

The Assembly met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to present on behalf of residents of Saskatchewan. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to put a moratorium on the closure of the Plains Health Centre until they conduct a comprehensive review into the health crisis we are currently experiencing.

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatures to this petition come from the communities of Oxbow, Alameda, and Wapella. I so present.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have petitions to present today. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to put a moratorium on the closure of the Plains Health Centre until they conduct a comprehensive review into the health crisis we are currently experiencing.

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

These petitioners, Mr. Speaker, come from Alida, Glen Ewen, Oxbow, Alameda, Frobisher, Carnduff, across the south-east corner, Mr. Speaker. I so present.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have petitions to present today. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to put a moratorium on the closure of the Plains Health Centre until they conduct a comprehensive review into the health crisis we are currently experiencing.

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

The communities involved, Mr. Speaker, are Oxbow, Alida, Redvers, and Willowbrook. I so present.

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, I as well have a petition to present to the legislature this afternoon, dealing with the issue of the Plains Health Centre and the moratorium that has been proposed for the health centre. These petitioners come from the Oxbow, Bienfait, Glen Ewen south-east corner of the province of Saskatchewan. I'm pleased to present on their behalf.

Mr. McLane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise again in the Assembly today to provide a petition on behalf of people of Saskatchewan. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to save the Plains Health Centre by enacting legislation to prevent the closure, and by providing adequate funding to the Regina Health District so that the essential services provided at the Plains may be continued.

Mr. Speaker, the signatures on this petition are all from the community of Bethune.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise to present a petition, and the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to take immediate action to allow the North to join the rest of Saskatchewan.

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

And the people that have signed this petition, Mr. Speaker, are all from Patuanak, Saskatchewan. I so present.

Mr. Aldridge: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise with respect to petitioners concerned about the closure of the Plains hospital. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to save the Plains Health Centre by enacting legislation to prevent the closure, and by providing adequate funding to the Regina Health District so that the essential services provided at the Plains may be continued.

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

Those who have signed this petition, Mr. Speaker, are from the communities of Weyburn and Yellow Grass. I so present.

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions from citizens concerned about the dangerous and confusing entrance to North Battleford. The prayer of relief reads as follows:

Your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to relocate Highway 40 to east of the David Laird Campground in order to alleviate the congestion at the entrance to the city of North Battleford.

... (inaudible interjection) ... No I'm not going to stand in front of the highway, Mr. Speaker.

Your petitioners this afternoon come from North Battleford ...

The Speaker: — Order, order, order. Order, order, order, order. I will want to remind the hon. member that he's not permitted to engage in debate while presenting petitions and I know that he'll want to conduct himself accordingly.

Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise on behalf of citizens who are concerned about children who find themselves in custody battles, and in particular Steven and Kimberly Walchuk. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may take the required action to allow the children named to remain in the custody of maternal grandparents, and that appropriate amendments be made to the justice system.

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

And the signatures are from Melville, Bangor, and Saskatoon.

I so present.

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise again on behalf of citizens who are seeking justice for men and women who have lost spouses in work-related accidents. And the prayer is as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to have The Workers' Compensation Board Act amended for the disenfranchised widows and widowers of Saskatchewan whereby their pensions are reinstated and the revoked pensions reimbursed to them retroactively and with interest, as requested by the statement of entitlement presented to the Workers' Compensation Board on October 27, 1997.

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

All of the people who have signed today, Mr. Speaker, are from Regina.

Mr. Goohsen: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people from Cabri, Saskatchewan as well as from Success, Saskatchewan, I'm happy today to present a petition which of course goes along with all of the others asking the government to double-lane the No. 1 Highway, and I'm happy to present their petition on their behalf today.

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 petitioning the Assembly on the following matters: the twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway; saving of the Plains Health Centre; halting investments in foreign countries by Saskatchewan Crown corporations; having the Workers' Compensation Board reinstate pensions for disenfranchised widows; and taking action to ensure that the required level of service in radiology is maintained in the North Central Health District.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, it's my distinct pleasure today to introduce a group of 75 grade 8 students from the St. Francis School in my constituency. They're seated in the west gallery and they're accompanied by Ms. Folk, their teacher, as well as Mr. Dauphinais and Mr. Benko. And they're waving to us. And I'm also going to be doing a collection between our members to pay for the drinks afterwards because

it's a very large group.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker — it's not every day I get to introduce two groups of students. And seated in your gallery, in the Speaker's gallery, we have 27 grade 4 students from the St. Francis School. And they're with their teacher, Laurie Ruhr. I want to welcome them as well to the Assembly and I look forward to meeting you as well after question period.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Hospital Crisis in Saskatchewan

Mr. McLane: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Liberal caucus gets hundreds of letters from people across Saskatchewan complaining about government in action. Lately we received a number of letters regarding individuals and their experience with Saskatchewan's hospital crisis. When we receive these letters we try to respond to them the best we can; sometimes we bring them up in question period or deliver a member's statement on them.

However today we received a number of letters from people pleading for help for one man battling a life-threatening cancer, and one of these letters, Mr. Speaker, speaks for itself and I'd like to read it:

I am writing this letter in hopes that you will be able to help Alick Paterson who is a friend and colleague of mine; he was admitted to RUH and diagnosed with metastatic melanoma on May the 15th. At that time, he was told that he had an appointment with an oncologist on May the 19th. But now he has been told that he will have to wait until June 11th.

Given that he was told his life expectancy is probably only seven months, one month of that precious little time will be wasted while he waits for medical help. Is there nothing that can be done to get him in to see an oncologist and begin anti-cancer treatment? This is clearly a matter of life and death; please, is there something that you can do to intervene on his behalf and for the sake of his family.

Mr. Speaker, for this government it seems the bottom line is what matters. For people like Dr. Paterson your struggle isn't with balancing the books, it's life and death.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Health Care Services and Facilities in Saskatchewan

Ms. Hamilton: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the weekend I and some other Regina MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly) were quoted in the media about the Plains hospital. This Regina MLA would like to restate the following: not one MLA in this caucus stands with those who favour two-tiered, user-fee medicine. That is why not one MLA in this caucus will stand with the members opposite on health care. Every MLA in this caucus does stand with those health professionals and health care users who are committed to better health services.

Mr. Speaker, people do become attached to hospitals responsible for saving their lives or family members, but we all know quality health care has nothing to do with bricks and mortar.

Every MLA in this caucus remembers the decision on the Plains was made in 1993. It was aired in the 1995 election and reviewed by the health board in 1996. And because we know what motions we vote on, we remember that this legislature voted on this matter as recently as December 17.

Every MLA in this caucus knows that services offered in the Plains building are going to be continued and improved in two modern hospitals serving Regina and southern Saskatchewan.

I'm going to continue to support what's right: better services and better facilities. That's what's being built right now in this city for the people of Regina and southern Saskatchewan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Sanctions for Nuclear Testing

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to express my grave concerns about the series, the recent series, of nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan in violation of the nuclear test ban treaty. This is a profoundly disturbing development that potentially affects all life on our planet.

It is important for those of us who represent the citizens of our province to state our deep regret over these actions, and we should send a statement of support to the federal government endorsing their comments and sanctions taken in response to these short-sighted and provocative undertakings.

I most certainly encourage this Assembly, our Assembly, to pass a unanimous motion that indicates unequivocally to the Hon. Lloyd Axworthy, that Saskatchewan concurs with the federal stance in requesting India and Pakistan refrain from any further testing.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Job Prospects in Regina Area

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Tuesday, May 26 at 10 a.m. Regina's CKRM Radio reported the following story and I quote:

Job prospects look bright in the Regina area. The latest survey from MANPOWER Temporary Services says 40 per cent of local employers plan to add staff over the next three months . . . None of the local employers surveyed plan to cut jobs. The greatest growth is expected in construction, manufacturing, and the retail sector.

Mr. Speaker, my thanks go out to those local employers who are making this good news possible and we all applaud their efforts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Melville Citizen Honoured

Mr. Osika: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to acknowledge and congratulate a gentleman from my constituency that has been recognized provincially. Mr. Ted Starchuck has been a St. John Ambulance council volunteer in Melville for nearly 30 years, and at the Saskatchewan council investiture in Prince Albert, he was invested as a Commander of the Order of St. John.

Mr. Starchuck is one of only two people designated commander in the province. The St. John Ambulance organization provides a wide variety of functions today adhering to its motto of "In the Service of Mankind."

It is always a pleasure to see someone that has dedicated much of their free time to such a worthy cause being recognized in such a fashion. I invite my colleagues here in the Assembly to join me in acknowledging Mr. Starchuck in his dedication to this organization and congratulating him on his designation. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Graduate Congratulations

Hon. Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Speaker, this as we all well know is the season of graduations and convocations from our elementary schools, our high schools, our technical colleges, and our universities. And, Mr. Speaker, every student graduating this spring deserves the congratulations of this legislature. But today, Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize one graduate of particular note — a constituent of yours, Mr. Speaker, and someone who is known to many of us in this legislature.

This graduate was one of the graduating class of the Palliser campus of SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology) on the weekend, who graduated with a business diploma in accounting. This graduate returned to school as a mature student, as a mother with a career and a family business and an ongoing and active political involvement in our community of Moose Jaw.

In her studies she achieved an academic average of 97 per cent, and, as a result, Mr. Speaker, received the Governor General's bronze medal for having the highest average of any graduating student at Palliser.

Mr. Speaker, this graduate's name is Karen Hagel, our friend and your spouse.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all members to join me in congratulating Karen for her outstanding achievement. And by the way, a dozen red roses from her husband would seem appropriate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Northern Hockey League

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the constituents of Athabasca I'd like to congratulate the successful 1997-1998 Northern Hockey League and the championship

team, the Canoe Lake Young Guns.

Although this is quite late, there is no question that this league not only provided northern Saskatchewan communities with entertainment and many hockey fans, but they have also raised the skill level and interest of the best game on the face of the earth.

In the initial season of the NHL (Northern Hockey League) there are many people that said it could not work. Well not only did the season work out well but the calibre and fan participation proved that competitive contact hockey in north-western Saskatchewan certainly has a place in the North in general.

I want to especially thank the championship team, the Canoe Lake Young Guns, for the gesture of putting up Ernie Iron's jersey alongside their championship banner to commemorate his contribution to their team and to the people of northern Saskatchewan.

I know that this was a class act that their families certainly appreciated. And I want to congratulate the Canoe Lake Young Guns for putting up that jersey in memory of Ernie Iron and also providing the fans with great hockey and of course putting that championship game together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Count Von Imhoff's Legacy

Hon. Mr. Sonntag: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to begin by thanking the member from Shellbrook-Spiritwood for taking my place at an event in my constituency just a few days ago.

The community of St. Walburg recently held a ceremony to honour two artists. As every Saskatchewan scholar knows, St. Walburg is the town made famous by the artist Count Bertold Von Imhoff, a German who in 1913 came to the north-west as a young man and promptly began painting seemingly non-stop until his death in 1939. His work graces many churches in our fair province and there is still a large collection of his work in St. Walburg.

To commemorate this rather unique immigrant, the St. Walburg Tourism and Heritage Society raised \$60,000 with which it commissioned a bronze statue of Count Imhoff on horse. The statue was unveiled at the ceremony. Jacquie Mysko, chairperson of the society, Carl Imhoff, the Count's son, and his wife Gladys, as well as people from across the province were in attendance at the unveiling ceremony.

Congratulations to the society whose work has enhanced the attractions of north-west Saskatchewan. Congratulations also to another artist, St. Walburg's Susan Welder who was recently named Citizen of the Year. These two artists have contributed greatly to the community. One put St. Walburg on the map, the other continues St. Walburg's artistic heritage. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

Closure of Plains Health Centre

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Premier. Mr. Premier, it's now clear that you have no intention of listening to Saskatchewan people and allowing a full debate and vote on the future of the Plains hospital.

For four weeks you have blocked a free vote on the future of the Plains. On Friday you refused to allow an emergency motion from the third party on the future of the Plains. That's why we are now appealing directly to the Speaker to allow an emergency debate and vote on this very important issue. We will be suspending our bell ringing today to let the Speaker make his ruling. We are hopeful that the Speaker will rule in our favour and this important debate and the vote will be held today.

Mr. Premier, if this debate does proceed, will you allow your members to vote on behalf of their constituents? Will you allow a free vote on the future of the Plains hospital?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, the question is hypothetical — to state it obviously — since you'll have to make a ruling and you have not made a ruling. I will say as a matter of general principle, members on this side of the House speak freely and independently on behalf of their constituents — in caucus and in the legislature.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, if your members are allowed to vote independently that would be very unique for your . . . but I look forward to that opportunity. Mr. Premier, it looks like some of your own members would even prefer a free vote on this issue. The member for Regina Wascana Plains says if the majority of her constituents supported the Plains remaining open that's how she would vote. Why not give her the opportunity?

Mr. Premier, even your former MLA, Ed Whelan, says you're on the wrong side of this issue. What does it take to get you to start listening? Mr. Premier, why don't you let your members vote according to the wishes of their constituents? Why won't you allow a free vote on the future of the Plains hospital?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I've said this answer or given it before and I'll give it one more time. The announcement with respect to the Plains was made, I think, in 1993-94. An election was fought, on a number of issues albeit, in 1995. The Plains was one of them. I fully recall the demonstration which was staged at that time by those who wanted to keep the Plains open.

The decision is final. We are now weeks or months away from opening up a brand-new complex in Regina which will provide the people of Regina and southern Saskatchewan with the very

best care and service, and larger space and service for southern Saskatchewan, that we can possibly afford.

And as I said before, with respect to votes, the first answer I gave to the first question speaks to that matter.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

More Nurses for Rural Health Districts

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP (New Democratic Party) likes to pick winners and losers in the health care system, and the big losers always seem to be rural Saskatchewan. That's what happened when the NDP closed 52 rural hospitals. That's what happened when the NDP decided to close the Plains hospital, the hospital that served southern Saskatchewan. And now rural hospitals are the big losers again in the NDP's plan to hire 200 new nurses.

