



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

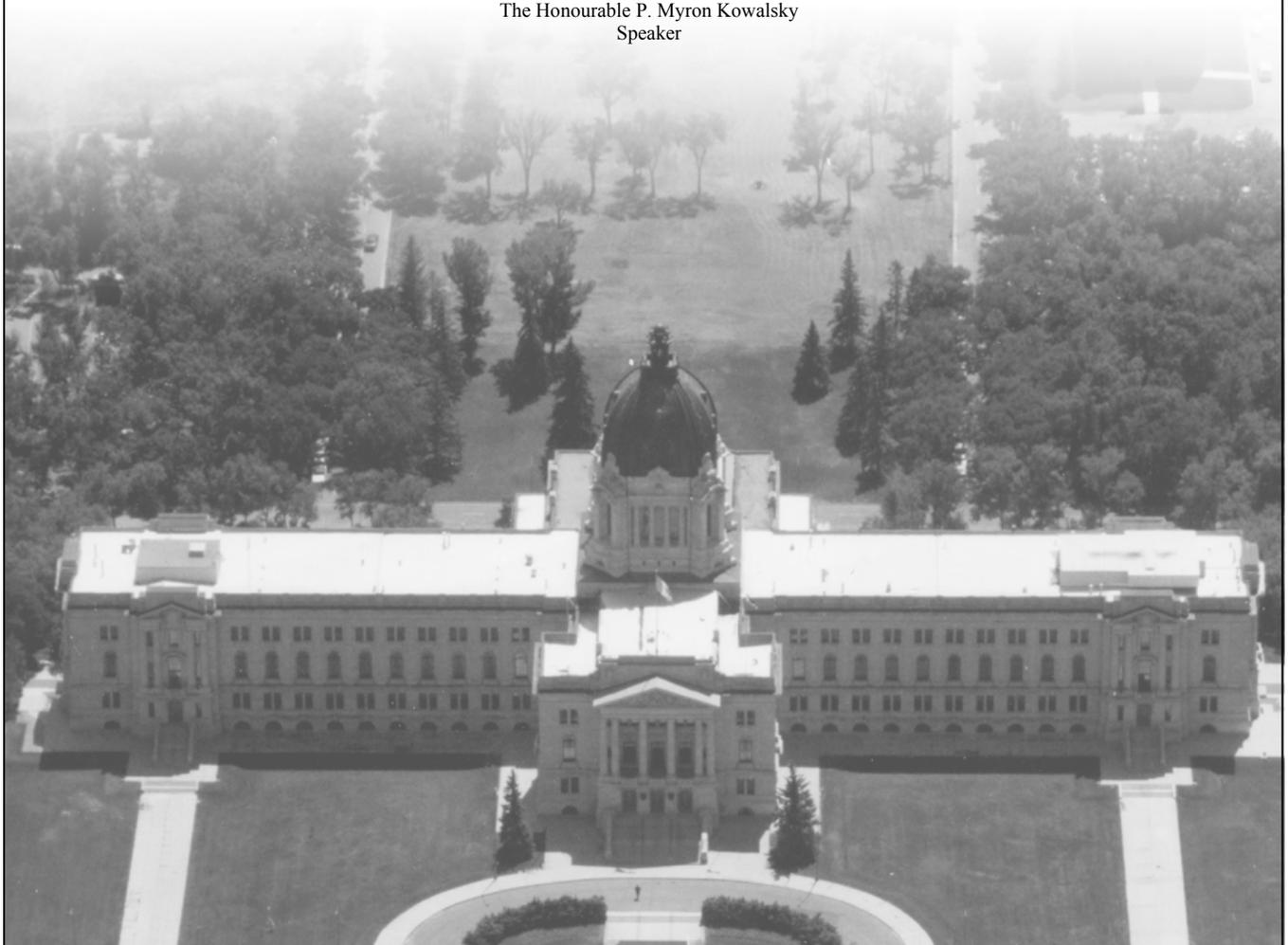
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of

