announcement, budget announcement, to give selected tax cuts to various business ventures around the province, and thereby promote economic development.

And it's really strange, Mr. Speaker, that after all of this time, this particular NDP government has sort of come around to the fact that number one, taxation is a hindrance to business and jobs. And I remember the Premier's quote back in 1991 where he said, taxation is the biggest killer of jobs in our society. And he's absolutely right. I guess that's why he's a thousand jobs short today from where he was back in 1991, Mr. Speaker. After the rest of Canada has pulled itself out of recession and is busy creating jobs, the economies are growing, this province after four . . . nearly four years of NDP government is still a thousand jobs short of where they were then.

So there's no question, taxation has a very big effect on activity in this province. And you only have to ask people in the west side of the province, Swift Current, all the way up to Lloydminster, what the effects of taxation have. They're absolutely devastating. Chamber of commerce in Swift Current estimates that it's \$55 million a year that they lose to Medicine Hat — or at least that area, Swift Current and area.

And I remember well, Mr. Speaker, the debate in this Legislative Assembly back in 1991 when we were dealing with the issue of harmonization, and New Democrats for days on end, tied the Assembly up. Brought in petitions, saying that business — business should not get preferential tax treatment from the average individual. That through harmonization, because business were able to claim back their portion of the sales tax charged for a capital expense or the ongoing needs of business, like your gas bill, your power bill, your telephone bill, those things, that business should not be able to claim that. That that was unfair to the average home owner and the average taxpayer who was going to have to bear the full brunt of harmonization.

But what's happened, Mr. Speaker, is that reality has come home to these people as it has in many ways, and they've realized that the dismal job creation record, the amount of people on social services, was absolutely killing the province of Saskatchewan. That you had to get yourself on an even par with those around you. That Alberta and Manitoba, United States, and other places do have a very strong effect on a province that lives by trade. Trade is absolutely fundamental. Eighty per cent of everything we do here, Mr. Speaker, has to go some place else for consumption, whether it be food products or manufactured products, but we cannot consume and eat and use all of the things that we do here. We are an export orientated society.

Well, Mr. Speaker, when you export, you compete with a whole lot of other people. So what we've seen the government do is very selectively say, because we know sales tax, we know that input costs are a hindrance to you being successful and we need the economic smack that you provide because of employment, because of tax dollars, because of real estate values, we will provide selected usage. And we saw the beginnings of it with Sears and others who got selected, preferential treatment, Mr.

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Speaker, by this NDP government — selected, preferential treatment.

We have now seen this taken another step forward where they've said there's whole sectors now that are going to have this special treatment. And we can even stretch it to the point where we will go to somebody like Cargill and we'll say, rather than you being able to claim these tax credits now over the construction phase of your plant, we'll just give it to you upfront in cash. Okay, you don't even have to go through the paperwork of spending the money; we'll just simply estimate on the total value, capital value of your plant, and we'll upfront the cash.

Well that's quite a leap, Mr. Speaker, from a bunch in 1991 that thought it was absolutely awful if anybody even claimed back their power bill as a business expense under harmonization. And I heard it from them, time after time in here. They brought in a hundred thousand names on petitions, they claimed, of people that said it is unfair that business is able to use their portion of the PST and get it back, but we can't as home-owners.

And now the NDP say, well it's okay if we just use it selectively. It's okay if we do it with Cargill or we do it with the friends of the Economic Development minister, but we can't do it with everybody.

And it's a strange transformation, Mr. Speaker, that takes place over the last three and a half years with the so-called social democrats of the province of Saskatchewan. You know, the defender-of-the-little-guy bunch, the guys that believe that you always, you always equalize everything down to the lowest common denominator. Those guys — the defenders of medicare?

And now we get in legislation that it's all right to pick and choose your way through the economy. Did you pick and choose your way through the folks who will come here and create jobs?

And you even piggyback yourself onto things that other administrations did and brought here. And you say, aren't these wonderful things now. We're working them and they're saying nice things about us, and they're the engines of growth in our society.