Mr. Minister, 18 out of 30 health districts, rural health districts by the way, will get absolutely nothing out of this announcement. Mr. Minister, nurses are understaffed and overworked in hospitals all over Saskatchewan. Why were 18 health districts left out of your plan to hire more nurses?

Hon. Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, I'll take the question on behalf of the government. There probably will be follow-up questions which the Minister of Health can address.

I think what's important about this question for me to respond to is this. The Conservative Party, the so-called Saskatchewan Party, and the Liberal Party in fighting to keep the Plains open in the face of now four years of construction and rebuilding — by the way at a cost of \$28,000 a day, I'll even leave those arguments aside — in effect, if they were to succeed, would be committing a hundred million dollars to the bricks and mortar of the Plains hospital.

Now they're getting up and asking for more money for more nurses — not bricks and mortars — but for services. You cannot have both. You can only be a Tory and have the mathematics work out both ways. And we're not Tories.

And we don't believe in bricks and mortar alone. We believe in services at the front line where the people of Saskatchewan need the health.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Premier, what we're doing on this side is we're listening to our constituents. And that's something that's not happening on that side of the House.

Mr. Premier, can you honestly say that the Assiniboine Valley Health District doesn't need more nurses? Can you honestly say that the Living Sky Health District doesn't need more nurses? What about Moose Mountain or South Country — not one additional nurse in any of these health districts. And there's about a dozen more that were left out in the cold as well. Hospitals in these areas are suffering from the NDP's attack on

health care just as much as anyone else.

Mr. Premier, how did you determine that some health districts get new nurses while others didn't? Why are you again picking winners and losers in our health care system?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to say to the member opposite that when he talks about pitting rural and urban Saskatchewan — which is what he's doing — and this is a clear exemplification again by the member opposite because it is clearly, Mr. Speaker, the exact practice that the Tory government of the 1980s did in spades.

And the member from Saltcoats has always been on that side of the camp. And now he returns back to that side of the camp and espouses exactly the same Devine propaganda that we heard in the '80s.

And I say to the member opposite, take a look at health care investment this year. Take a look at it. We've spent 48 million new dollars on physicians in this province, Mr. Speaker — 48 million — of which we're putting a lion's share of that expenditure to rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

We're taking 88 million brand-new dollars of which \$30 million is going specifically to district health boards, Mr. Speaker, and a large portion of that money is going to support rural communities across the province.

Now we put in additional funding for nurses in this province which the people of Saskatchewan have been calling for, the nurses themselves, the government of the day. And the member opposite stands up and says we shouldn't be making an investment in nurses of the province. And this is typical Tory policy.

The Speaker: — Order, order. Next question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Meadow Lake Pulp Mill

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, my questions this afternoon are for the minister responsible for CIC (Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan). Mr. Minister, last year the NDP agreed to start paying all of the operating losses at the Meadow Lake Pulp mill even though your government only owns half of that company. The CIC annual report says that CIC does not expect these losses to exceed \$10 million.

Mr. Minister, an order in council signed by you and the Premier on May 26 authorizes \$15 million to go to the Meadow Lake Pulp mill to fund cash flow deficiencies. That's already \$5 million more than the pay out forecast in the CIC report released just a few weeks ago.

Mr. Minister, why does the bill for this keep continuing to go up? Why did you agree to a deal where taxpayers only own half the company but gets stuck with all of the losses?

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I find it ironic, as I'm

sure you and the members of the public do, when a member who went to Conservative conventions at the time this deal was being arranged between the Devine government and the company, Millar Western — that today he stands in his place and questions the fundamentals of the deal which in many ways the public lauded as a great environmental project but still to this day has to prove its economic base.

Mr. Speaker, I was surprised last week when the member from Melfort criticized his former colleague, Mr. Devine, for the investment in Crown Life and wondered out loud how we could ever get the money back.

Today the member from Kindersley says he wonders why the deal that his Devine government made isn't making more money. So I say to the member opposite, when he gets up tomorrow morning he should ask that question while he's shaving, looking in the mirror, why did we make that deal and why did we put so much money into it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, the problem is we have no guarantee that \$15 million is going to cover the expected losses. By the time you get done paying down the operating losses on this deal, Channel Lake could start looking like a bargain for taxpayers.

Mr. Minister, how many more potential . . . how much more is potentially exposed for the Saskatchewan taxpayers? Can you give us an assurance today that \$15 million will be the extent of it, or how much more will taxpayers in Saskatchewan be on the hook for?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I say again to the member opposite that these are the questions that he should have asked when he was at his conventions with his Conservative colleagues back when the investment was being made. Because I say to him clearly that there is no option — there is no option — except to stay in this deal, other than to shut it down.

Now he may be arguing that what we do is shut down the Meadow Lake plant. That may be. Having invested the money — having invested the money that member and his party did back earlier in the decade and in the 1980s — he's now arguing that we should shut it down.

And I say to him he should come clean and it would be good for him to admit that the \$15 billion that they ran up was a mistake.

Now he may be arguing that you should shut down the Meadow Lake project but if he believes that, then he should stand in his place or move a motion or a resolution arguing that point. But at this point in time we support the project that you invested in, in order to keep the jobs in that area of the province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Resources for Acute Health Care

Mr. Osika: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health has indicated on a number of occasions that the Liberal opposition is fearmongering when we suggest that the current bed crisis in Regina and southern Saskatchewan is putting lives in jeopardy.

In fact on March 23, the minister told this House, and I quote:

I want to ensure the member opposite and the people of Saskatchewan that nobody has died in this province who required emergency services.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister, do you stick by this claim?

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Well in saying that, Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, that in the time that I've had responsibility to oversee this portfolio, and in the time that I've served on this side of the House in government, I have not personally received an information that says to me that somebody has lost their life because we have not been able to provide emergency services in the facilities that we have across the province, Mr. Speaker. I have not received that communiqué or information from anyone.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Osika: — Mr. Speaker, the Liberal opposition has obtained a letter written by Yorkton doctor, Joseph Javier, dated October 7, 1997. This letter indicates a patient was in distress because his lungs had filled with fluid.

For two days — two days — a number of attempts were made to transfer the patient to the Plains hospital for treatment that could not be offered in Yorkton. Before a bed became available in Regina the patient suffered a heart attack, developed respiratory failure, and was placed on a ventilator. He died unfortunately on October 1.

The minister was sent a copy of this letter dated October 7, 1997. Why then in March of this year did the minister say that nobody has died in this province who required emergency services? And why was this House misled?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say to you and to the member opposite that I am appreciative of the information that the member has access to. And say to the member opposite that I too have had an opportunity to review that file with the East Central Health District.

And I want to say to the member opposite, if in fact you're saying today that this patient has died because of poor medical service, then I say to you, Mr. Member, that I would want then a copy from the physician. A copy of a letter from the physician who says that in fact this individual died because there has not been appropriate services available for this individual.

And I would say to you, Mr. Member, that I have had this discussion with that individual physician and he has not provided me with that. And so I ask you clearly, if you could obtain that piece of information on my behalf, I would be very

happy to receive it from a physician.

Mr. Osika: — Mr. Speaker, the Liberal opposition has also received a letter written by a Regina cardiologist regarding this specific case. The letter states, and I quote:

I feel sorry that we were unable to help this gentleman. As you will recall from our numerous phone conversations, I tried my best to get the patient to the Plains Health Centre; unfortunately there was no critical care beds either in CCU, COU, or ICU.

To the minister, these letters confirm that a patient died because there was no available critical care beds at the Plains hospital. How can you suggest that there is not a bed crisis? How can you tell this legislature that no one has died because of a bed shortage when we have just provided evidence that someone did die?

And I want to send this over to the minister — the relevant correspondence.

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, what I want to say to the member opposite is that I don't make it a practice, and won't today, to review in detail the individual cases that come to my attention and/or the member's attention.

But this is a commitment that I will make today, Mr. Speaker, that I will undertake to do a full evaluation of this particular case and will ask the member opposite to participate in that exercise. And will say to the member opposite that at the end of the day, we will need to reveal whether or not what he portrays here today is in fact factual. Because if in fact you're stating today that a member of this community, Saskatchewan, has lost their life because there isn't sufficient facilities or services, that's a serious, serious concern of mine.

If you make the accusation, however, that in the attempt to save somebody's life there has been a concern about the practise of the physician community, that's a serious, serious allegation — that I say to you my friend — and we will undertake to examine that in its fullest.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Osika: — Mr. Speaker, all the people that we've heard from, all the concerns that have been expressed about the shortages of beds during critical times — it's so evident. Yet the government continues to insist on shutting down and reducing the numbers of beds. That's just unthinkable.

We've also obtained a copy of a letter regarding this issue from the head of cardiology in Regina. Doctor Naiyer Habib writes:

The beds are limited and the administration is aware of it. There is always a solution to a problem, hoping that the solution is sought before the problem occurs.

Mr. Minister, there is an obvious solution to this problem. Save the Plains hospital, keep more beds in the system. Will you make that commitment today so we don't see even a suggestion of a repeat of this kind of a tragedy?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the member opposite, and have on many occasions said this, that from time to time across the province in certain locations there is stress and pressure on the health care system. I've said that. And I've said to the member opposite that from time to time some of our emergency wards are under some difficulty.

But I say to the member opposite that when I look at the number of beds, acute care beds, that I have in the province today, and I look at what the average daily census of beds are in the province today, that number is significantly different by anywhere from 5 to 700 beds on any given day.

And I say to the member opposite, if the issue and the question here is, whether or not we have enough acute care beds in the province — I'm on record saying that in Saskatchewan we have enough acute care beds, and from time to time we need to do an examination of where we need to possibly provide some additional enriched services.

But HSURC (Health Services Utilization and Research Commission) has advised the province in their review, that of 780 beds that they studied, 25 per cent of those acute care beds — the patients did not need to be in them.

And I've said this to the House, and I continue to reiterate to you, that the number of beds that we have in this province today for acute care services, in my opinion and from what professional people have studied it say to me, that we have enough.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Osika: — Mr. Speaker, one final quote from Doctor Joseph Javier who writes, and I quote:

Bed closures save money but lives are lost. From my perspective the loss of the Plains Health Centre and further bed closures province wide will most undoubtedly see this scenario repeated.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister, the current bed crisis has already claimed one life and that is one life too many. It's time to begin basing our needs . . . our bed counts on needs and not on dollars and cents but strictly on common sense.

I will ask once again, will you save the Plains hospital? Will you make a commitment to the people of this province that no more beds will be lost in this Regina system?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, on many occasions — many occasions — I've said to the member opposite the decision on hospital beds in Regina has been made. It's been made for some time now. It was made in 1995.

And the district health board has indicated that 675 beds are going to be the number of beds that will be serving Regina and the southern part of the province. I say to the member opposite that he believes that the number of beds in the system translates

to good services.

And I'm going to ask the question of my good medical friend, as yours is, Dr. Javier who quotes today, "that people's lives in fact may be in jeopardy because of there not being sufficient hospital beds". And, I say to you, in the regional hospital of Yorkton in 1973 there were 245 beds. Today in the regional hospital of Yorkton, 25 years later, we have 107 beds.

And today when you look at regional hospitals and tertiary hospitals across the province, you'll find that they receive and provide better services. We have stronger specialities today than we ever had in the history of our province; we have better technology to do that. We have more outpatient services. And never, ever across this nation or anywhere have the number of beds translated to the quality of health care and I say that to you and to the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Nurses Required to Update Training

Ms. Haverstock: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Although one must be suspicious about the motive and the timing, I want to congratulate the government on its recent announcement to hire 200 nurses, in an attempt to stabilize a situation that daily grows more critical for patients and health professionals.

Individual nurses have been unable to find work because of policies put forth by this government. Those nurses are now facing further financial penalties as they try to secure one of these so-called new jobs. These nurses had jobs. Many of them have subsequently left Saskatchewan or have given up their dreams of becoming a nurse. And now they find themselves forced to update, after which they still have no guarantee that they're going to be able to get one of these new jobs, Mr. Speaker.

It's quite obvious that my question this afternoon is for the Minister of Health and it is as follows: what is your government going to offer nurses caught in this situation, a situation not of their making but that of a government that failed to plan?

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the member opposite that one of the issues that you raised with me is not unlike the one that we talk about when we talk about physicians and that is that in Saskatchewan we train nurses and we train physicians to a level of high degree. And in Saskatchewan today we have a tremendous demand for our professional community to work all over Canada.

And when you talk about the kinds of demands that are within the system today on health professionals — and we've acknowledged that they're great — the reality is that they also come to recruit our nurses out of our province and the rationale being is because they're extremely well-trained.

Now if the question is whether or not we need to provide better working environments for nurses, we say that in our case we're providing some of that today. We're enriching some of the facilities which they're going to work in. We're advancing the kinds of new equipment in some of the facilities that we're

talking about.

So into the future with the Department of Education, and district health boards, and SAHO (Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations) — we're working in partnership to enrich the value of working environments and opportunities for nurses across the province. And that will continue to be our focus into the future.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Haverstock: — Mr. Speaker, this is quite interesting because updating will require nurses in our province to pay anywhere from \$2,500 to \$3,000 and then face a further financial penalty because they must mentor for a month or even more. And during this time they will receive no salary and the end of it all they have no guarantee of a job.

My question to the minister is this: will you, Mr. Minister, agree to create a bursary for nurses in this particular situation? And will you work with the associations involved to ensure that these individuals are not lost again to our province?

Hon. Mr. Serby: — Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, just recently in our announcement of 200 additional nurses for the province, we indicated that we would be working closely with the human relations committee. And the committee would be made up of professional organizations and unions in all of the disciplines in which health professionals are working today. And clearly we're going to be examining all of the options that are available to us, or should be available to us, in order to retain and recruit and further advance the educational opportunities for people who are working in the front line — which nurses are a part of.