The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. P. Myron Kowalsky
 Premier — Hon. Lorne Calvert
 Leader of the Opposition — Brad Wall

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Addley, Graham	NDP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Hon. Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Bakken, Brenda	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Beatty, Hon. Joan	NDP	Cumberland
Belanger, Hon. Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Borgerson, Lon	NDP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Calvert, Hon. Lorne	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Cline, Hon. Eric	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Crofford, Hon. Joanne	NDP	Regina Rosemont
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Dearborn, Jason	SP	Kindersley
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, Hon. David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Gantfoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
Hagel, Glenn	NDP	Moose Jaw North
Hamilton, Doreen	NDP	Regina Wascana Plains
Harpauer, Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Ben	SP	Martensville
Hermanson, Elwin	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Higgins, Hon. Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Huyghebaert, Yogi	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kerpan, Allan	SP	Carrot River Valley
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Kowalsky, Hon. P. Myron	NDP	Prince Albert Carlton
Krawetz, Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lautermilch, Eldon	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMorris, Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Ted	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Morgan, Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, Hon. John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Prebble, Hon. Peter	NDP	Saskatoon Greystone
Quennell, Hon. Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Serby, Hon. Clay	NDP	Yorkton
Sonntag, Hon. Maynard	NDP	Meadow Lake
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Hon. Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Thomson, Hon. Andrew	NDP	Regina South
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Van Mulligen, Hon. Harry	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
Wakefield, Milton	SP	Lloydminster
Wall, Brad	SP	Swift Current
Wartman, Hon. Mark	NDP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

The Assembly met at 13:30.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon it's a privilege for me to stand in this Assembly and present this petition to the Assembly. I read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petitions I present today are signed by the good people of Griffin; Stoughton; Weyburn; Creelman, Saskatchewan; and Midale. I so present.

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

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise on behalf of constituents to present the following petition:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that the CAIS program receives adequate provincial funding, the funding formula is changed to ensure equal access to compensation, and to contribute funds to the latest BSE assistance package released by the federal government.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Today's petitions are signed by producers from the communities of Eastend, Claydon, and Shaunavon. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Martensville.

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I present a petition which is one of literally thousands across the province and the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

And these are signed by people from the Candle Lake, Paddockwood area. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Swift Current.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on behalf of my constituents from the city of Swift Current concerned about the ongoing SPUDCO (Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company) scandal. Mr. Speaker, the prayer of the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to hold an independent judicial inquiry into the SPUDCO scandal.

And as I have said, Mr. Speaker, all the petitioners are from the great city of Swift Current. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

Mr. Hermanson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition regarding forced amalgamation of school divisions, and it expresses concern that the Boughen Commission is being adopted piecemeal and not entirely. The prayer of the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, there are several signatures on this petition, and they come from the communities of Demaine and Beechy. And I'm pleased to present this petition on their behalf.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have petitions to do with the forced amalgamation of school divisions, and I'm sure the member for Meadow Lake will join with me in his concern for these petitions. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on strictly a voluntary basis.

Mr. Speaker, the signatures are from the communities of Pierceland, Golden Prairie, Neville, Climax, Pierceland again, Meadow Lake — a number from Meadow Lake, Mr. Speaker — and the community of Edam. I so present.

The Speaker: — Order, please. I'd just ask members in their presenting of petitions to refrain from extraneous and unnecessary comments.

I recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a

petition signed by individuals concerned with this government's funding shortfall for the CAIS (Canadian agricultural income stabilization) program. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to ensure that the CAIS program receives adequate provincial funding, the funding formula is changed to ensure equal access to compensation, and to contribute funds to the latest BSE assistance package released by the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by individuals from the communities of Cabri, Abbey, and Lancer. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

Mr. Wakefield: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition to halt the forced amalgamation of school divisions. And the prayer reads as:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly volunteer basis.