Our Finance minister trundles off to New York to collect money, assure them that our bonds are all right. And who does she use as examples? Oh, people like Hitachi and Cargill and Crown Life and Millar Western, and the list goes on and on. And not only that, Mr. Speaker, these people now receive selected tax treatment — selective tax treatment.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is the basis of Bill No. 58. It shouldn't be an Act to amend The Income Tax Act, it should be called an Act to amend the social democratic philosophy of the province of Saskatchewan. That's what it should be called — an Act to amend the social democratic philosophy of the province of Saskatchewan.

See, Mr. Speaker, what it points to is there is absolutely no truth in political advertising. And members of the House wonder why the folks out there are a little bit cynical, you know, a little bit cynical.

October 21 the PST is gone. Did it go? No, it didn't go anywhere. It just went up, took some more out of your pocketbook. That's the only place it went.

Harmonization is dead, unless you happen to be a big company and the jobs and the tax dollars that you bring to this province are badly needed because your record is in trouble. Then it's all right.

I mean that's why there's no truth in advertising. I suspect that's why the member from Rosemont isn't running again. He admits, he says, I'm a social democrat; I'm a left-wing person; I'm going to stay true to my philosophy; I'm not going to run again; I can't put up with this junk any more. They say one thing and then they change their minds three years later.

Used to be NDPers in this province, Mr. Speaker, were consistent if nothing else. They were fairly consistent. But nowadays, no, the politics of survival, of maintaining power, keeping your friends there, your Jack Messer friends and others, are more important than any kind of philosophy.

So, Mr. Speaker, there is no truth in political advertising when it comes to New Democrats, especially when you get to taxation. Taxation, Mr. Speaker, has become a way of life with these people. And they will selectively apply it or selectively remove it in order to help out wherever they think it's most politically expedient. There's no question.

And the proof is in Bill 58; the proof is here. I will cherry-pick my way through the economy of this province, because by doing that I can have the most political impact on how I am perceived by the people in this province.

Mr. Speaker, there's all sorts of families in this province, and these are the people that pay the majority of taxes, that are in that 25 to 35, \$45,000 range. They don't even begin, Mr. Speaker, to qualify. They don't even begin, and never will. What they can do is simply pay and pay and pay. And they, Mr. Speaker, will never get a chunk of money upfront like Cargill got. They will never get a break like the CIBC (Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce) got. They will never get the break that Sears got. All they will do is pay and pay and pay.

And I guess the only thing we can hope, Mr. Speaker, the only thing we can hope is that these people here, the next time they go out and campaign in the province of Saskatchewan, will say we aren't New Democrats any more. We've decided to change our philosophy. It doesn't work any more; it's ancient history. And we can't stand on our ground any more; we've got to come out and tell the truth, say exactly what we are. We're closer to a Liberal than we are anything else and we'll become Liberals. And we'll mix and match like Liberals do and we'll try and be in the mushy centre of the spectrum, and we'll sort of do a little free enterprising. We'll do a little of this, and we'll be Liberals. And they can be just like Chrétien and his friends in Ottawa and

play to that middle ground, and none of this social democratic stuff any more because it simply doesn't exist — it's non-existent.

(1200)

And you can't campaign on it any more. You can't go out and sell yourself as the protector of the poor and the guy that's going to look after the underdog. Because the proof's in the pudding; it's in the legislation. It's there every day. It's who's paying the taxes and who isn't. It's as simple as that, Mr. Speaker.

And I believe people in the 1990s are smart enough to start to realize what's going on here. They aren't going to put up with the hypocrisy of Bills such as No. 58 much longer.

Mr. Speaker, the impact of this Bill on the business community is, as I have mentioned, significant, especially in some sectors. Some sectors are able to use this far more effectively than others. We have contacted a lot of people around this province — areas like manufacturing, tourism industry, others — to try and size up the impact of the changes.

Some responses, as I can appreciate, Mr. Speaker, are positive; others aren't so positive, because they see this as one way that some people can really take advantage in our society. And I think, Mr. Speaker, until we understand the full impact of this government cherry-picking operation, that this Bill should not move forward. And I'm going to move that we adjourn debate until all of those questions are answered.

Debate adjourned.

#### Bill No. 24

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Carson that **Bill No. 24 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation Act** be now read a second time.