And I say to the member opposite that much of this discussion will need to occur with the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association who have a position that, by the year 2000, all nurses in the province who are practising need to have their baccalaureate. And clearly we're going to be working closely with the unions and the SRNA (Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association) to try to see how we might be able to blend that.

But this is an issue that will require some of that dialogue. And the human resources committee of course will be part of that discussion.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Canadian Light Source Synchrotron Project in Saskatoon

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with leave to make a somewhat extended ministerial statement on the Synchrotron project.

Leave granted.

Hon. Ms. MacKinnon: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to rise today to announce the deadline has been met for the filing of a letter of intent to the Canadian Foundation for

Innovation for the \$177.9 million Canadian Light Source Synchrotron Project.

Over the weekend an agreement was reached with the Government of Canada that closed the \$14.2 capital deficiency required to complete the financial arrangement for the Synchrotron project.

Under the agreement Saskatchewan will contribute a total of \$20 million to the CLS (Canadian Light Source) over four years starting in 1999. The federal government will match this funding. Half of the money will go toward building the facility; the other half will go toward operations.

We will operate the facility as a non-profit corporation that will be a partnership of the governments, the university, and industry.

Now that we have sent in the letter of intent, we will proceed to the next step — formal application to the Canadian Foundation for Innovation.

Mr. Speaker, the CLS project is about collaboration at the highest level in science between industry, universities, and governments. We are hopeful that we will get a final decision from the Canadian foundation by the spring of 1999, and we have every reason to believe the decision will be a positive one. We will then begin design and construction shortly thereafter.

The Synchrotron will generate 2,000 person-years of employment during construction and will create 200 permanent jobs. It will also create approximately \$35 million in increased R&D (research and development) spending across Canada.

But even more important is what the Synchrotron means for the bigger picture. Once Canada's Synchrotron is built and operating, the country will have an important link to a growing global network that places a high value on innovation and discovery in a knowledge-based economy.

The Synchrotron will aid in the development of products that may include things like improved pesticides and more frost-resistant crops. This opens up new industries in our province, will provide direct benefits to farmers in terms of new crops and new uses for those crops, and it means more jobs for people.

The Synchrotron also means advances in cell research for faster and better cancer treatments. This means a better quality of life for individuals in Saskatchewan, in Canada, and in the world.

Mr. Speaker, this is good news for Saskatoon, good news for Saskatchewan, and good news for Canada. I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate everyone involved in the process for cooperating and allowing this very, very important project to proceed. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We would want to congratulate all involved with this very positive development for Saskatoon and for the province of Saskatchewan.

From time to time, in fact it's more often than that, the members opposite like to point out that the opposition is opposed to positive development. Nothing, as you know, could be further from the truth, Mr. Speaker. We believe in hopes and dreams and opportunity, and that's what this announcement represents.

Positive developments like this should and could be followed by far more. In agriculture the opening of markets for farmers, allowing the nuclear cycle to be exploited for positive gain, opening the door to trade and development, lowering taxes, cancelling the CCTA (Crown Construction Tendering Agreement), are just a few suggestions that this government could look at.

But in this case this is indeed a positive development for Saskatchewan. We are hopeful that this project will go ahead in its entirety. Good jobs, very good jobs, for Saskatchewan residents could result; investment could result — positive benefits for all of Saskatchewan people.

We would like to congratulate the people of Saskatoon and everyone that was involved in bringing this very positive news forward today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Canada is the last country in the western industrialized world to acquire a Synchrotron, so this is good news for our country, and will be especially good news for us if it is located in Saskatchewan.

It will strengthen our biotech industry. It will strengthen agriculture and medical research especially. It will strengthen our university. And it will mean that some of our most brilliant graduates can find work here in this province.

At a time when our federal system is under such stress, it is also good to see that our various levels of government can work together in the national and provincial interest. If I may say though, it was craftily suggested last week that the hold-up in getting this project on the rails was the federal government.

My understanding is that Ottawa has been an enthusiastic backer of the Synchrotron project from day one and the question mark was whether or not the province would come on board. And I am pleased that they have today, even if my understanding is they are riding in the caboose and not the engine.

Well, Mr. Speaker, though hopefully, despite us having the highest income taxes in Canada and among the highest business taxes in Canada, that professionals will find work in this province and will want to locate and work in the biotech industry that will locate in Saskatoon.

The Synchrotron is an important step in the building of a high-tech base for this province and I applaud our governments for working together for the benefit of Saskatchewan and to see the benefits of attracting industry, reducing red tape, and reducing taxes so that the Synchrotron can become the cornerstone of a flourishing biotech industry in the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 214 — The Recall of Members Act, 1998

Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to move first reading of Bill No. 214, The Recall of Members Act, 1998.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a first time and ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, we have a very diligent caucus and a diligent civil service and have been pleased to be able to submit the answers to questions. I hereby submit the answer to question 66 and request leave to submit the answers to questions 67, 68, and 69.

And in doing so, Mr. Speaker, I just want to take but one sentence forward, and that is a special thank you from our government to our civil service for doing the work that enables the members to have timely answers to these questions.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The answers to questions 66, 67, 68 are provided and the Chair asks, was question 69 dealt with? And 69 as well; 69 is provided as well.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 57 — The Education Amendment Act, 1998/ Loi de 1998 modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As members will know, The Education Act, 1995 provides the fundamental legislative basis for our province's public education system from kindergarten to grade 12. It establishes the governance structure of school divisions under the jurisdiction of locally elected boards of education and it provides for matters relating to curriculum, facilities, funding, and so on.

Bill No. 57 incorporates amendments to many sections of the existing Act. These amendments can be divided into two main categories. First, there is a small number of amendments dealing with diverse but important topics. Second, there is a large number of amendments all dealing with the same general area, the restructuring of the francophone component of our public education system.

I will deal with each of these two categories of amendments in order. These amendments cover four topics. First, boards of education and francophone school boards are given explicit authority to participate in the coordination, administration, and delivery of pre-kindergarten programs. As well, the Minister of Education is given authority to develop policies in this area.

Mr. Speaker, it is now well-recognized that for many young children, access to programs before they reach school age can have a significant impact on their future education and development. As part of the action plan for children, our government is strongly supporting a variety of head-start and early invention programs.

One aspect of this broad objective is pre-kindergarten programs operated in conjunction with the community schools. As boards of education become increasingly involved in such programs, it is important that their authority to do so be reflected in statute. That is the purpose of these amendments.

I want to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that the amendments are to those sections of the Act that set out the powers of a board, not the sections which set out the duties. We're not imposing any legal obligation on boards for the funding or administration of pre-kindergarten programs in our province.

The next in this first category of amendments deals with the election of boards of education in urban school divisions. School divisions whose geographic area is less than the prescribed threshold are not legally required to be divided into subdivisions for the election purposes. The Minister of Education is authorized to create a ward system in these urban school boards but only if requested to do so by the board of education.

A new provision is being added in this area. In the future, if a public vote is held within an urban school division and the majority of those who vote support the establishment of a ward system, the board of education will be legally obliged to apply to the minister to establish wards for this purpose.

Some members may be aware that public votes on this were held in the Regina public school division in the fall of 1994 and in the Saskatoon public division in the fall of 1997. In both cases a substantial majority of the voters supported a ward system.

Regina Public School Board subsequently chose to take no action in response to the vote. I understand that the Saskatoon Public School Board will soon be considering the outcome of the vote in that city — a vote that passed by some 80 per cent.

The amendment which we are including in the Act does not apply retroactively to either of these two cases. Nevertheless, I believe it is important that the rules regarding public votes of this type be clear for the future.

The third amendment is a straightforward one dealing with the application of land title fees to property transactions by boards of education. The intent of the existing legislation is that where a school division's restructure and title to the property is transferred to a new or different board of education, the boards involved should not be liable for the normal commercial land titles fees.

As a result of changes in the fee structure over the years, the current wording of the Act no longer achieves this objective. We're simply revising the wording to restore the original intent.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, that this problem was addressed on

an interim basis last year through regulations. This statutory amendment provides a more appropriate long-term solution.

The fourth and final amendment in this first group deals with provincial collective bargaining for teachers, and specifically with a process for the resolution of grievances under the provincial collective agreement. The sections of the Act which deal with this matter use the term “parties” — parties to the grievance and parties to the agreement.

The purpose of the amendment is to confirm that for purposes of these sections, the parties referred to are the two provincial bargaining committees. That is, the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation committee on the one hand, and the government trustee bargaining committee on the other.

Mr. Speaker, from our perspective, this amendment does not reflect a substantive change in the current provisions but rather a confirmation and clarification of these provisions. It’s important to point out that over a period of 20 years since this legislation was first passed, the two provincial bargaining committees received and dealt with all aspects of grievances under the provincial agreement without any question being raised as to the validity of this process.

Over the past two years, the correct interpretation of the legislation has been called into question by the school trustees, and the purpose of the amendment is to confirm that for the future, the structure and process that have been used for many years is still the process to be used.

Mr. Speaker, I now want to turn to the area which encompasses the vast majority of the amendments to this Bill. This area is the structure and governance arrangements for the francophone component of our province’s education system.

The basis of this legislation is section 23 of Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Sections 23 set out the constitutional rights of parents of a linguistic minority to have their children educated in that language. In Saskatchewan this means French.

Section 23 also includes the concept that where numbers warrant, francophone parents have the right to establish and govern their own schools and to receive public funding for those schools in the same way as any other school jurisdiction.

Following court decisions in Saskatchewan and elsewhere about 10 years ago, a lengthy and detailed process was undertaken in our province to develop appropriate arrangements to satisfy these constitutional obligations in our province.

That process culminated in substantial amendments to The Education Act in 1993 to create a new francophone component. The francophone component had two major parts to it. First, eight francophone educational areas were established in communities with a substantial francophone population, and a ninth one was established later.

(1430)

Each of these areas and the francophone school within it was governed by a locally elected francophone school board called a conseil scolaire. In addition there was provincial coordinating

body called the conseil général made up of representatives from each of the conseil scolaires. This provincial body arranged for specialized services such as special ed consultants, and it also handled requests for programs from francophone parents who lived outside of one of the francophone education areas.

The structure of the francophone component in all of its details were worked out through a collaborative process in which all of the stakeholders were closely involved. The result was consensus on all major points.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan’s francophone community now has several years of experience with this new component of the education system, and many boards of education and many communities have examined ways to strengthen programs and to be more effective through restructuring of the divisions.

The francophone school boards and their communities have also been looking for ways to achieve the same objective. Last fall the conseil général, on behalf of all of the conseil scolaires, submitted a series of recommendations to our government for a major restructuring of the francophone component. And over the past few months we worked with representatives at the conseil général and francophone parents in developing legislation to reflect these recommendations as fully and clearly as possible.

The Saskatchewan School Trustees Association and the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation, as major stakeholders in this matter, have been closely and continuously involved in the consultation.

Mr. Speaker, I’m pleased to say that this restructuring has the support of all parties involved. And I’ll outline the key elements of the change.

First, the conseil général and all the nine existing conseil scolaires will be disestablished. In their place will be a new Conseil scolaire fransaskois which will serve as one board of education governing all fransaskois schools in the province.

Instead of being independent governance areas, the francophone education areas will now become subdivisions like subdivisions in school divisions . . . that is the francophone parents in each of the areas will elect one member of the new conseil scolaire. A number of functions currently carried out by the conseil général, such as handling program requests from parents outside the francophone education area, will be taken over by the conseil scolaire.

For each fransaskois school there will now be a local community parent council and this council will be elected by the parents and will be made up of parents plus one other francophone from the community. The local council will have a strong role in an advisory capacity to the provincial conseil scolaire, including being involved in the development of all policies. It will also have the authority to handle a variety of matters which this conseil scolaire may delegate to it.

These new local parent committee councils will play an important role in ensuring that parents in each francophone community continue to have significant influence with respect to the operation of their school board.

For funding purposes, provincial operating grants will now be made available to the one new conseil scolaire, rather than to the existing individual conseils. The new conseil scolaire will be responsible for establishing a budget and allocating funds to the schools in the same way as the board of education of the school division.

As I've indicated, Mr. Speaker, the initial requests for these changes came from the francophone community itself. Trustees and officials of the francophone component, as well as the parents of other individuals involved, are to be commended for their forward-looking approach to the governance of francophone education in Saskatchewan.

The new structure will enable funding to be reallocated from administrative areas and used for direct services and supports for classrooms and students. Staff time will be used more efficiently. Measures will be in place to ensure strong, local input to decisions of the new francophone board of education.

Mr. Speaker, with these amendments to The Education Act, and as you know, our province has been involved in voluntary restructuring of our school divisions unlike other parts of Canada where they forced amalgamation, our province has moved from 119 school divisions to 107 voluntarily. With these amendments to The Education Act, we will move from 107 school divisions to 99 school divisions. That's a significant reduction in school divisions across the province without any kind of legislation. It's been done voluntarily by local people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — As I've indicated, Mr. Speaker, this Bill incorporates amendments dealing with a variety of important matters within our public education system. It reflects the necessity for continuous updating of the legislation in response to evolving needs and circumstances.

I'm therefore pleased to move, Mr. Speaker, that Bill No. 57, An Act to amend The Education Act, 1995, be now read a second time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask leave of the Assembly to return to routine proceedings to move an emergency motion dealing with the Plains hospital.

The Speaker: — The hon. member from Cannington requests leave of the House to move to a matter previously available on the agenda. The request for leave is not in order. The House is currently in the midst of a proceeding and is incapable, is incapable of moving to another matter except by a superseding motion . . . is the only means by which it can continue.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to reply to Bill No. 57, comments made by the Minister of Education regarding Bill 57.

Mr. Speaker, as noted by the introduction of the Bill, we have a number of issues that are being put forth as far as the changes to The Education Act. Well, I recognize that a number of the changes to this Bill are housekeeping in nature or are of

significantly lesser importance than I believe two of the changes that the minister's put forward.