And as duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And these petitioners are from the communities of Goodsoil.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a petition regarding the forced amalgamation of school divisions. I'll read it:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and to continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from Meadow Lake. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have another truckload of petitions coming in here, and the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary

basis.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by people from Meadow Lake, Meadow Lake, Meadow Lake, Meadow Lake, Meadow Lake, and Meadow Lake. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Estevan.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of constituents of mine who have concerns over the SPUDCO scandal. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to hold an independent judicial inquiry into the SPUDCO scandal.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this is signed by people from the great city of Estevan. I thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

Ms. Bakken: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition on behalf of the constituents of Weyburn-Big Muddy who are very concerned about their Highway 35. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to make the necessary repairs to Highway 35 north from the United States border in order to prevent injury or loss of life and to prevent the loss of economic opportunity in the area.

And the petition is signed by residents all over Saskatchewan and the United States. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Arm River-Watrous.

Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I also have petitions here dealing with forced amalgamation of school divisions. I'll read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan, and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

In duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

There's a few petitions here signed by the good citizens of Brownlee, Moose Jaw, Tugaske, Central Butte, and Meadow Lake. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you. I would like to present a petition to revisit the effects of the TransGas Asquith natural gas storage project. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately address the concerns of all individuals affected by this project, pay 100 per cent of the costs involved to rectify disruptions to water supplies, produce an environment assessment study encompassing a larger area outside the scope of the project, disclose the project's long-term effects on these areas, and consider alternative sources of water for the project.

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

Signed by the good citizens of Asquith, Grandora, and Vanscoy. I so present.

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

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too rise to present a petition, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of people from Saskatchewan. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

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

Mr. Speaker, signed by the good citizens of Nipawin, Codette, Choiceland, White Fox, and none from Meadow Lake, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Chisholm: — Mr. Speaker, I also have a petition regarding the forced amalgamation of school divisions, wherefore . . . and it reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

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

Mr. Speaker, I have signatures from Loon Lake, Spruce Lake, Mervin, Turtleford, Livelong, and a full page from Meadow Lake.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Kindersley.

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise in the Assembly again and present a petition on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan concerned with the forced school amalgamations. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of the school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good citizens of Kerrobert and Luseland, and as well an entire page signed by the citizens of Meadow Lake. I so present.

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

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to rise and present the petition on behalf of citizens of . . . that live in the northwest portion of our province. And the prayer deals with the forced amalgamation of school boards. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, it may be no surprise but there are signatures from the community of Meadow Lake, Green Lake, and Loon Lake. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also rise to present a petition on school board amalgamations. It reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to reverse the decision to force the amalgamation of school divisions in Saskatchewan and continue reorganization of school divisions on a strictly voluntary basis.

And they are signed completely from the good people of Meadow Lake.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk: — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and are hereby read and received pursuant to rule 14(7):

A petition concerning an independent judicial inquiry into SPUDCO, that's sessional paper 647.

And addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional

paper no. 63, 107, 203, 637, 638, and 640.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

Mr. Wakefield: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that I shall on day 66 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of the Environment: within SERM who is responsible for the management of fisheries resources; as well, have the fisheries resource management functions been devolved; who's responsible for compliance in fisheries management?

Mr. Speaker, I have a further question to the Minister of Environment.

What changes has SERM made to fisheries management policy since 1997; have any of these changes involved the devolution of authority to a co-operative or to a third party?

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Douglas Park.

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to welcome a group here today that has not visited us during the session, or at least in my capacity as member for Regina Douglas Park, but they're here today and I'm just delighted they're here.

And this is a group of 25 students. They're from the Regina Christian School located in my constituency. They are, for the most part, seated in the west gallery. And they are accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Jane Robertson. And one of the students, Jessica Andrews, is seated behind the bar and she's accompanied by attendant, Tara Schmidt.

I look forward to meeting with this group after question period, and I would ask all members to join with me in extending a very warm welcome to this group of students today. Thank you.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(13:45)

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

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week I had the good fortune to be able to present a member's statement to the House on the recent crowning of Ms. Christa Lawrence of Maple Creek as the most recent Miss Rodeo Canada. That event happened at the Canadian Finals Rodeo in Edmonton.