**Mr. Swenson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in reviewing this particular piece of legislation, I don't find a lot that I think is controversial. In the best interests of the House, I think that the proper place to discuss this would be in committee, that the officials need to be in in order to get some answers with some of this stuff. And therefore I would say that I'd be prepared that this Bill go to Committee of the Whole, sir. Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole at the next sitting.

#### Bill No. 60

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Calvert that **Bill No. 60 — An Act to amend The Department of Health Act** be now read a second time.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a few moments just to address a few concerns regarding this Bill. I would also indicate that this Bill was fairly recently introduced to the House and it would also be appropriate that

we take a little while longer to review it before it be moved to committee.

But according to the Health minister, Bill 60 will allow Saskatchewan to benefit economically from our knowledge and achievements in the health field. What it does, Mr. Speaker, is allows the government to enter into commercial agreements related to health technology, expertise, and information.

Apparently this legislation will allow for the division to conduct market research and establish partnerships to achieve these objectives. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to technology in the health care field, Saskatchewan, as we all know it has been the focus of attention for quite some time.

Mr. Speaker, we just have to think back a few short years and we're quite well aware of the introduction of the computerized health care cards for Saskatchewan people. And what we've seen since that introduction, we've had several representatives come from several countries to our province to study the process in order to implement it in their countries.

And it's just a strong indication that the health card has certainly been a benefit and can be a benefit, if you will, in maintaining and finding ways to create a more efficient and yet caring health care system.

And as many of the constituents of mine and people across this province have indicated, it would certainly appear that this card could be used in a much greater sense, certainly through hospital or visits to a doctor, even in their clinics in just establishing a method of following up regarding costs of our health care system.

The minister stated that in recent months, health officials from Wales, South Africa, the Republic of Georgia, and others, have visited our province. In addition, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has received speaking opportunities and invitations from many other countries and organizations including the Pan American Health Organization in Washington, DC (District of Columbia); Bolivia, Taiwan, and Northern Ireland.

As we note, Mr. Speaker, health reform has taken place not only across this province, but across this nation, across this continent, and worldwide. And certainly this international interest in our technology is understandable. And the official opposition certainly supports any measure which will enhance economic development in this province. And we see this . . . we're prepared to support this NDP government in their support of . . . basically they're advertising and offering the technology and the services we have available to this province and how they could be used in other areas, in other nations and other countries.

There are however a few questions that need to be clarified in regards to Bill 60. The Bill allows the Department to, quote: develop health systems and health technology or expertise. Yet there is no dollar figure placed at how these initiatives will be arrived at. As well, definitions are needed for these terms.

As far as marketing technology systems and marketing health

systems and technology to persons, other governments, international agencies, or commercial or non-profit organizations, is this a question of overlap, Mr. Speaker? That's something that we will need to address as we proceed further in the debate of Bill 60.

Do we not have an Economic Development branch of government solely dedicated to marketing Saskatchewan? Is this not an avenue that could be used? So are we . . . I guess the big question at the end of the day, are we talking about building a bigger bureaucracy in Saskatchewan, or a better and more efficient bureaucratic system and network, whereby we basically use what we already have in place to meet the needs and the requests that come to us.

The Bill also states that the department will be allowed to enter into any agreements that the minister considers necessary for the purposes of exercising any power or function pursuant to this section. This, Mr. Speaker, I believe that's a fairly broad mandate; one that seems to have no cap unless the Health Minister creates one. And it's certainly something that we need to take the time to review and address. And as I indicated earlier there are other questions as well, Mr. Speaker, that need to be pursued in regards to Bill 60.

And since it was just introduced on April 24, and we haven't had ample time to do enough or sufficient research to make sure that the questions we're raising are the concerns that certainly are out there regarding Bill 60, it's therefore appropriate, Mr. Speaker, that at this time I move adjournment of debate.

Debate adjourned.

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

### Bill No. 47 — An Act to amend The Meewasin Valley Authority Act

**The Chairperson:** — I will ask that the minister introduce the officials with him here today.

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. With me today is Mr. Jim Brickwell, senior policy analyst, municipal policy and legislative services branch of Municipal Government.