The changes to the pre-kindergarten program, the changes to the ward system, the changes suggested by the minister to the land titles — those kinds of changes to The Education Act are required. They are necessary and I think they will improve the delivery of education. They will improve the efficiency of boards of education, and, as well, I think people will feel that the boards of education represent them in a far better capacity.

But, Mr. Speaker, I do want to talk about two of the issues that the minister put forward in her address.

First of all dealing with the question of the amalgamations, or the voluntary getting together of all of the francophone boards of education across the province, the Minister of Education has indicated that this has been a long consultation process. She's indicated that all of the partners in education have been involved, that there has been a spirit of collaboration and cooperation in terms of working out all of the different nuances that will be necessary. Because what you have occurring, as the minister has indicated, is that the boards of education currently which represent all of those school divisions will become one board of education. And they will have subdivisions representing all of those other communities. They have worked through all those things and are there.

However the one, I think, that has caused the greatest amount of concern, Mr. Speaker, is the changes to the grievance procedure. And I want to indicate very clearly, that the groups involved, the different parties involved in the changes to this section of The Education Act, do not agree. Very clearly by the materials that I have received from the various groups, there is a great deal of concern as to whether or not this is the correct move.

I have been consulting with these groups and have, as I've indicated, a very different point of view from the two groups. And I'm hopeful that the Minister of Education can meet with the two groups to resolve, as she's indicated — in that collaborative, cooperative spirit that has reached the decision on the francophone question — I would hope that the same kind of decision could be reached on this question around grievances.

And I think there has to be that kind of opportunity to indeed look at the seriousness of this. The problems that occurred last year in education with the changes that were made to The Education Act resulted in conflict. And as a result we have that same type of spirit that is missing, Mr. Speaker. And I would ask that those kinds of things be looked at very quickly.

And I would suggest that we do require as an opposition, we do require some more time to better meet with these groups to further understand what could be resolved. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move that we adjourn the Bill at this time.

Debate adjourned.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask leave of the Assembly to return to routine procedures to deal with a motion concerning the Plains hospital.

The Speaker: — If I understand correctly, the Opposition Deputy House Leader requests leave to return on the agenda to the end of routine proceedings and just before orders of the day.

Leave granted.

PRIORITY OF DEBATE

Plains Health Care Centre Closure

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a motion under rule 19 dealing with priority of debate in the Assembly. The motion that I would propose to read is as follows:

That this Assembly direct the provincial government to take immediate action to stop the planned closure of the Plains hospital and instead make the necessary arrangements to ensure its continued operation in a response to the ongoing public opposition to the Plains closure and the ongoing hospital bed shortages in Regina.

Under rule 19, Mr. Speaker, we are to present this letter to you at least two hours before — which was done, Mr. Speaker — and we would ask to proceed with this motion.

The Speaker: — This morning, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition delivered a notice for a priority of debate to the Office of the Clerk as is required under rule 19(2). The notice was accordingly distributed pursuant to the notification provision of the rule.

And having reviewed the member's case, I am now prepared to rule on the matter. It is the Speaker's responsibility to determine whether the matter should receive urgent consideration. Under rule 19(5) the Speaker is obliged to pay — I quote:

Regard to the probability of the matter being brought before the House within reasonable time by other means.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition states in his case that a decision to halt the closure of the Plains hospital must be taken now in order to make necessary arrangements to ensure its continued operation even though it is not scheduled to close until October of this year.

The argument goes on to note that this subject is within the administrative responsibilities of the government and that similar motions have been debated in recent weeks without conclusion.

In matters such as this, the question for the Speaker is whether the matter is sufficiently urgent for the Assembly to set aside all other business to discuss this matter now, or is there any other ordinary parliamentary opportunity available in which this matter could be raised?

In determining the answer to those questions, it must be stressed that it is not the Speaker's role to force the House to exercise these opportunities if they do exist. Whether the Assembly avails itself of those opportunities is a decision of the House collectively.

In this case, the Speaker finds that in the immediate future there will be opportunities for this matter to be brought on to the order paper. As recently as last Friday . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Order. As recently as last Friday, notice for such a motion could have been provided to create an opportunity to debate this issue tomorrow on private members' day.

Also tomorrow's debate could be resumed on motion no. 4 on a similar topic, capable of being amended. Or debate could occur on Bill 230, The Plains Health Centre Preservation Act. Similar opportunities will be available on subsequent days. For this reason it is the Speaker's decision to deny the request for a priority of debate.

(1445)

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 43 — The Queen's Bench Revision Act/ Loi portant révision de la Loi sur la Cour du Banc de la Reine

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of The Queen's Bench Revision Act.

The Queen's Bench Act was first passed in 1915. Although it has been amended innumerable times since then, a surprising number of provisions remain in their original form. The result is a hodgepodge in which some sections are clear and easy to understand while others are incomprehensible to anyone other than a legal historian.

In keeping with the practice over the last three years, this legislature will once again be asked during this session to approve the re-enactment in French and English of a number of Acts from a list which the French community in Saskatchewan has identified as being of the greatest importance and usefulness to them. The Bill before us today is one of those Acts.

Our practice in preparing these bilingual Acts is to make no changes of substance. However before this Act could be translated into French, the English version required revision.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill before us today contains four schedules that contain separate Bills. They are before us today, within one Bill, for ease of reference for members and for the easier access of the public to this Act. This is not an omnibus Bill, but rather one that re-organizes The Queen's Bench Act to make its provisions more easily understood by the public and legal practitioners.

While there are very few substantive changes in the Bill, The Queen's Bench Act in Schedule A enacts two changes of substance to which I would draw your attention. First, jurisdictional provisions that . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. Now the Chair is having some difficulty being able to hear the minister provide his debate to the House on the second reading of the Bill and I'll ask for the cooperation . . . Order. The Chair asks for the cooperation of all hon. members to enable the minister to be heard.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — While there are very few substantive

changes in the Bill, The Queen's Bench Act in Schedule A enacts two changes of substance to which I will draw your attention.

First, jurisdictional provisions that refer to the jurisdiction exercised by courts in England in the 1800s are replaced by a simple statement that the court has jurisdiction in all matters. Second, the grounds for an order of judicial separation are changed to reflect the current grounds for divorce.

Schedule B, The Administration of Estates Act separates out provisions which contain the law that applies to estates which are now buried in The Queen's Bench Act and which are subject to complaint because it is not readily apparent to users that they would be contained in that Act. Again those new provisions in this Act move matters of substantive law from the Queen's Bench rules to the Act and fill in gaps in existing provisions only.

Schedule C contains The Interpretation Amendment Act, 1998. It moves to The Interpretation Act, 1995 provisions respecting the demise of the Crown from The Queen's Bench Act. The only substantive changes in the Bill enact two clarifications of the law: the first adds a definition of "must" to the Act; the second extends the rule that regulations survive a re-enactment of an Act so that it also applies where an Act is amended.

Schedule D contains The Queen's Bench Consequential Amendment Act, 1998. Mr. Speaker, for ease of access and housekeeping purposes, this Act amends other Acts to make them consistent with the provisions of the new Queen's Bench Act.

Mr. Speaker, this housecleaning of the Queen's Bench Act substantially improves the law by making it clear and more understandable. Gender neutral language is adopted, the numbering of the sections is regularized, archaic terminology is eliminated. These are all common forms of housekeeping amendments which are necessary from time to time, especially in such an archaic piece of legislation as The Queen's Bench Act.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of An Act to enact The Queen's Bench Act, 1998, The Administration of Estates Act, The Interpretation Act, 1998, and The Queen's Bench Consequential Amendment Act, 1998.

Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following on the minister's comments. As he mentioned, it is a Bill that's sort of technical in nature and updating the Act to bring it up to today's standards. And we would certainly feel that if there are any questions to be asked on the piece of legislation, that we would be prepared to do them in the committee, and see that the process is handled in that fashion.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and, by leave of the Assembly, referred to a Committee of the Whole later this day.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 47

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Nilson that **Bill No. 47 — The Saskatchewan Insurance Amendment Act, 1998** be now read a second time.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker our caucus has no major objections to this Bill. On the whole this is very positive legislation that protects both the consumer and the insurance industry in a number of ways. The insurance industry is a complex one for many people, and the need for effective protection for the consumer cannot be stressed too highly.

We are encouraged by the provisions of the Act, which give the insurance superintendent powers to bring actions against companies engaging in misleading or deceptive conduct. The Act also gives a superintendent greater powers to discipline insurers that engage in any of the range of fraudulent activities.

Further to this end, the Act gives the superintendent the freedom to bring in experts, such as forensic auditors, to assist with the examination of alleged offences. The Act also restricts insurers or other agents from making the sale of insurance a condition of sale of another product.

These and several other aspects of the Act go far to provide improved protection for the consumer. Our caucus, Mr. Speaker, is fully supportive of all such moves. While it makes these provisions on behalf of consumers, it also provides greater fairness for the insurers. It does this through such things as allowing insurers, or anyone else directly affected by the superintendent's decision, to appeal a decision on points of law to the Court of Queen's Bench. This eliminates the previous state of affairs where there was no further appeal to these decisions.

This Bill also expands the rights of people who have suffered a financial loss from an individual who seeks redress through the individual's insurance. This measure helps to ensure the orderly and fair resolution of civil disputes.

Again, Mr. Speaker, on the whole our caucus feels that this Bill is fair and balanced to all parties involved. There is only one area where we would raise concern. The Bill provides a superintendent with the power to enter in and inspect any commercial premises if he has a reasonable grounds to suspect an offence.

Strangely the Bill gives superintendent the right to obtain search warrants but does not require him to obtain one before making an inspection. This strikes us as a particularly useless provision. Why would the superintendent apply for such a search warrant when he has absolutely no need to obtain one?

Further, this raises serious questions about privacy and commercial confidentiality. While we recognize that the superintendent needs flexibility to do his job effectively, we think that legislators should always be hesitant to give an official broad powers to intrude in the places of business of private citizens at will. Therefore we feel this provision should be reviewed more closely before this Bill is passed.

This is, by the standards of this session, a relatively lengthy and complicated Bill, so we would be looking forward to going over it clause by clause in committee to ensure that the public interest is being served in all cases. However, those are points of detail best left to the committee and we have no objections to seeing this Bill pass second reading at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and, by leave of the Assembly, referred to a Committee of the Whole later this day.

Bill No. 55

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter that **Bill No. 55 — The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 1998** be now read a second time.

Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, this Bill is a very routine Bill and our caucus sees little reason to hold up the proceedings of this House on this particular piece of legislation. If we can answer our . . . I think the questions that have been put forward have been answered in a fashion that is sufficient enough for us. So we see no reason to hold the Bill up any further.

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

Bill No. 54

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Lingenfelter that **Bill No. 54 — The Crown Corporations Amendment Act, 1998** be now read a second time.

Mr. Boyd: — Again, Mr. Speaker, the questions that we have we feel can be sufficiently dealt with in committee so we'll be asking them at the appropriate time.

Mr. Hillson: — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I rise to say that the Liberal opposition has enormous concerns about some of the underlying principles of this Act. I think it is crystal clear that the experience we have had in the last while underlines the need for more accountability of our Crowns to the government and people of Saskatchewan, and to this legislature, rather than less.

And I'm concerned that it may become even more difficult to get information on what our Crown corporations are doing and how they are accountable to the people of Saskatchewan. I think there are serious questions that arise when we find out that the company that we are now having the current inquiry into was sold initially for the purpose of preventing information coming before this legislature.

And we now have firm testimony and firm evidence that the whole purpose in selling the company so hastily in five weeks was so this legislature, and in turn the people of Saskatchewan, would never have to find out what happened over their company. And then to make it even more galling and insulting we have Saskatchewan Power officials tell us unctuously that we the people of Saskatchewan are the shareholders. I'm sorry, but we have been treated very shabbily as the shareholders of

the company, as the owners of the company, when it is felt it is fair game to deceive, mislead, and hide from us the owners, and yet that is what happened.

(1500)

And I am concerned that this legislation may not assist in making our Crowns more accountable to the people of Saskatchewan. Certainly I do agree, Mr. Speaker, that if we as a province are going to continue to own a power company worth \$5 billion, it is not acceptable to make the president of that power company the Premier's campaign manager. Nor is it acceptable to fill the board with people who are political supporters of the government in power.

It is not so much an issue of patronage, although that's a very real issue. But the issue is not patronage; the issue is expertise. The issue is that you cannot run a \$5 billion corporation with campaign managers with little or no other background for running a corporation of this size. So if we want to own these corporations, we have to make sure that the expertise is in place.

And I realize when I say this that I ironically find myself lining up with Jack Messer who said that we have to take the politics out of the Crowns, although of course it's ironic coming from his mouth because we all know how he got his job in the first place. But having said that, but having said that, he is in fact right.

You can't have billion-dollar corporations and put them in the hands of campaign managers who may have been very good, I concede, very good at running campaigns, very good at raising campaign funds for the successful party, but whether they know a whole lot about running a power company or a phone company is another matter. And the same goes for the boards.

But the answer, Mr. Speaker, is not to make the power corporations less answerable to the government, the legislature, and the people of Saskatchewan. Indeed what I see is something in the nature of a catch-22. We are also told that our public corporations have to run more like private businesses. Well I think we all want our corporations to act in a proper businesslike manner, but — but, Mr. Speaker — there is an important proviso here: namely, the reason you have public ownership is because these corporations are serving as instruments of public policy.

Now if our Crown corporations are not instruments of public policy, then I would submit there is simply no argument left for public ownership. So if they function solely as private businesses, then that's precisely what they should be.

We set up public corporations to serve public policies. And indeed historically I think we all know that the reason why we had public corporations was that there was concern that the private sector might be interested in providing telephone and power service to our major cities and ignore the rural areas. So there was a public policy need that we felt could best be answered by setting up Crown corporations. So that's why we went the Crown corporation route in the first place as opposed to simply leaving the job to private enterprise.

Now that might need some updating, but the basic principal remains sound, and the basic question is still there. What public policy objectives do we still have with our Crowns — which means that the Crowns should be publicly owned as opposed to sold off.