While today, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to do the real thing, through you to the members of the Assembly, to introduce Miss Rodeo Canada. I'd like Christa to stand. She is the youngest person, as far as we know, to have ever achieved this particular award. And we're very proud of her. I know her

dad is even more proud of her.

We have a history in the Southwest of producing Rodeo Canada queens. The last person that won this title from my area — it was 22 years ago, mind you — but she was a neighbour of mine. And now Christa is in very good company. Christa is actually the third Saskatchewan resident to have achieved this particular distinction.

And she's here today to participate or view some of the proceedings of the House. But she's, even more importantly, here to participate in Agribition activities that we all are familiar with. She's going to be presiding, Mr. Speaker, over the nightly rodeo. And horsemanship is Christa's primary capability, but personality carried her to victory. And I'd like to offer my congratulations, and I ask the House to join me in welcoming her here today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Crofford: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today in the west gallery we have joining us a group of young people from Dale's House, accompanied by their teacher, Terry Shalley. And as with many of the schools that come here, the students have to earn the field trip privileges. So the fact that folks are here today means that this is a good day. And I want to also add that we decided we're all looking so good today that we're going to have a photo together after and enjoy a drink together. So I'll see them later. And would everybody join me in welcoming them today.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Swift Current.

Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to introduce to you and through you to my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly, in the Speaker's gallery, Graham and Cathy Dorn from right here in Regina, as well as Nestor Budney, from the city of Weyburn. I would ask all of my colleagues to join with me in welcoming them here to their Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and to all members of the legislature, John Brockelbank, former speaker of the legislature, former cabinet minister in the legislature, as well as a long-time member of the legislature.

Mr. Brockelbank is now a constituent of mine. Mr. Speaker, I happen to represent quite a few retired politicians, including Mr. Brockelbank. I know that he takes a keen interest in politics. He is still very active in the city of Saskatoon serving on the Meewasin Valley Authority. And I would ask all members of the legislature to welcome John Brockelbank back to his legislature.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of the House, a number of visitors in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. First off, I'd like to introduce Larry Hubich who is the president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour; also Gary Schoenfeldt from the Regina & District Labour Council and also the Communication, Energy, and Paperworkers Union of Canada. Also Lori Probst is there from the Regina & District Labour Council and another member of CEP (Communication, Energy, and Paperworkers Union of Canada).

Also we have Marv Meickel from the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and the Canadian Union of Public Employees. Also we have Maurice Werezak, who is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers and president of Local 248P. And Frank Menten from the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and the Canadian Union of Public Employees. And also we have Terry Zahorski from the Regina & District Labour Council and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

I am very pleased that these folks could come and visit us this afternoon and I hope they enjoy the proceedings. Thank you very much.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the Minister of Labour in welcoming Mr. Hubich and the other labour leaders that are in your gallery this afternoon. I am sure they are here with interest to watch the proceedings this afternoon and I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming them.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Wascana Plains.

Saskatchewan Film and Video Industry Receiving Recognition

Ms. Hamilton: — Mr. Speaker, 2004 has been the busiest year ever for Saskatchewan's film and video industry. With a wide range of projects from comedy to children's programming, to documentaries and drama, this year's production volumes are expected to exceed \$60 million.

And, Mr. Speaker, not only are the province's film and video companies busier than ever but Saskatchewan productions are being recognized for their very high quality. For, example, Mr. Speaker, this year's Saskatchewan productions have been nominated for a record 17 Gemini Awards given out for

excellence in Canada television.

Last night in New York, *Corner Gas* was up for an International Emmy Award for the Best Comedy category — this in addition to five Gemini nominations, seven Canadian Comedy Awards, and a Director's Guild of Canada Award for Outstanding Team Achievement In A Television Series that the show has already won this year.

In order to receive the International Emmy nomination, the show went through three preliminary rounds involving 500 judges in 38 countries. The show didn't win the award, but being in the process is further proof that Saskatchewan can stand shoulder to shoulder with anyone in the world on stage.