#### Clause 1

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, and welcome to your official joining us this afternoon.

In regards to the Act, Bill No. 47, The Meewasin Valley Authority Act, Mr. Chairman, and to the minister, it's quite evident over the past number of years, and I believe even back prior to 1991, that there have been or were cut-backs to a number of organizations such as even the Meewasin Valley Authority, as governments were trying to grapple with the . . . or have been trying to grapple with expenditures and the cost of supplying services.

And I'm not exactly sure where the Authority stands today; what

their feelings are regarding funding. I would be surprised if they didn't have concerns over the reduction in funding over the past number of years.

And I believe when you introduced the Bill, you had indicated that for the first time in a long time you've at least been able to hold the line rather than reducing the funds. But I would like to know, in regard to the fact that we have had over the past number of years, an inflationary factor that most people like to pursue when they talk about the fact they need increases, as far as the funding level that we're offering today and that this Bill is making available, the Meewasin Valley Authority, in your discussions with them, have they indicated the . . . what have they indicated as far as their ability to meet their objectives; what are their objectives?

And in regards to expanding or enhancing the Meewasin Valley so that it become a more . . . that it becomes a centre that is more people oriented and certainly attracts . . . will be able to reach and provide the services that they would like to offer. And in regard to those observations, Mr. Minister, maybe you could indicate to us the Authority's observations and their concerns regarding the present level of funding that will be approved through this piece of legislation.

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — I thank you for your question. I had the privilege of attending the first board meeting as the minister about two weeks ago, and had a good discussion regarding the funding issues. And as you know there's always . . . those minutes are normally accessible.

And obviously they're relieved that there's no funding reduction. I don't think I could characterize it as saying they're thrilled that there is no increase, but they're at least satisfied that they can live within that. And they'll have to make some adjustments, although it should not affect their developmental plan as far as I understand.

I think as well there are alternative funding sources that they pursue and continue to pursue. One part of this Bill creates the opportunity, which they've been asking for, to provide some consultation to other jurisdictions who are looking for their expertise, their 20 years of expertise, in water management or management of the river-bank and so on. And in fact some of those requests have come for their expertise.

They do not have the money to provide on an ongoing basis that additional support. But they of course would . . . are asking us if they could have the ability, through one of the amendments here, to negotiate on a small fee for some of the service they provide, at least to recover their costs.

And that certainly is an important part of this Bill, because it allows them to respond to some of those other requests that are coming from, say, North Battleford, and other jurisdictions who are looking for their consultation and support.

So I think I could characterize it as saying, they understand the situation financially of the province and they've been very responsible about maintaining a good program, maintaining their developmental program on the river-bank, and I think can

live within the budget this year.

(1215)

**Mr. Toth:** — Well, Mr. Minister, you just indicated that you attended the board meeting I believe a couple weeks ago, and I would be surprised if the board members didn't raise some questions or concerns they have as to how they would . . . of means or methods whereby they would like to enhance the valley, or enhance the Meewasin Valley, so that it is, if you will, more accessible to the public and certainly offer services that would attract the public.

I think one of the things that any recreation or any service area needs is things that would attract individuals — probably like walking paths, probably like picnic sites in the area of biking paths. And certainly that area along the Saskatchewan River through Saskatoon is certainly a beautiful area in the summertime. It can become very picturesque. And I'm sure that many residents of Saskatoon would appreciate and appreciate the fact that it is there, that indeed we do have the Authority in existence.

In regards to the funding level as it exists today and the board meeting you recently attended, were there any indications that there were projects that had to be put on hold because the funding levels were maintained at the same level? And were there any indications of projects that they would like to do or like to accomplish if they can find added revenue available to the Meewasin Valley? Were any of those discussions undertaken at that time, Mr. Minister, and what were your observations in regards to those?

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Well I think the atmosphere, the climate at the board meeting, was one of understanding and you know, we'll proceed as best we can within the constraints that we have. I think that they do have a developmental plan, as you know, a long-term developmental plan. There is still lots of undeveloped river-bank land. And I suppose some of the projects might be slowed down a little bit.