And so, as I say, while I agree with the statement that we want our Crowns to behave in a proper business-like manner, similar to the private sector, I do not agree that we want them to run simply as any private sector company would operate, because if we do, then they shouldn't be publicly owned. It's as simple as that. They can only be publicly owned if they are forming and serving public policy objectives.

But I want to return to my point about the shabby treatment the people of Saskatchewan have received from some of the Crown corporation heads as our being supposed owners of these companies.

And I want to say that I do not recall this legislature voting or endorsing foreign equity investments by our Crown corporations. And I submit that if the people of Saskatchewan — if the people of Saskatchewan are the owners of these Crowns — then their representatives in this Assembly should vote as to whether or not we want to invest \$31 million in the world's most indebted country to buy a power company. Is that really what we want to do? Now if it is, that's fine by me, but I don't think that is a question to be decided in the back rooms of Saskatchewan Power; it's a question to be decided by the shareholders, by the people, and by their representatives, after a full debate on the issues involved.

Is it right, Mr. Speaker, that corporations that were initially established to make sure that rural Saskatchewan would have power service are now putting our money at risk in a cable company in Chicago, in an electric company in a country few Saskatchewanians have ever heard of before? Is this what we want? Is this a valid purpose? Is this a valid purpose for our Crowns?

Well the hon. member across the way says that our Crowns can no longer exist simply to serve this province. I frankly don't agree. I just don't agree. And I concede I don't know a great deal more about the intricacies of running a power corporation than Jack Messer does.

But I am told by some of the experts that the fact is it is not outdated to say we could have a telephone company or a power company existing to serve the province and people of Saskatchewan, and that far from ensuring the future of our Crowns by embarking on these foreign investments, we may be putting the Crowns at risk.

In fact hon. members will recall, Mr. Speaker, that Manitoba Telephones passed out of public ownership simply because of their unwarranted and unwise investments around the globe. Simply because they ceased serving the province of Manitoba, got involved in some high-flying and very ill-advised investments around the world, and the end result was that Manitoba Telephones passed out of public ownership into private ownership, leaving us with the only publicly owned telephone company on the continent.

So I simply do not accept, I do not accept the NDP argument that we can't have Crown corporations to serve Saskatchewan. That the only way we could have Crown corporations is if they are getting involved in globe-trotting boondoggles, and these globe-trotting boondoggles are somehow going to save our Crown corporations.

Now that's a basic philosophical argument and I concede, you know, that members opposite should be able to place that argument before this Assembly; we will place our arguments. It should be debated in this Assembly and debated in the province as a whole and let the people of Saskatchewan decide if this is the direction we want our Crown corporations to move.

And while I say I certainly stated my position, if there is an agreement in the province that this is what we want our Crown corporations to be doing — we actually want our Crown corporations to be involved in cable companies in Chicago, electric companies in Guyana; we want them in El Salvador, we want them in Peru, we want them in the Philippines, we want them in Uruguay — if that's what the people of Saskatchewan say, then so be it. We are still a democracy.

But my suspicion and my belief, Mr. Speaker, is that the people of Saskatchewan will say that the Crown corporations were set up by the Liberals in the early years of this province to serve the needs of rural Saskatchewan, and that's still why we have them. We want public policy objectives within the province being served by our Crowns.

We do not want globe-trotting boondoggles. We are not happy with the fact that we pay the highest power rates in western Canada to finance some of these boondoggles. We do not think that is why Saskatchewan Power was established in the first place. We do not think that is why we have Saskatchewan Power today.

And, Mr. Speaker, not only am I confident that that is what the people of this province would say, I am also confident that if we have a president of SaskPower who is knowledgeable and has a background in the running of power corporations as opposed to a background in the running of NDP campaigns, I'm confident the president of SaskPower too would have a different view on the situation.

But certainly it is almost secondary to me as to what we would ultimately decide. But what I am absolutely certain of is that if the people of Saskatchewan are the owners of these companies, then these companies must be committed to providing accurate, timely information to this Assembly and to the people.

In Channel Lake, Mr. Speaker, the company and SaskPower — and I specifically accused them of this and I will do so outside the House if called upon — were committed to preventing the people of Saskatchewan from finding out what they were up to. What the owners of that company were not supposed to find out, what SaskPower was doing with their money and their corporation. I find that scandalous and outrageous, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm concerned with this Bill, I am concerned with this Bill that we are not strengthening accountability to this House and to the people. I am worried that we are further weakening it. My concern is, Mr. Speaker, that what we are really setting

ourselves up for is the “health districtization” of our Crown corporations.

Well why do we have health districts, Mr. Speaker? Well I think we have health districts so that members opposite can tell us, oh we didn’t shut down Rabbit Lake; the health district did that. We didn’t shut down the Plains; the health district did that.

Well you see, members opposite, we call them the government, but that’s inaccurate, Mr. Speaker, because that suggests they have responsibility. And actually the members opposite, they can blame the health district, they can blame Ottawa, now hopefully they can blame the Crown corporations. But they can say, we have no responsibility here; we will . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, there is always someone to foist the blame off on rather than say we are the Government of Saskatchewan, we must take ultimate and final responsibility.

And it seems to me that if we are going to have public ownership of our Crown corporations, that intrinsic in that notion is that the government will take responsibility as the owners and as the representatives of the people of Saskatchewan. And they will work to correct the management that says, we don’t want the people of Saskatchewan finding out what the Crown corporations are doing.

So the issue, the issue is to strengthen accountability and not weaken it. The issue is to be able to accept responsibility rather than push it off on others.

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — With leave, to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I’d like to, for the member from Moosomin, introduce students from the Grenfell Elementary School. In your gallery, Mr. Speaker, 18 grade 2 students with teacher Betty Parley, and chaperons Kelly Derby and Patty Welch. And Mr. D’Autremont will be meeting with them shortly, for Mr. Toth.

I would ask the members to welcome them here this afternoon, and hope they have a good visit.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I will want to remind the hon. member, and I’m sure that in the future in making comments in the House, he’ll want to avoid making use of proper names in the House.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 54 (continued)

Mr. Hillson: — Thank you. I’d like to thank the member for Saltcoats. I appreciate the interruption. I needed some time to catch a second wind here.

So, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me the Crown corporations are a special mix. On the one hand they need to behave in a business-like manner. And that includes, as I say, putting a board and a CEO (chief executive officer) in place who knows how to run a power corporation. People who have expertise beyond, as I say, running NDP campaigns . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, it’s an important point.

But the other side of it is that our Crown corporations aren’t merely private sector businesses. They are Crowns because they are serving public policy objectives, and if we abandon the concept of our Crowns serving public policy objectives, we must inevitably abandon the concept of public ownership.

We have to, however, abandon the idea that our Crown corporations exist so that various ministers and CEOs can fly around the world getting us involved in foreign adventures in which we have no expertise and little prospect of profit.

(1515)

And let us strengthen accountability. If the people of Saskatchewan are truly the shareholders and owners of these corporations, we will want to keep them informed and we will want to have free and open debates in this House before we engage in foreign investment.

And that is why we will be moving an amendment to say that there will be no foreign equity investments without a debate in this House. And I call upon all members who believe in democracy and who believe in our Crown corporations as being servants of the people of Saskatchewan, to make that into a principle of day-to-day operation rather than an empty pious phrase which is devoid of practice.

So we are trying to move into the 21st century with our Crowns. We know that our Crown corporations played a significant role in the original development of this province, and they still can. But they are not going to play a role in the future of this province if they are used for back-door taxation. They are not going to play a role in this province if they involve themselves in globe-trotting boondoggles which do not have public confidence and which will simply expose us to ridicule and loss.

And the last point, Mr. Speaker, which I would ask the member for Lloydminster especially to pay particular account of because I haven’t actually used this one before, is the question of public utility rate reviews. It is scandalous, Mr. Speaker, that we are now the only jurisdiction on the continent that does not have rate review. And it is even more scandalous when one thinks that these are public companies, again servants of the people of Saskatchewan.

Well if they’re servants, why can’t there be rate review similar to what every state and province in North America enjoys. Why does there simply have to be an announcement that, well we’re jacking up the rates again; we know that we had \$150 million profit last year but we’re going to need a rate increase.

Well why do we need a rate increase? Well we need a rate increase because we're thinking of moving into Peru, or we're thinking of moving into the Republic of Gavoombabaga, or some other place that sends us all scrambling for our atlases wondering where the Deputy Premier is going to be visiting next.

So let's not have these foreign investments without a full public debate by the people and their elected representatives. And let's not have rate increases just to build up a war chest for the NDP in an election year or to build up a travel fund as they tour the world and visit countries that I say I have trouble locating in my atlas.

It could be, it could be that my NDP friends are right that we in Saskatchewan should have the highest power rates in western Canada, as we do under the NDP. But I can't help but wonder if we had rate review, if we actually had rate review, that there might be ways we could control rate increases.

And maybe the people of Saskatchewan would be able to come before those rate review commissions and say, why don't we hold down telephone rates by not losing \$16 million on a Chicago cable company. I think most of the people in Saskatchewan would say, I would rather have a lower telephone rate than lose \$16 million in a cable company in Chicago.

And there . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the hon. member says it is ridiculous and a fabrication for anybody to say that we have the highest power rates in western Canada. Well I must say how thrilled I am to hear her contradict the Minister of Finance, because that's what he said in his budget speech.

So we see another example yet again this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, of NDP back-benchers who are no longer able to stomach government policy. Yesterday we saw the hon. member from Wascana criticizing the Health minister — here she has to sit with him — but she was criticizing his policies. Today we see the hon. member for Lloydminster calling the Finance minister's budget ridiculous. And I must say she has a point.

But ridiculous or not, truth is truth, and the truth is we have the highest power rates in western Canada. And the reason we have the highest power rates in western Canada is the NDP needs back-door taxation. They need money for their international junkets. They have lost sight of serving the people and province of Saskatchewan, which brings me back to the Act presently before this House.

Mr. Speaker, I say with all the non-partisan conviction I can muster, let us get back to the philosophy and purpose for which our Crown corporations were initially established. Let us get back to the idea of basic service at basic rates. Not taxation, not foreign adventures, not gambling in Vegas or wherever, but service to the people and province of Saskatchewan at reasonable cost.

And I think that if we do that, we will find our utilities will be in public hands as we enter the 22nd century. But my prediction, Mr. Speaker, my firm prediction is if we continue to use the Crown corporations for, one, back-door taxation; two, foreign adventures; and three, a soft landing for campaign

managers for the NDP, we will lose public ownership and they will be sold off into private hands by this government.

And that is why, Mr. Speaker, I say that the need is to strengthen accountability to the people of Saskatchewan. My concern is that I see this legislation going in the opposite direction. I see this legislation as a back-door way to pave the road for sell-off of the Crown corporations as their policies inevitably fail. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Speaker, it was not my intention to enter this debate. However, there were a couple of remarks made by the member opposite to which I feel a response is in order.

The member in his remarks talked briefly, Mr. Speaker, about the inquiry that Crown Corporations Committee is having with respect to the Channel Lake. And he used the words that they — and he didn't say who — but he said that they deceived and they misled and they hid.

Mr. Speaker, I sit in the committee and so does the member opposite. I sit in the committee and so does the member opposite, and I say to the member, if he feels strongly that somebody deceived or somebody misled or somebody hid, it's up to him in the committee to point that person out, to ask that particular question, and to say . . . And I never did hear him say that, Mr. Speaker.

So I want to set the record on that, that that kind of language certainly does not help our Crown corporations and it does not help public confidence in the system and the member himself.

Mr. Speaker, I think what we could say is that mistakes were made, better communication could have been had. But certainly it is out of order, completely out of place for the member to use those words.

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

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 12 — The University of Saskatchewan Foundation Repeal Act

The Deputy Chair: — Before I call clause 1, I'll invite the minister to introduce her official.

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. With me today is John Biss, the executive director of the university services branch.

Clause 1

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Madam Minister, and to your official.

We just have a few questions to clarify some of the things that we have already raised. And I've had the opportunity to speak on the telephone with Dr. Ivany, president of the University of Saskatchewan, and one of his officials as well, and I think a number of the concerns that were expressed by some

individuals have been clarified to a degree.

So, Madam Minister, just a couple of questions still remain unanswered. Could you indicate what the balance of the foundation is that will be wound down. What is the financial balance that exists currently?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — The known bequests that would be left are half a million. Now if someone has left something in a will, that would become known at a future date. But the known bequests are a half million.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you. The money that is currently in the foundation, are there restrictions on the funds that have been placed in that foundation as to where they can be spent or how they can be spent? Do you have current restrictions on the money that's there?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Yes, any restrictions that the person that makes the bequest puts on it continue to stay with that bequest. And even in the instance when it's transferred over into the University of Saskatchewan proper, it would still be under the conditions of the bequest placed on it by the person who donated it.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister, that was the concern expressed by one individual as to whether or not those would carry forward.

As far as the specific uses, have there been or are there . . . in the current foundation, are there specific capital projects that the money has been designated to, and do those also carry forward as far as their usage in the future?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — We're not aware of any capital asset money. The money is really student bursary types of money so it's . . . there isn't any of that kind of money at the moment.

(1530)

Mr. Krawetz: — Madam Minister, the winding up of the University of Saskatchewan Foundation indicates that their assets — after of course liabilities are taken care of and all bills are paid — that the assets will be transferred over to the general administration of the University of Saskatchewan. Will this be true for all of the assets after the liabilities?

Can you assure the people of Saskatchewan that all of the amounts that currently sit within the University of Saskatchewan Foundation will indeed be transferred over to the general administration of the university?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Yes. The Act provides for the winding up of the foundation and the transfer of the bequests and donations, and also appoints as trustees the chancellor, the president, the Chair, the Board of Governors, and the President of the University Alumni Association to ensure that those duties are properly carried out.