I ask all my colleagues to join me in congratulating all those involved in Saskatchewan's film and video industry, and particularly everyone involved with *Corner Gas* for giving the world a little more Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Kindersley.

Premier Klein Wins Alberta Provincial Election

Mr. Dearborn: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today to congratulate Premier Ralph Klein on the fourth straight election that the Alberta Progressive Conservative Party has won under his leadership. As many people know, my riding of Kindersley borders Alberta and we are neighbours with these people.

The former mayor of Calgary has been Premier since December 1992 and has won yesterday's election with 63 of 83 seats in Alberta. The Conservatives have held power in Alberta since 1971. This was their 10th straight majority election.

Under Premier Klein's leadership, Alberta is prospering. The province's unemployment rate is 4.7 per cent — by far the lowest among the provinces. Alberta is the only province without a provincial sales tax. The elimination of \$3.7 billion of public debt by March 31 will make Alberta the country's first debt-free province, and the province's economy is expected to grow by 4.3 per cent this year — the highest for any province according to the Conference Board of Canada.

Perhaps the most important thing that the Alberta Premier said after winning yesterday's election was that, while the Conservatives have a solid majority, they're going to have to listen a little more closely to what Albertans want. He said this election was about building a future of choice and opportunity and of personal freedom, protecting and improving their health and education systems, and creating good jobs for the young people in a climate where business thrives. I believe that the people of Saskatchewan would agree that this type of plan for the future of our province would be most refreshing.

Please join me in congratulating Premier Ralph Klein on his fourth win as the Premier in our neighbouring province of Alberta.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

**Saskatchewan Goat Breeders Association
Milkathon at Agribition**

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in the Assembly today to say a few words about an event that took place yesterday at the Canadian Western Agribition.

Mr. Speaker, each year individuals from across the province, the country, North America, indeed the world over, are invited to embrace their competitive spirit to take part in the goat society's milkathon. The milkathon requires a team of three people to work together and hold and milk a dairy doe in competition with other contestants to see who can milk the most milk in a two-minute time frame.

The Minister of Agriculture has always maintained that he would be a hands-on type of minister, Mr. Speaker. So when the Saskatchewan Goat Breeders Association approached him to put a team together, he could hardly refuse. Putting a team together proved to be a great idea, Mr. Speaker. Not only did it give him some valuable experience, it also allowed him to raise some funds to go towards the Agribition youth scholarship fund.

Although the minister's team was unable to capture the coveted title of goat milking champions, I am pleased to report, Mr. Speaker, that his team managed to place third overall and raise \$1,060 in proceeds to go to the scholarship fund. I would also like to add that this marked the single largest team contribution at this year's goat milking competition. That says a lot, Mr. Speaker, for the pull that this minister has.

I ask that all my colleagues join me today in thanking the Saskatchewan Goat Breeders Association, the Saskatchewan goat society, and all those who contribute to this fun and noteworthy event. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

**Michael Vidal of Saskatoon Receives the
Little Hero Award**

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize Michael Vidal of Saskatoon. Michael, his parents, Joe and Debbie Vidal, are constituents and neighbours of mine.

Michael Vidal was recently recognized as a little hero by Saskatoon fire and protection services and the province of Saskatchewan for showing maturity and bravery well beyond his years during a medical emergency last winter.

January 15 started out as a typical work day and school day for the Vidal family. That is until his mother, Debbie Vidal, became extremely dizzy to the point where she couldn't stand. With her husband, Joe, gone from the home, Debbie relied on nine-year-old Michael to get to the telephone, call 911 . . . and

covered his mother until emergency personnel arrived.

Michael, your recent Little Hero Award was well deserved and demonstrated to your peers, your parents, your friends, and your neighbours that young people understand and are capable of far more sometimes than adults give them credit for.

On behalf of myself, the official opposition, and other legislative colleagues, we are all proud of you, and we congratulate you on your recent award — well deserved.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone.