At the same time though they're proceeding with the Gabriel Dumont Park, part of the developmental plan. They're proceeding with the north-east trail system this summer. And they're also looking at additional areas of concern by residents regarding enhanced safety and some ideas around that. And we talked about some ways in which other potential funding sources could provide potentially some employment for students, for summer students. And we may be able to access some other programs for some of those additional costs related to trail safety, which is a fairly significant concern that they're attempting to address, so that everyone can enjoy the trail and the beauty of the river.

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Minister, you did make a comment just a moment ago about the fact that Meewasin Valley Authority has asked to be given the ability to seek or source other sources of revenue that would allow them to become, if you will, a more effective . . . or enhance their ability to provide the services and update the types of programming that they would like to make available and work in the valley for the sake of residents who

would choose to visit the Meewasin Valley.

And I think, Mr. Minister, in the light of . . . and not just in light of government budget constraints, it would seem to me, Mr. Minister, that any organization at this stage of the game would be looking at other avenues whereby they could include outside parties, or interested parties or groups, who would like to become involved in promoting such a site as the Meewasin Valley. And would like to have, if you will, the ability to maybe run fund drives or just giving people the ability to maybe donate some funds to the Meewasin Valley.

Is there anything in this present Bill? Are you basically indicating that we are now opening the door or giving the Meewasin Valley Authority the ability to do that, the board to open up and contact organizations or to go outside the present funding of government and, I believe, the city of Saskatoon and the University of Saskatchewan? What we're doing in the Bill here, what this Bill is intending to do, is making it an avenue available for the board to then pursue other interested groups.

And if you will, Mr. Minister, as well, does this Act allow individuals who would like to make donations to the Meewasin Valley the ability to, say, make a donation on the basis of getting a tax receipt? Or is that available today? Is that something that could be pursued? Because I think, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Minister, you would find that there would be many individuals, if they knew they had an avenue whereby they could donate or contribute to a foundation or an organization such as the Meewasin Valley, if there was an avenue open to them, they probably would do that.

And the board may find that they may not have to enter into or start charging for a lot of the services which, if you start charging just for someone to go through the valley or to ride through or to use the picnic sites, you might find people would take a second look and they may go and use other facilities. So what specifically are we entering into and what avenues are being pursued to look at other means whereby the Authority can derive some revenue, some of the much-needed revenue they may need to provide additional services to the taxpayers — and not just taxpayers but the personnel, the general public, who would utilize the services within the park?

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Well you make some good points and raise a number of important questions. I'll try and deal with them as I can.

Regarding the question of donations. It's my understanding that there exists now a trust fund already . . . a foundation, pardon me. And that interested persons already make donations because of their commitment to the river-bank and the environment and so on. So that is already occurring.

I wanted to make sure I'm clear on this, that the intent of the amendment here from the Meewasin Valley's point of view, to share their expertise, their services, their 20 years of experience, is not because they want to make more money doing that. They don't want to necessarily use that as a form of revenue generation.

But the requests are coming from other municipalities for their expertise, North Battleford for example, or P.A. (Prince Albert), and joint work potentially with Moose Jaw and Weyburn and so on — wherever there's a river. They're getting requests for their expertise and their advice as other jurisdictions look to more fully develop their river-banks. And they're more than happy to provide that service but they're not able to at this point, by law, charge any fee or negotiate on some small return. They're really not looking as a revenue generation of any significance of capacity.

They're already working as well with many, many other organizations. For example, the Wanuskewin Heritage site is connected there. They're working with of course the city of Saskatoon, and the university provides some funding, as you say — they're on the board as well. But they also work with recreational boards and various groups with regard to clean-up, safety on the track, on the trails, and so on.

So I think that . . . I hope I've answered sufficiently the three questions that I thought I heard you ask me.

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Minister, in your second reading speech, you described how the Authority would be entering into agreements with agencies outside of the valley area, and I'm wondering if you could describe the process and why is it necessary. What is hoped to be accomplished? How will these agreements be implemented, and how will they affect the quality of life in the Meewasin Valley?

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — It's my understanding that, as I say, some of the municipalities have already approached Meewasin Valley Authority and in fact they're providing some of that support now, but they really can't afford to do that in the way in which it's being requested.