Mr. Krawetz: — Over the last number of years or few years, how active has the foundation been in terms of receiving bequests or donations or grants?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — I think its inactivity is what has led to its demise; 1993 was the last time they actually had to meet to conduct any new business. So really this is just a winding down of something that has essentially ended in fact.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Madam Minister. And my final question, in section no. 4, Madam Minister, you indicate that the — I think it reads "the trustees shall take all reasonable steps to notify the public including creditors of the foundation of the winding up of the foundation."

And I guess the definition that I might be concerned about is, how the words reasonable steps will be interpreted? Do you foresee any conflict in terms of people of coming forward sometime from now saying we weren't notified, we weren't aware, and we have some concern about the foundation, or we actually did not become aware that indeed the foundation was being wound up and everything now is being transferred over?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Not anything that we would know of because there is only this one fund and it is already been referenced, and people know that this is the fund under discussion. So it's well known that this is the fund that's being transferred.

Mr. Krawetz: — The creation of the University of Saskatchewan Crown Foundation I think is something that has occurred a number of years ago, and you've indicated that the foundation that is being wound down today by this Act will be . . . has not been in use since 1993. Is that one of the reasons why this Act or this foundation has become so inoperative because of the fact that the Crown foundation was originated?

And then my second question, Madam Minister, would be: is the Crown foundation fulfilling all of the requirements that the previous foundation did prior to 1993? And are you satisfied with the mechanisms that are in place to ensure that all of the proper kinds of bequests, donations, whatever comes by way of people wanting to contribute, will indeed be handled by the mechanism that you have in place?

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Well the issue is more around the taxation laws, and the Crown foundation gives the necessary charitable donation status in order to make sure that the money is able to be used in that purpose for the university. It might be of some extra use to know that, as well as being reviewed by the internal auditors at the university: it's also subject to the review of the Provincial Auditor as well.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 6 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

Bill No. 41 — The Teachers' Dental Plan Amendment Act, 1998

The Deputy Chair: — I invite the minister to introduce her officials.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Beside me is Michael Littlewood, director of legislation and

third party funding. Beside me is Craig Dotson, deputy minister of Education. Behind me is Norma Knuth, supervisor of financial affairs, and Shirley Robertson, manager of superannuation programs.

Clause 1

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Madam Minister, welcome to you and your officials. A few questions of clarification, Madam Minister.

I note that the explanations on Bill No. 41 indicate that it is a requirement as a result of the negotiated contract, and we understand that. Could you explain the differences now in dental plans of other groups. And the question I'm leading to, Madam Minister— is you've indicated that there will be now a 20-day waiting period — are most dental plans at the six-month waiting period? And is this a significant move within this set of negotiations or is it occurring in other groups as well?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Chair, my officials aren't familiar with other dental plans. But what I can share with the member is that in the teaching profession you have permanent contracts and temporary contracts. And this is in light of what's happening in the workplace with regard to temporary contracts.

I think if you were to look at other workplaces this would not be the case. You generally would have a temporary job that might last two years or a maximum of two years, and you would have permanent jobs.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. And I guess I was referring to the recent changes with the public employees' plan that indicates that I think constituency assistants, for instance, will have a six-month waiting period before they can claim. And I note now that this is changing to 20 days.

And I suspect that that means then a teacher who is a new teacher, who begins teaching in September, after 20 days they will be on the dental plan. And you acknowledge that that's accurate.

A clarification, Madam Minister, if there's a contract, a term contract for anything greater than 20 days — let's say 30 days — and that person then becomes eligible for dental plan benefits, what will be the period of time then that they will be eligible to receive benefits? Will it end at the conclusion of that 30-day contract or will there be an extension? For instance, you know some dental work that is required on the 32nd day, two days after the contract is over; will they be covered under the plan?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Yes, Mr. Chair, in order for the teacher to receive benefits they have to have the work done during the term of their contract. With the exception of perhaps dentures, where they may have started while they were on the contract of employment and couldn't finish that kind of work. But the expectation is that you'll receive benefits if you obtain those services during the term of your contract.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. I'm glad that that's clarified.

Madam Minister, one of the concerns expressed a number of years ago — and I think it's still current as well — regarding all group dental plans — that plans like that were becoming so expensive that indeed they may not be able to be maintained. Could you identify some of the changes that have been enhanced during the last set of negotiations, and I'm not looking for every specific clause. What I'm looking for is how much improvement has occurred.

I note that in your estimates . . . the costs of your budget this year over last year has about \$34,000 of cost to the dental plan. Do we see sky-rocketing dental plan costs? And my concern, as expressed by a number of teachers is: will we be able to continue to afford the plan if it gets to a point that it costs the government so much money that suddenly they decide at the stroke of a pen that the dental plan doesn't exist any more.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — To the member, Mr. Chair, what I can say about this particular benefit is that it's collectively bargained so it couldn't be deleted with the stroke of a pen; it would have to be changed at the bargaining table.

We've added about a million dollars to the cost of the dental plan. What you need to know is that in previous years, all of the money allocated to the dental plan was not necessarily spent.

In the dental plan there are no new codes that have been covered. There's a higher percentage of coverage. The annual maximum amount that you can spend on dental work has been deleted and orthodontics for dependants is now partially covered.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Madam Minister, do you fear that carriers of the insurance plan — whoever they may be; I believe it's Metropolitan Life right now — that they will be increasing their rates significantly as a result of claims on the dental plan?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — I'm not aware that they're going to increase their rates and I'm advised that they have not increased their rates in some years.

Mr. Krawetz: — Madam Minister, my final question here is . . . Obviously the dental plan is an asset to the teachers and I think that's shown by the improvements that you've made to the plan. Teachers obviously consider that a priority.

Is the dental plan — no doubt you keep statistics and records — is the dental plan, the number of people that use it, is it greater than the average, in the province of Saskatchewan, of other employee groups, as far as Metropolitan Life's statistics?

(1545)

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — We don't know the answer to that question. We just look after our own dental plan, so we don't know what its costs are relative to other groups.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

**Bill No. 42 — The Teachers' Life Insurance
(Government Contributory) Amendment Act, 1998**

Clause 1

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Madam Minister, we note that in this Bill as well as the preceding one, I think the largest fundamental change is to the 20-day clause in respect of the 50-day that used to exist. How many people do you see affected by the change here?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — We anticipate that it'll be less than a hundred people.

Mr. Krawetz: — How expensive will that be in terms of cost to the department?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Seventy-five dollars per year per teacher.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Madam Minister, you indicate in your explanatory notes that there was some concern, and actually I think you indicate that it is not a change but clarity of full or partial days.

I recall some I think discussions — we'll call them that, discussions and not bitter debates — about full versus partial and the kinds of things that have occurred at the teacher tables before in negotiations amongst teachers and of course amongst teachers and boards then.

Is this the settlement of concerns that have been there before? Or is this just housekeeping in nature, and indeed there have not been concerns raised in the past about full versus partial.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — This is housekeeping in nature.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 7 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

**Bill No. 53 — The Teachers Superannuation
and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 1998**

Clause 1

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Madam Minister, you've indicated that the changes, some of the changes necessary in this Act, were due to some of the federal income tax regulation legislative changes. Could you indicate to this House what some of those federal changes were to enable us to better understand the changes as far as how they relate to Saskatchewan.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Chair, what I can indicate to the member is that this is a matter of clarifying the legislation in order to satisfy the federal government. Particularly what we needed to do was clarify the definition of dependant, and secondly we needed to clarify how you can transfer funds from one pension plan to the other. So this is simply a matter of clarifying the intention of the legislation in order to satisfy the

federal government.

Mr. Krawetz: — Madam Minister, you indicated that there were some inequities that had existed before in the administration of the superannuation and disability benefits. Could you identify what some of those inequities were?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Okay, this is a matter of fairness. In some cases we'd refund the member's contribution plus the interest to the member in terms of their estate or to their widow or widower.

In other cases, if the member was alive and they wanted a refund, we could refund them their money but we couldn't refund them their interest on their funds, so it was a matter of just making the situation fair regardless of the situation.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Madam Minister, I think your department is familiar with the concern that was raised by a gentleman where his spouse was a teacher and of course still has contributions in the plan up to two years. But the changes that were initiated in 1989, if I'm correct, were shortly after her passing and as a result that money has indicated . . . or remains within the plan. And he feels that even though the changes that occurred in '89 correct everything since '89 that that has left him in an awkward position, and that he is not able to benefit from the contributions that his spouse made during their years when she was a teacher.

And I'm wondering, Madam Minister, is there any further concern within your department as to — or any other people who are raising those concerns — that say that this was not settled in the best interests of everyone, and whether or not there is possibly a method that by which you can resolve this gentleman's concern?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — There's no retroactivity to this legislation.

Mr. Krawetz: — Madam Minister, in clause no. 16 you talk about the ability to transfer, and I know that you indicated the commuted value. Could you explain the procedure that existed before versus what section 16 is trying to change, for clarity purposes, Madam Minister?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — This clause is for those folks who quit teaching some significant amount of time before they're going to be eligible for their pension. So for example, if I'm aged 45 and I quit teaching and then I'm not eligible for a pension. I won't be eligible for pension until I'm 55. When I do go to collect my pension, my pension will be based upon my income 10 years previous. So in fact I'll be behind the eight-ball. I will be collecting a pension based on my income of 10 years previous.

Now what they'll be able to do is to take the commuted value of that investment and invest it in a fund of some kind with the thought that they will get a rate of return on that fund for 10 years hence. And then they'll be able to collect the money when they're 55 and they should be in a better position. They will be better off, we believe, with this change to this particular clause.

Mr. Krawetz: — Madam Minister, does this change affect both

pension plans that are in existence for the teachers' federation, or is it just the current one?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — It only affects the old plan.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 19 inclusive agreed to.

Schedule A agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

The Deputy Chair: — Why is the hon. member from Moosomin on his feet?

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Chairman, with leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it's my pleasure to introduce a group of students from the Langbank Elementary School who've just joined us this afternoon. There are 12 students from the grade 5 class. They're attended by their teacher, Laurie Dubé; chaperons Leanne Lawrence, Sharon Barbour, and Jeannette Ede.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to . . . I think it's certainly a privilege for the students to be here, especially when we have the Minister of Education in the auditorium and the fact that our schools were two that joined together, are working together; and another question that we'll be raising with the minister is the fact that there's certainly need for a new facility.

But I want to have the members join with me in welcoming the students that are here with us this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(1600)

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 12 — The University of Saskatchewan Foundation Repeal Act

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

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

Bill No. 41 — The Teachers' Dental Plan Amendment Act, 1998

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — 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.

Bill No. 42 — The Teachers' Life Insurance (Government Contributory) Amendment Act, 1998

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — 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.

Bill No. 53 — The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 1998

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill be read a third time and passed under its title.

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

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

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

Mr. Toth: — Mr. Chairman, with leave to introduce guests.

Leave granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as well, a third group that's here to join us this afternoon from the Moosomin constituency, a group of students from MacLeod Churchill Elementary School in Moosomin — 42 grade 3 students who are here.

And I see as well, this group of students I think has taken the Children's Festival in as well. It's a pleasure to introduce them to the Assembly. They're accompanied by their teachers, Mrs. Pam Foy, Miss Nancy McGonigal, and a number of chaperons.

I'd like to invite them . . . And just for the sake of the students, the interest of the students, to the students, what we're doing here at this moment in the Legislative Assembly, we have the Minister of Education and we'll be addressing how she's spending the money that's been allotted to her department, how she's spending it, and why she's spending it in certain areas.

So for the moment you have in this Assembly, I hope you'll enjoy the debate that takes place. And I'd like to invite the members of the Assembly to welcome the students here this afternoon.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

General Revenue Fund Education Vote 5

The Chair: — Before we start, I would ask the minister to introduce her officials, please.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I too

want to join the member in welcoming all of the grade 3's to the Legislative Assembly this afternoon. If you stay for a few minutes, I'm sure that you will hear the members opposite ask some questions. And as the Minister of Education, it's my duty to respond to those questions in the best way I can. So welcome.

Joining me today are Craig Dotson, who is the deputy minister of Education; he is to my left. To my right is Michael Littlewood, executive director, third party funding and legislative services. Behind me is Ken Horsman, the associate deputy minister. And sitting beside Mr. Horsman is Mae Boa, the executive director of finance and operations.

Also joining us is Cal Kirby, director of capital facilities planning, and Karen Lautsch, who is the former senior policy adviser for school grants. She's now working with the Department of Post-Secondary Education for one year. And joining us as well is Norma Knuth and Shirley Robertson, both from the Teachers' Superannuation Commission.

Subvote (ED01)

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Madam Minister, welcome to all of your officials. I look forward to a productive afternoon. And I know that as the hour indicates, we'll be back here this evening.

And I'm wondering, Madam Minister, as I look back at the comments and questions of April 15, the last time that Education estimates were before this House, I had raised with you and your officials a number of questions and a number of concerns. I believe I had asked for eight specific points if you would be able to supply.

And I'm wondering whether or not that information would be available today or maybe later on tonight if we're able to secure that information during the recess time.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — I understand that I can give you the questions four through eight. I can give those to you today. And the questions one, two, three were asked by your House Leader, and those questions are going to be submitted by our House business office to your House leaders in due course.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Madam Minister. While the information that I asked for in four to eight is going to be extremely valuable in terms of some of the questions that need to be addressed, I know also the other three questions are also . . . or the other three answers are also very important. And I was hoping that we would be able to have all of that information prior to Education estimates being voted off if indeed they do get voted upon this week.

Nevertheless, Madam Minister, one of the points that we did talk about the last time you were here was the construction of schools and the renovation of projects and in fact that's one of the items that I asked for. Madam Minister, we're hearing a lot of concern expressed by boards of education, individual communities, around what regulations are in place for projects to be approved for construction. With respect to capital projects, is it the government's policy to give priority to joint-use facilities?