Reopening of YWCA Housing Units

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday morning myself and the Minister of Community Resources and Employment had the pleasure of attending the official reopening of the YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association) newly expanded and renovated housing units in downtown Regina. Located, I might add, Mr. Speaker, in the fine constituency of Regina Elphinstone-Centre. This was a unique project and a fine example of governments and the private sector working together for the good of the community.

For over 90 years the YWCA has been meeting the needs of Regina and area women. And when funding was requested to do much needed expansion and upgrading, not only did all three levels of government respond, but so did numerous members of the public and private sector.

The result, Mr. Speaker, are 19 new, affordable rental spaces and 35 existing spaces renovated and upgraded. Of the five floors that were renovated, three floors contain residences for single women and one floor is a shelter for battered women and their children. This project has enhanced the building's health and safety standards, increased accessibility for persons with disabilities, created the only wheelchair accessible domestic crisis shelter for women and children in the city, and complements improvements to the daycare facilities.

Mr. Speaker, congratulations and thanks are due to all those associated with this project, but I particularly want to mention YWCA director, Deanna Elias-Henry, and Regina YWCA president, Tamara Stocker, and their staff and volunteers who, together with governments and private sector, have worked so hard to build a healthier and safer community.

As the YWCA moves on to the next stage of their renovations, I wish them good luck and I am confident their efforts will be just as successful as those in past. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Retirement of Harry Hansen

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past

September 13, representatives from the Saskatchewan Emergency Medical Services along with officials from SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology), the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, and citizens of Strasbourg gathered in the Strasbourg community hall to honour Harry Hansen. Harry was stepping down after being mayor of that community for 13 years. He was also retiring from the EMS (emergency medical services) Association after 26 years of service, and he was also retiring as the owner/operator of Hansen's ambulance service.

Glen Percie of the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region had this to say about Harry that evening. And I quote:

If anybody can connect with a patient, Harry can. It's just something so special that you have.

At the end of the evening, Mr. Speaker, the Emergency Medical Services Association formed an honour guard for Harry on Main Street. They had eight ambulances from across the province with their sirens . . . sounding their sirens and flashing their lights in honour of Harry. Harry Hansen, Mr. Speaker, has cancer. And I would ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in wishing Harry, his wife, Marj, and their family a long and happy retirement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:00)

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Sutherland.

Saskatoon Authors Highlight Saskatchewan

Mr. Addley: — Mr. Speaker, even those of us who have the good fortune of living here in Saskatchewan sometimes don't realize or appreciate what a wonderful and diverse place Saskatchewan truly is. Whether we're talking historically, culturally, or in terms of its natural beauty, sometimes all this province has to offer goes unnoticed.

I'm pleased to stand in the House today, Mr. Speaker, and say a few words about two constituents of mine from Saskatoon Sutherland who have made it their full-time job to tell the world, and those of us here at home who may not be aware of it, what a great place Saskatchewan is to live, work, and to play.

Mr. Speaker, Arlene and Robin Karpan of Parkland Publishing are the authors of four travel books about Saskatchewan, a book of Saskatchewan trivia, and another called the *Western Canadian Farm Trivia Challenge*. Along the way, they have not only enlightened readers about Saskatchewan's natural and cultural landscape but they've also garnered a number of Saskatchewan Tourism awards for excellence and have been shortlisted for the Saskatchewan Book Awards.

The Karpan's latest project, designed specifically for the province's upcoming centennial, is the 2005 *Great Saskatchewan Scenery & History Trivia Calendar*, filled with great photographs and interesting tidbits from Saskatchewan's past. I'm sure it will prove to be yet another well-deserved success.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Arlene and Robin Karpan for their ongoing efforts to promote Saskatchewan places and people, and I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing them every success, now and into the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

Microgro's Financial Situation

Ms. Bakken: — Mr. Speaker, in 1998, Graham and Cathy Dorn and Nestor and Judy Budney were running a thriving greenhouse business in Biggar called Microgro. They employed over 100 people during the growing season, and things were going very well. Then they got involved with SPUDCO.