So they want the ability to individually negotiate with those municipalities who are requesting their expertise and experience in training. There would be some form of contract established. And some of the areas that they could provide services and that are being requested for them to provide services would include, for example, shore line restoration expertise; interpretation design and training; fund-raising expertise, because Meewasin's been fairly successful — very successful — there; project management; doing environmental audits; special events planning, relating to one of your questions; resource and land use analysis and mapping, and those kinds of areas that go into the development and overall management of a plan to enhance the river-bank area.

**Mr. Toth:** — So basically what you're saying then, Mr. Minister, the type of agreements you're talking of is not necessarily agreements as far as funding arrangements to fund the Meewasin Valley, but the fact that other groups have come to the Meewasin Valley seeking their expertise and advice on how you would go about implementing maybe the same type of process, I think, as you indicated in The Battlefords, the North Battleford area, along the river-bank, and some of the other communities — I'm not sure — well Moose Jaw has . . . I think they already have an Authority in Moose Jaw.

But basically what you've indicated is this is individuals or

groups or organizations or communities who have come and are looking for some advice as to how they could basically go about implementing the same type of program in their community. Is that what I understand?

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Yes, that's exactly correct, yes, based on the uniqueness of the different areas and every municipality wanting to develop in a way that is the most enhancing for their local area, and believe that Meewasin, which has a good reputation — as of course does Wakamow and here — but they may all be getting these kind of requests. But certainly Meewasin is quite willing to share the expertise as initiated and requested by the local municipalities.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, in your observations in your recent meeting with the Authority and just . . . I'm not sure whether finances would have come up — I'm sure it probably would have — but as far as the report to the government, it would seem to me that due to the fact that the province puts a substantial sum of funding into the Meewasin Valley, you would be interested in noting how the administration has been carried out — whether the Authority and the board has been able to manage their funding appropriately and manage their finances.

And I'm wondering if you could just indicate whether you're . . . how satisfied you are with the financing, whether the funds are being utilized in the best possible means to provide services for the travelling public or the tourist public or the individuals who would use the projects or take advantage of the projects and the opportunities within the valley.

Also, Mr. Minister, were there a number of projects that were at a shortfall because of the limitation of funding, where the Authority maybe had to cut back and not complete projects and were looking for some additional funding that would help them complete any projects? I wonder if there are any shortfalls there and if there are any projects that had to be cut back on and what kind of response you would be making, even in the near future, in regards to that type of request that may have arisen.

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Yes. They are . . . Meewasin Valley Authority is . . . of course they do their financial audit with requirements there every year and they file that, which they're required to do, because as you know, \$740,169 of provincial tax money goes through there plus the money that goes through the University of Saskatchewan and so on, and the city. So they do their financial audit as required.

And with regard to whether projects came up that would be delayed or would proceed or so on, they have, you know, short- and medium-range, and long-term projects and initiatives in that long 20-25 year plan — it's developmental. And you look at the whole package much like you run the budget of a department, I suppose.

You look at the whole package and you proceed with some things, you stay something else, you delay something else, and you manage the whole issue. And I think that's what they're really doing. And there was no specific request to me that I try and access additional funds for them on anything that they felt

they couldn't manage within the current budget.

(1230)

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Minister, in your second reading speech you say deficit financing is over, and although you're not in a position to increase the funding for the Wascana Authority, we are pleased to be able to maintain the same level of funding as was the case last year. And I'm sure the Authority and the board were breathing a sigh of relief that at least it wasn't being reduced any further.

And so I think what you were trying to do was make yourself and colleagues feel a little better about the fact that you were able to hold the line. But I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, in view of the fact that there have been a number of freezes . . . and I don't know if the ability is there to even expand or increase funding down the road yet.

I think personally within government we must look at services whereby we maintain the healthy living and lifestyles and protect health and education and the well-being of individuals in our society ahead of just providing recreational areas. And certainly maybe the community has to be involved in some of those recreational areas, as I indicated earlier.