(1615)

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — It's one of the factors. Joint use is an extremely important public policy initiative of the province. We have been very pleased with the progress that has been made in various communities, particularly rural communities, when it comes to joint-use facilities where the regional college, the health board, the regional library, and other such community public services are co-located in the school. We think this is the way to go. It is not the key to receiving funding for capital projects. I would say the first priority is obviously health and safety, and then the other factors such as enrolment pressures and joint use certainly come into play.

Mr. Krawetz: — Madam Minister, have you or your officials been able to monitor projects that have occurred a number of years ago where there has been a joint-use facility constructed or renovated and shared, and are they totally supportive? Have there been any problems with shared agreements between municipal councils, health boards, public library boards, etc., or all projects that you have been involved with regarding joint use, are they all proceeding successfully?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — I've never had a complaint that I can recall. My understanding is that all these projects are proceeding successfully and the communities really appreciate the fact that some of these services are co-located in a school where children and young people are.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Madam Minister, the second use of school facilities seems to be around the area of sharing between the two systems in our province, the public system and the separate system. And there have been announcements by your department regarding the approval of some, as you've referred to them as, shared facilities I think, or as joint-use facilities between the public and the Catholic boards. Is this going to be a requirement now, Madam Minister, that indeed capital construction projects will only occur if there is a shared facility between both public and the separate boards?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — No, it's not going to be a requirement, but we do have a long history of comprehensive high schools in the province which is the sharing between public and Catholic ratepayers or children.

I will say this, that joint use between the Catholic and public schools makes sense in some cases. We certainly have a successful project that's just on the verge of being completed in Yorkton between the Catholic and the public school board.

We have some discussions that are going on in the city of Regina between the Catholic and public school board. Oftentimes — or sometimes, I will clarify that word — sometimes a joint-use facility may mean that you will get your approval, because if you were to go forward with a single-use facility you may not get approval based upon your own particular observations on your need.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. With reference maybe to the facility that you've identified at Yorkton, do you foresee that there will be a reduction in the overall administrative cost because of the sharing of that facility? Or in fact are you looking at that facility as a test case to see whether

or not there is a situation that can occur where the two buildings are basically side by side, sharing a wall, but as my understanding, and I've been phoned a number of times, is that the people there see this as basically two separate systems, that all that they're sharing is a wall; that indeed there won't be much else shared and that costs overall will probably not be reduced at all.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Well I beg to differ with the member. There is sharing. There's sharing of the mechanical system, there's sharing of gymnasium facilities, there's sharing of a resource centre, a library. By going together, the taxpayers of this province have saved \$1 million on construction costs.

Now are they going to save money on administration? The answer is no. Are they going to save . . . is the province, our taxpayers going to save money on construction costs? The answer is yes, we've saved a million dollars.

Certainly the Catholic children are located on one side of the school, the public children located on the other, but they do share a gymnasium and the library and that sort of thing. As well, the city of Yorkton has gone in with the joint-use facility and they're putting in the facility as well, which the children will have access to. It is a leading edge project.

The other point I want to make is that joint use between the Catholic and public school boards is not new to the province, or in this . . . I mean it's new to this province but it's not new in the rest of the country. We have examples of joint-use schools in Ontario and in Alberta.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. I'm glad to hear that indeed the description of the project is far greater than what was described to me, and that indeed some of the things that people have been suggesting for a number of years are starting to proceed.

The other side of the coin, Madam Minister — and there's always two sides — is of course there is some concern in the separate community that the decision to share will eventually lead to amalgamation and the eventual, I guess, assimilation of the separate system into the public system. Has that concern been raised to you?

And what kind of response would you give to a concerned person in Saskatchewan as to whether or not projects like that will eventually lead to a creation of one system, basically the public system?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Well I think that, as the member may not know, when Saskatchewan joined confederation in 1905 — and we're about to celebrate our 100th birthday — one of the conditions going into confederation was that minority religious groups in the province would have access to minority religious schools. That is the foundation, one of the foundations, one of the principles of our province joining confederation.

So I would say that Catholic people in the province of Saskatchewan should be comforted by the fact that this was the premiss, one of the premisses of our entry into Confederation, that they would have access, minority religious groups would have access to minority religious schools. So I don't see us

going the route of Newfoundland, which had a much different basis of coming into Confederation.

Our Premier has stated on occasion, on many occasions — and he certainly meets with the bishops and the archbishops; I have met with the archbishops and the bishops — that this is a government that would never undermine the rights of Catholic people in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Madam Minister, I think one of the concerns expressed, probably because of the issue in Saskatoon regarding transferring of taxes between the public and the separate system, and that has been further inflamed I guess as a result of the discussion and the debate that's going on in Saskatoon — it has been here in Regina for a number of years — there's always discussion between the public system and the separate system regarding taxes.

Does the current urban municipal Act, The Education Act, does it sufficiently describe how taxes are to be paid and is there a conflict that can be resolved? And the second part of that, Madam Minister, would be, are all people aware of their responsibilities, I guess, and their obligations?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Well I think it's quite clear to the administrators in the Catholic systems across this province that only Catholics can give their taxes to a Catholic board. All other persons in the province that own property are to give their taxes to the public board in their communities. Only Catholics shall give their taxes to Catholic school boards. That is the law. That is very clear and that is the law.

So if you were to decide, as it's being suggested in some quarters, that your taxes could be redirected, and if you are not a baptized Catholic, a member of the Catholic community, to send your taxes to a Catholic board would be illegal.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Still on the topic of capital projects and construction. Madam Minister, in 1991-92, I think your first term in government, the amount of money spent on capital grants I believe was about \$70 million. And we've seen that decline now where we're still sitting in the 20 millions range over the last three or four years.

I think as a result we've heard from a lot of boards of education from a lot of communities that indeed a lot of the renovations, a lot of the upkeep, the kind of work that requires significant dollar contributions, not only from the local taxpayers but from government as well, has not been forthcoming. And as a result a lot of those projects have been put on hold. We hear of safety concerns at schools.

Madam Minister, I guess what my concern is and the concern of a number of people who have raised this with me is that as you've talked about joint use and the need to have joint use facilities as the wave of the future, which I don't disagree with, that there is a concern that the projects that require completing, a simple matter, that we need to get busy with some of these projects that have been put on the back burner three years ago when we only had \$21 million of capital grant monies. Last year they were put on hold. And I think your own numbers, if I recall, you indicated that I think in this House that there was

somewhere upwards of 200 applications for either capital or renovation.

So, Madam Minister, is there a situation where school boards and communities need to be concerned about safety and does your department ensure that projects that are necessary, projects that will be controlled by safety factors will indeed go forward, and that indeed the monies will be provided to ensure that those projects can be completed?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — I want to thank the member for the question because it's a good question and I just want to put the answer to the question in this context. You'll know that for the past several days the bells have been ringing in this legislature over the closure of the Plains, and the debate in this House and elsewhere has been around health care funding.

The fact of the matter is that this province as you know when we came to government in 1991 was facing a \$1.2 billion deficit. This province had the highest per capita debt and deficit in the country. And there was some steps that had to be taken if this province was not to go into bankruptcy. In fact, our Premier and our Minister of Finance had to make some trips to New York and elsewhere in order to show the bond dealers what we were going to do to get the situation under control.

Well what do you do when you're facing a real crisis — a real crisis when no one wants to lend you any money? And what you do is you begin to look at where can we reduce our spending in order to refinance some of the debt that was coming due and so on and so forth. And one of those places is capital.

And so I think it's a fair observation that in the last several years the province of Saskatchewan has not spent the \$70 million per year on school capital, and it's a fair observation that there are over \$300 million in capital requests for school facilities — and that's a fair comment.

Now when you get to a time when you have a little bit of money, and we have a little bit of money in this budget, if you look at where the vast majority of this money or a large part of this money was spent was in health care — \$88 million. The budget of Education, we received a \$7.3 million increase in capital, I believe it was, and \$21 million increase in operating grants, so about 30 million.

The fact of the matter is that every ministry in this House, when we go to put together our budget, has to deal with the reality of health care because it's an extremely important topic to the citizens of this province.

(1630)

And so I think it's fair to say that the real crisis in this province has been: how do we manage debt and deficit? How do we never go back to the days where we spent money? We have empty schools that are eight years old in this province. Go to Paddockwood. There were schools . . . There were decisions made that were political — let's build a school — and Paddockwood is an example. That school is empty — there are no students there.

So I would argue, sir, that we have in the last five years as

government people tried to balance public expectations with what we really had in terms of money. And this year we had some additional dollars as a result of the improvement in the economy. Obviously we're somewhat concerned about the drought and frost in your part of the woods and we'll see how things are.

But you know we're a balanced government and we do things incrementally, and we are not going to spend money on capital projects when we don't have it because that's what happened . . . That certainly was done by your predecessors.

Mr. Krawetz: — Well, Madam Minister, thank you for those comments. First of all though, they weren't my predecessors. Secondly, Madam Minister, if we take a look at your numbers, we take a look at your numbers on capital, you indicated, I think, 7 million. And when I look at the costs of school capital and the school capital interest payments, which are tied together, I see only an addition of about 5.7 million last year over this year.

I think last year there were 26.8 million and this year your costs for capital and capital interest are 32.5. So I see a difference of 5.7 million, not the 7 million that you had indicated.

Interest is down, and I guess as you've indicated, interest will continue to go down year after year so indeed your department will have additional monies available because interest will continue to go down. We've seen that over the last three or four years because of the fact that your government has decided to spend less in capital since '91; there were fewer projects that were financed. And as a result of the maximum 10-year term, we can look at it that probably down the road we're going to see very little interest budget as far as a line item.

Madam Minister, if you would clarify those numbers to indeed be able to indicate to us what is the total amount of money that will be spent on capital and capital interest this year over last year, I'd appreciate that.

And secondly, Madam Minister, there have been changes to the way capital projects are financed. I recall years ago when I first became involved with the school division, I think the maximum amount that we were paying on a capital project regardless of size was 2 mills of local taxation, then it changed to 4 mills, and then there were caps. And now I understand that depending upon the assessment, school divisions could be paying anywhere from 40 to 60 per cent of a capital project.

Madam Minister, have any changes to capital funding by . . . as far as the commitment from the province and the commitment at the local level, were there any changes this year in the way capital projects are being funded, and do you contemplate any changes in that formula for next year?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — There have been no changes in the way we determine the revenue sharing or the capital sharing for projects in this year's budget.

Mr. Krawetz: — Madam Minister, I indicated that the percentages were between 40 and 60 of the cost per school division. Is that an accurate . . . do you have those numbers available for what might be the lowest percentage that one

particular school division contributes and what would be the highest as far as across the province?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — On average we pay 60 per cent and it would depend on your assessment.

Mr. Krawetz: — As a result of that percentage, I guess when we're talking about a construction of a large or a capital structure where we might be looking at 4 million or \$5 million of total costs, have you had any concerns from boards of education that they are being prohibited from applying for that project because they would have to contribute 45 per cent or 42 per cent of a four and a half million dollar project and they find that that's just too expensive?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — The department advise me that they have been involved . . . they've been advised by two boards, the Yorkton Catholic and the Estevan public, that this is a problem for them but they have many projects. I mean the Yorkton Catholic has the huge project right now with the joint-use facility. And in Estevan, I mean they have seen a lot of capital construction in the city of Estevan particularly in the urban board. Joint-use facilities, Pleasantdale, we've just announced another project. I mean this is a community that's seen some major renovations and reconstruction to their school facilities.

Mr. Krawetz: — Madam Minister, you've identified two boards that you've indicated are active in the construction of facilities within their divisions. I guess my question to you, Madam Minister, though is still have you heard from boards of education, because of the changes in downloading and indeed their costs becoming so high that they haven't put forward a B-1 to your department to say that we would like this project done but we're not even going to submit it because we won't be able to afford it even if you approve it.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — I haven't received anything to that effect.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. If we could change to a slightly different topic, Madam Minister, and that would be the area of transportation of school children.

I think it was about a month ago, Madam Minister, when the Saskatchewan Safety Council asked the government to change the regulations regarding school bus stopping and operation at railway crossings. There seemed to be two different points of view.

One where if a school bus is not required to stop at railway crossings, there was some suggestion then that there might be a lowering of the numbers of accidents that occur at railway crossings.

The other groups have indicated, of course, that buses should stop at all controlled railway crossings because there might be a failure of the actual railway crossing lights to work.

And I know that there was controversy and there was a number of articles in the paper that probably described both points of view very accurately.

I'm wondering, has your department made any

recommendations to government or have you continued your discussions with the Saskatchewan Safety Council to work out what might be a solution for Saskatchewan's buses since we do have hundreds and hundreds of buses that are on the roads and many of them cross railway crossings every day?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — My understanding is that this matter has been referred to the Highway Traffic Board for their consideration.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Madam Minister, the department made some changes to the foundation grant formula last year and how you were allocating transportation grants. I think there was the exchange in terms of how the actual pupil count occurred.

Did your department receive any concerns or complaints from boards of education to those changes that you implemented last year? And have you made any further changes to this year's transportation grant?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — For the member's information, last year we did change how we calculated numbers of days because we had a particular school division that went to a four-day school week. They in fact were not actually bussing children five days a week; in many cases they were bussing children four days a week.

They expressed some concern about that and in this year's formula or calculation for the rural transportation factor, there is some recognition for capital contained in the formula for transportation. So some of their difficulty has been partially resolved.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Your answer is a response to a couple of other questions — I asked you that very similar question last year around capital — the need for bus replacement. Has your foundation grant formula taken into consideration bus replacement on its new allocation of funds?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — There's no change in that regard.