But I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, would you be willing to commit today to restore the statutory funding formula to the Meewasin Valley Authority and the other authorities, or where do you stand on this plan? Is it something that could be entered into within the next four years if there is, as the Minister of Finance has indicated, should be a surplus appearing within the budget over the next four-year plan. Is that a possibility, Mr. Minister?

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Well I think that, you know, you raise a question that I guess I can try and answer like this. Because with some of the other reductions in some of the other programs, to get the budget under control you'll note that we actually haven't decreased the funding in the last three years to Meewasin. And that is because we believe that this is money well spent and there wasn't any capacity to reduce the funding.

Therefore, I hope that the board would take that as a sign that we will enhance it as we're in a position to do so; go back to statutory funding as we're able to do that.

And I really can't prejudge at this point what the next year's budget will be with regard to Meewasin Valley Authority. But clearly we do, as you know, have a four-year budget plan and as we get more breathing space, we will allocate money on a priority basis as fair as we can.

And I think Meewasin Valley can feel reassured that not having had a funding cut three years in a row, that we view this as an important, an important resource for the city of Saskatoon and area, because it's really, like the others, is really provincial in scope.

So I can't answer the question about next year, but we will certainly review that always in a positive way.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I have a bit of a concern as to . . . with the expanded Authority; what kind of services the parties that you might come into an agreement with could be providing. If you could give us some sort of an outline as to what kind of services you're talking about with other parties.

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Yes. Well the nature of the services that are being requested by other municipalities of course vary with the municipality, but the kinds of services that are being requested externally to Meewasin are things like overall resource management; interpretation, design and training; fund-raising expertise, because they've been successful there; partnership development expertise, because there's been other partners in this project; environmental education; environmental audits; resource and land use analysis and mapping; shore line restoration expertise; and those kinds of things. Just how to develop a developmental plan, the various elements of that, and then what Meewasin's experience has been. And not wanting to reinvent the wheel, they're coming to them because of the 20 years experience of running the project.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well thank you, Mr. Minister. What kind of parties, other parties, will these agreements be limited to? Are they unlimited — any party can come forward and make an agreement with Meewasin — or are they going to be limited to surrounding municipal governments?

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — At this point, we're not proposing limiting them, but I think the intention really is, is to give them the ability to respond to those who are coming now. For example, usually municipal governments and rural RMs that are coming for their advice, and who wanted to develop their river-bank plans. Also it could be, on occasion, other authorities, like Wakamow or Tatagwa Parkway in Weyburn. And so it's not limited. But typically it may be municipal governments, RMs, that's who's coming to them now for some of the expertise that they've accumulated.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. So it's not necessarily municipal groups that would be receiving these agreements or this assistance, services, but it could be other groups, such as a regional park, or it could be . . . I'm thinking of the group that just formed in memory of people who provide organ donations. They're doing some work out along the valleys north-east of here on Diefenbaker Lake. Would someone like that qualify for providing services of fund-raising expertise? Would those people qualify?

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — I think the best thing I can really do is confirm what you've said, because you made very good points. It is general in nature. It could very well be charitable organizations or any form of local examples you mentioned, which I suppose are really municipal or local government in nature.

So I'm just I guess affirming what you were saying. It could be all of those.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — How broad then, Mr. Minister, would, say, the service of fund-raising expertise be provided? Would it be provided to other organizations that may wish to raise funds but aren't directly associated with the river valley at Meewasin or some other river valley, some other park structure? Would they be provided say to, oh, some church group perhaps that wanted to raise funds for some particular reason, could they approach Meewasin for some support in providing fund-raising expertise?

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — I just want to, in case I'm not making myself clear, just make it . . . keep this into perspective in that really the nature of the requests, for example, fund-raising is one of the many services but is really to help local developments in terms of their developmental plans. And that would be established through individual negotiations between Meewasin, for their expertise, and the local municipality in terms of the kinds of support and advice and what not that they require. It's not meant to be a general service to the broader public.

Meewasin's really into river and valley developments and enhancing projects there. And others are seeing that as a good model and a good project, and are asking for some advice as they develop theirs in different parts of the province.

So it's not . . . I don't want to give you the impression that this is big in magnitude, but right now they don't have the ability to negotiate a little contract and charge a small fee for some of the service they're providing. They're willing to provide this service and to share their expertise, but they can't do it all over the province, and that wouldn't probably be the nature of it.