Mr. Krawetz: — Did I not hear you on your previous answers say that there were now changes to capital for purchasing a bus?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — For the purposes of Scenic Valley, we recognize that they have certain fixed costs, and capital obviously was one of them. We didn't change the way we calculate capital, but for the purposes of Scenic Valley, we recognized that there were certain fixed costs, which include capital.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you for the clarification, Madam Minister. Madam Minister, last year I believe you indicated that about 54,000 . . . 54 million, sorry, was allocated in the area of transportation. Is that a similar figure for this year?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Okay. In total recognized expenditure recognition, we recognize 894,019,774. And for the purposes of transportation, there are three categories: 55.9 million; 4.8 million for special education transportation; and other transportation, 7.8 million.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Madam Minister, one of the other concerns that was raised as a result of your changes last year — and you indicated that you hadn't had a great response — this is coming from one of the school divisions, who've indicated that the requirement to keep almost, I guess a daily stat, in that students were only going to be recognized as being transported if indeed they were on the bus that particular day.

And the concern was raised to me was whether or not there would be an illness, or whether or not a student was away for a week due to a field trip, and that they would not . . . the school division in fact then would have to keep records to indicate the number of days that were recognized. Was that a concern, or was that an incorrect interpretation?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Well I understand that we had some overzealous secretary-treasurers who may have not understood exactly what we were indicating. What we were trying to get at was — how many days do you expect to transport students in your school year and we'd like some indication of that. It is not, is Johnny on the bus 185 days and you'll only get paid for 185 days, or is Sally on the bus 160 days and you'll only get paid 160 days. The question is — how many days in the school year does your bus travel the roads of Saskatchewan?

(1645)

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. I'm glad to hear that that was resolved.

The other concern that was described was there are situations where someone begins to ride a bus in the fall and they'll ride for a couple of months because of a rural location, they'll move into an urban community for the winter months and then they're back out on the summer months — does that affect the amount of grant that that school division will receive for those months when the student is not being transported?

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — You only get to count once a year. So the time of year when the count is being done if there are children on the bus, they're counted. If those children aren't on the bus at that particular time of year, they're not counted.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Madam Minister, if we could turn to a couple of other things time permitting. One of the ones that you and I have had some discussion with, and I've raised the issue here in the House, is around the small schools factor.

And we have taken a look at the existing regulations around the small schools factor and the recognition and the changes that you made last year and there are still concerns from communities, Madam Minister. And I want to describe the situation again so that you would understand it even though I believe I've indicated this before. And I hope that I'm not being repetitive, Madam Minister.

The concern is still from the community of Yorkton and of course Theodore, Madam Minister, where Theodore was a K to 12 school and still is until June 30. And then the board of education has made or has decided that they will discontinue offering grades 10, 11, and 12 in the community of Theodore

and those students will be transferred . . . transported to the city of Yorkton.

Madam Minister, the concern of the Theodore local board of education, the people in the community of Theodore is regarding the allocation of grant monies to the Yorkton School Division for specifically the secondary grades 10, 11, and 12. Your formula recognizes that the school that is the closest and the second closest will be the two schools that will come into play as far as determining the amount of grant that's allocated by way of the small schools factor.

I have a concern with that and I've expressed that to you, and the people of Saskatchewan in those communities also have a concern. While I can see it being it a suitable formula if you are comparing apples to apples — and we've used that over-used term before — if I'm comparing a kindergarten to grade 12 school in one community to two other communities that have kindergarten to grade 12 schools, your formula and your regulations make perfect sense because I will be comparing a school of like grades to another school of like grades.

Madam Minister, the problem though is when we start to compare a school like Theodore which is kindergarten to grade 12, and now we're comparing it to a school, Springside, which is a K to 6 school. And you're saying that because there's a school that has some grades in it — not grade 10, 11 and 12 — the distance between Theodore and Springside means that there is no grant allocations for the 10's, 11's and 12's from Theodore.

Same scenario for our second closest school, I believe, for the community of Theodore — and I might be corrected as far as the schools — is the community of Sheho, which is now a K to 8 or K to 9 school. And you're also using that school for calculating the grant for the 10's, 11's and 12's in Theodore.

So as a result, we're looking at the community of Theodore, grades 10, 11 and 12, and we're saying your grant will be determined by the two nearest schools that aren't even offering grade 10, 11 and 12. And as a result the community of Theodore, very specifically, the local board is saying this is bizarre. We have a formula that is saying that you won't receive any monies for having 10's, 11's and 12's in your school because their enrolment in each of those grades is below 20, because we're going to compare you to Sheho and Springside, and those communities don't have grades 10, 11 and 12.

Does it not make more sense to compare apples to apples and indeed look at the nearest school that contains the grade configuration. Your small schools factor is broken up into three categories. Very specifically it talks about the elementary grades, middle grades, and the secondary.

So when we have . . . I guess if you were comparing a K to 8 school to a K to 9 school there might be a little bit of overlap there and it might be a little difficult to indeed compare that. But if we're talking about secondary grades . . . and as you've indicated in this House many times, Madam Minister, that schools will continue to close; they've closed over the last number of years and there will be grade discontinuance.

However, I don't think we're making it fair to the board of

education who's done its job. And I'm not sure when Springside was a K to 12 school or when Sheho was a K to 12 school but I'm sure sometimes in its history it was. A board of education now is looking at that very school and saying, well we've made the distance factor further; we've ensured that there isn't a secondary school every eight miles.

And you've said that yourself, Madam Minister, that we shouldn't be looking at that because older children can travel further. I agree with you on that instance; we should try to ensure that our younger children are closer together. But now you're indicating that 10, 11s and 12s, the grant calculation is going to be determined by a building. It's not going to be determined by the proximity of grades of a similar nature. You want it to be described by buildings.

This is a problem not only in Theodore, Madam Minister. I've received a number of calls from schools again, K to 12 schools. Because they're fearful that their senior grades, 10, 11 and 12 — you are going to be comparing them to other schools. And as the enrolments decline somewhat, even if they're still going to be very viable schools where the enrolments are 14 or 15 in each of grade 10, 11 and 12, still a very viable school, but now the grant that is being allocated to the school division is reduced significantly because the next school closest . . .

I'm going to give you one more example, Madam Minister. You're familiar I'm sure because you've received letters from this community . . . and that community is the community of Sturgis regarding an elementary school and a high school in the same town. The concern there, of course, is they would like to keep the elementary school open because it offers them a good school, good quality education. Likewise, a couple of blocks down, there is a high school.

Now, by your grant calculation, because the enrolment in the elementary has dropped below 20, they are being assessed as the closest school, the composite school or the high school that is two blocks away, that is grades 6 or 7 to 12. As a result, people and the board of education look at your regulations and say, why do we want to keep the elementary school? We are being penalized for keeping that school open because it's being compared to the other building that's in the same community.

And they've indicated by letter — I've talked with the board of education — they have a letter that describes that their two closest schools for the elementary school is the high school and the school in Preeceville. Both of those schools, Madam Minister, are within the minimum kilometres that you describe. As a result their grant is zero.

And there's a concern, because I think what you're going to see happen is, school divisions are going to look at that and say, if we're going to receive maximum grant, then we have to even close some of the smaller schools — the K to 6 schools that you say should be kept open and I agree should be kept open. I think we have to take a look at that grant formula and we have to determine what is best for the people of Saskatchewan. I await your response.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Well, just from a response, I can't imagine that you'd have people keeping two half-empty buildings open. My assumption is that the good people of

crystal springs school division would probably move all of those students into one school.

And then they would have the benefit of the minimum of the small school factor because I understand Preeceville is not that far away from Sturgis. So I presume that the school board will act with some frugality and they may look at merging those two schools into one.

That's happening in communities across the province where you may have a kindergarten to 6 and then a grade 7 to 12 and they're moving students from one school to the other and having one school. So I assume that's what'll happen in Sturgis.

What the member should know is that our government did make a decision to change the small schools factor last year and this was to benefit small, rural schools across the province. And in fact, some of the rates moved from \$850 per student to 1,000 and from \$450 a student to \$1,000 per student. And we also increased the numbers of students in the grade that would be recognized from 10 to 15. So that was an extremely important thing to do as well.

The old formula that we inherited did not recognize the small school factor, in terms of comparing other schools by distance, by road. They just had it recognized as the crow flies, and that doesn't necessarily work in the province of Saskatchewan. So this recognition increased funding to small schools in the province to \$18 million from \$8 million. So we think that this was a real benefit to small, rural schools in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now you raised the . . . And I would make this point. That for the first time in over 23 years there will be, I'm told, only four schools closed in the province of Saskatchewan in 1998. The last time we had that few numbers of schools was in 1975 when three schools were closed and prior to that, 1970 when three schools closed.

So I really do think that our government's commitment to rural education and small rural schools in this province has meant that, in this year in particular, we have very few schools closing in the province of Saskatchewan, particularly when we've seen other years, in the '80s, when your predecessors were in power: 19 schools closed in '83; 20 in '84-85; 13 schools, and so on and so forth; 1990, 20 schools closed. So I would say we've got a real commitment to small schools in rural Saskatchewan.

In terms of your other observation I think I said this to you at the time, that in order to look at how we determine to close a school, I think that's something we need to look at. When you mentioned it to me it was rather late in the day in terms of changing how we determine the small schools factor in the province. But it's certainly something that I'm prepared to look at for next year because I think you do make a point that's worthy of consideration.

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Madam Minister. Madam Minister, I don't know what the statistics are for this year in terms of school closures and grade discontinuance; you've only indicated that there are four schools closing. I would suspect that there are some schools though that will have grade discontinuance. And the concern that I'm bringing forward,

Madam Minister, is the concern at Theodore.

While you've indicated that schools in Sturgis for instance . . . that the Crystal Lakes School Division will be as efficient as possible, I'm sure they will . . . but the regulations that currently exist are going to be looked at by school divisions and saying, are we losing out on grant monies because of the kinds of regulations that are in place? Not because whether or not the program is being delivered, it's going to be whether or not we are able to change to meet the regulations.

And I don't think we want to get into that situation. I think we want to give the board of education the ability to make the decision based on what is best for the students in Sturgis, Saskatchewan — not what's best and whether or not they can get numbers.

And when you're suggesting that schools . . . And I'm glad to hear that you've indicated that to compare a school that is K to 6 — about whether or not it should receive X number of dollars as a small schools factor — when you compare it to another school just in the same community and it's 7 to 12, doesn't make any sense at all. And you've indicated that your department is willing to look at that.

I'd suggest, Madam Minister, that when you've indicated that there were \$18 million that were allocated — I mean that's a significant amount of money — and I think what we have to do is look at that entire allocation as to whether or not it's being distributed fairly. Because maybe the situation should be that the pot of 18 million doesn't change, but that you give the communities the ability to be equal.

Because right at the moment the way it's being disbursed, we have school divisions that I think are going to be in conflict with one another. Because they're going to be suggesting to a neighbouring school division, if there's a small school on the side of the boundary, to close that school because it will affect their grant.

Madam Minister, I think we will continue the discussions after the recess.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Krawetz.....	1457
D'Autremont	1457
Bjornerud	1457
Boyd	1457
McLane.....	1457
Belanger	1457
Aldridge	1457
Hillson	1457
Osika	1457
Haverstock.....	1458
Goohsen	1458

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk	1458
-------------	------

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Lingenfelter	1458
Bjornerud	1473
Toth.....	1478

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Hospital Crisis in Saskatchewan	
McLane.....	1458
Health Care Services and Facilities in Saskatchewan	
Hamilton	1458
Sanctions for Nuclear Testing	
Haverstock.....	1459
Job Prospects in Regina Area	
Van Mulligen.....	1459
Melville Citizen Honoured	
Osika	1459
Graduate Congratulations	
Calvert	1459
Northern Hockey League	
Belanger	1459
Count Von Imhoff's Legacy	
Sonntag	1460

ORAL QUESTIONS

Closure of Plains Health Centre	
D'Autremont	1460
Romanow	1460
More Nurses for Rural Health Districts	
Bjornerud	1461
Romanow	1461
Serby	1461
Meadow Lake Pulp Mill	
Boyd	1461
Lingenfelter	1461
Resources for Acute Health Care	
Osika	1462
Serby	1462
Nurses Required to Update Training	
Haverstock.....	1464
Serby	1464

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Canadian Light Source Synchrotron Project in Saskatoon	
MacKinnon.....	1464
Boyd	1465
Hillson	1465

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 214 — The Recall of Members Act, 1998	
Krawetz.....	1466

ORDERS OF THE DAY**WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

Kowalsky	1466
----------------	------

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**SECOND READINGS****Bill No. 57 — The Education Amendment Act, 1998/Loi de 1998 modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation**

Atkinson	1466
Krawetz	1468

Bill No. 43 — The Queen's Bench Revision Act/Loi portant révision de la Loi sur la Cour du Banc de la Reine

Nilson	1469
Boyd	1470

PRIORITY OF DEBATE**Plains Health Care Centre Closure**

D'Autremont	1469
Speaker	1469

ADJOURNED DEBATES**SECOND READINGS****Bill No. 47 — The Saskatchewan Insurance Amendment Act, 1998**

Bjornerud	1470
-----------------	------

Bill No. 55 — The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 1998

Boyd	1471
------------	------

Bill No. 54 — The Crown Corporations Amendment Act, 1998

Boyd	1471
Hillson	1471
Kowalsky	1474

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**Bill No. 12 — The University of Saskatchewan Foundation Repeal Act**

Crofford	1474
Krawetz	1474

Bill No. 41 — The Teachers' Dental Plan Amendment Act, 1998

Atkinson	1475
Krawetz	1476

Bill No. 42 — The Teachers' Life Insurance (Government Contributory) Amendment Act, 1998

Krawetz	1477
Atkinson	1477

Bill No. 53 — The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 1998

Krawetz	1477
Atkinson	1477

THIRD READINGS**Bill No. 12 — The University of Saskatchewan Foundation Repeal Act**

Crofford	1478
----------------	------

Bill No. 41 — The Teachers' Dental Plan Amendment Act, 1998

Atkinson	1478
----------------	------

Bill No. 42 — The Teachers' Life Insurance (Government Contributory) Amendment Act, 1998

Atkinson	1478
----------------	------

Bill No. 53 — The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 1998

Atkinson	1478
----------------	------

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE**General Revenue Fund****Education — Vote 5**

Atkinson	1478
Krawetz	1479