They would, as they had the resources themselves, negotiate individually, and I really wouldn't be party to those negotiations. But they would negotiate individually based on the local needs and I think the number of requests would be fairly small.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Okay, Mr. Minister, if Meewasin provides a service, do they get a fee for that? Can they charge, or are these services provided for free?

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — They provide some general information now, general advice and so on, but they don't provide any services because they really don't have the capacity. And this would give them a little bit of . . . this would give them the opportunities to do that and charge a small fee through negotiation of a contract on that.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. What my concern in particular with this is, is the ability for Meewasin Authority to provide services such as fund-raising expertise to any organization in the province, if that was the desire of the board. Or to provide, say, with environmental audits, do the environmental audits for a particular organization who has an environmental concern with a company or the government itself, and funnel the money . . . the government could funnel the money indirectly through the Meewasin Valley Authority to provide assistance.

Right now if you want to push an environmental audit, it's up to you to provide that incentive, those funds that are necessary for you to push and promote that and do your investigation.

But this would be an avenue, Mr. Minister, by which the government could funnel money through the Meewasin Valley Authority, because they can turn around and provide at a very . . . either free or at no cost, or a very small cost, to some other organization without it having to come before this Assembly.

The monies would be authorized to go to the Meewasin Valley Authority who then turn around and provide either fund-raising expertise or environmental audit expertise to some other organization, say, such as SCRAP (Stop Construction Rafferty Alameda Project) down at Radville. And I believe that if it is used for that, Mr. Minister, it's definitely being used inappropriately.

So I think that that type of circumstance has to be monitored that it is being done, dealing with the Meewasin Valley Authority and its particular niche, its expertise, and not branching out broadly across the province to promote particular special interests that may arise from time to time throughout the province.

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Yes, these are very specialized expertise that we're talking about here, very specialized projects. And the point you raised would have no chance of being a concern here.

(1245)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Pringle:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank Mr. Brickwell for assisting me, and I move that the committee report the Bill without amendment.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the minister and his officials for coming in today and providing us with the answers. Thank you very much.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 47 — An Act to amend The Meewasin Valley Authority Act

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

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a third time and passed under its title.

### ROYAL ASSENT

At 12:48 p.m. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent

to the following Bills:

- Bill No. 19 - An Act to amend The Business Corporations Act
- Bill No. 20 - An Act to amend The Co-operatives Act, 1989
- Bill No. 38 - An Act to amend Certain Health Statutes
- Bill No. 39 - An Act to amend The Medical Profession Act, 1981
- Bill No. 37 - An Act respecting Medical Laboratory Technologists
- Bill No. 10 - An Act respecting Private Vocational Schools
- Bill No. 46 - An Act to amend The Wascana Centre Act
- Bill No. 40 - An Act to amend The Land Surveys Act
- Bill No. 41 - An Act respecting Land Surveyors and Professional Surveyors
- Bill No. 7 - An Act to amend The Apiaries Act
- Bill No. 25 - An Act to amend The Farm Financial Stability Act
- Bill No. 45 - An Act respecting Trading in Real Estate, the Real Estate Commission and Brokerages, Brokers and Salespersons Trading in Real Estate
- Bill No. 33 - An Act respecting the Donation of Food
- Bill No. 53 - An Act respecting Agricultural Operations
- Bill No. 34 - An Act to repeal The Economic Development and Tourism Act
- Bill No. 35 - An Act to amend The Department of Economic Development Act, 1993
- Bill No. 6 - An Act to amend The Crop Insurance Act
- Bill No. 8 - An Act to repeal The NewGrade Energy Inc. Protection Act
- Bill No. 47 - An Act to amend the Meewasin Valley Authority Act

**His Honour:** — In her Majesty's name I assent to these Bills.

Bill No. 63 - An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of Money for the Public Service for the Fiscal Year ending on March 31, 1996

**His Honour:** — In Her Majesty's name I thank the Legislative Assembly, accept their benevolence, and assent to this Bill.

His Honour retired from the Chamber at 12:51 p.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:53 p.m.