Mr. Speaker, SPUDCO convinced them to convert their entire summer production to seed potatoes and made a five-year commitment with them. The Dorns and the Budneys then borrowed half a million dollars to convert to potato production based on this agreement with SPUDCO. But by the fall of 1998 SPUDCO stopped paying its bills, and by the spring of 1999, SOCO (Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation) was forcing them into bankruptcy.

Mr. Speaker, these people are here today in your gallery. To the Premier: how does the Premier justify destroying Microgro and ruining these people's lives?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for SaskWater.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First of all, Mr. Speaker, let me just be very clear about the fact that it has never been the intention of SPUDCO to damage anyone in this province, Mr. Speaker. The losses that the family and the business suffered, Mr. Speaker, are losses that I feel sad about, just as I feel upset about the losses SPUDCO incurred on behalf of the people of the province.

But let me make it very clear that it was never the intention of the company to damage the viability of the business with respect to its payment of invoices. And I'll be pleased to speak to that further, Mr. Speaker, when the next question is asked, which I anticipate it will be shortly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

Ms. Bakken: — Mr. Speaker, for the first few months everything went okay. SPUDCO was paying its bills on time. But then in the summer of 1998, about the time the NDP (New Democratic Party) got the Ernest & Young report and realized SPUDCO had big financial problems, everything changed. SPUDCO was in a tailspin.

Mr. Speaker, SPUDCO stopped making its payments to Microgro. The NDP started leaning on the Budneys and the Dorns to renegotiate their five-year agreement, and since SPUDCO was pretty much their only customer at this time, the Dorns and the Budneys had no choice but to agree. Then they got a letter from SPUDCO cancelling their agreement effective December 31, 1998.

Mr. Speaker, none of this happened by accident. There was a deliberate strategy, approved by the minister of SaskWater at the time, to drive the Dorns and the Budneys into bankruptcy.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why did his government set a deliberate strategy to destroy these two families?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for SaskWater.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to put on the record the invoices that were received from the business, Microgro, and the time when payments were made because what the member is inferring, Mr. Speaker, is that somehow we didn't pay our bills as a government.

So let's review the record. An invoice was received from Microgro on September 14, 1998 for \$2,614.52. It was paid, Mr. Speaker, on September 28, 1998. The next invoice that was received, Mr. Speaker, was on October 28, 1998, an invoice for \$19,054.51, Mr. Speaker. It was paid on October 30, 1998. Received on October 28; paid on October 30.

These are just two samples, Mr. Speaker, of the fact that bills were paid promptly.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

Ms. Bakken: — Mr. Speaker, this NDP government did set out to destroy these people financially. According to a SaskWater memo, the Minister of SaskWater approved a strategy to, and I quote, "... to create some financial expediency from Microgro by impacting its cash flow".

Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what this government did. It stopped paying its bills to the Budneys and the Dorns. SPUDCO owed them \$200,000, and yet they were forced into bankruptcy by SOCO — another NDP government agency — because they couldn't make their loan payment of less than \$90,000.

Mr. Speaker, these people were driven into bankruptcy by an NDP squeeze play. One government agency stopped paying its bills, and the other forced them into bankruptcy. I can't imagine a government doing a more immoral, despicable, heartless thing to people in their very own province. Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why did your government do this to these families?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for SaskWater.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think I should continue putting on the record the invoices that were received and the payments that were made.

I documented the ones for September 14 and October 28. I demonstrated that, in the case of the first, it was paid within 14 days. In the case of the second, it was paid within two days. The third invoice, Mr. Speaker, that was received was dated November 30, Mr. Speaker. It was for \$11,912.50 and it was paid on December 11, 1998. Mr. Speaker, the fourth invoice that was received was received on November 10, 1998. It was ... Sorry, November 5, 1998, and it was paid on December 11, 1998, for \$307.98. Mr. Speaker, another invoice, Mr. Speaker, was received on November 10, 1998. It was paid on December 11, 1998, again for \$307.98, Mr. Speaker.

These are all examples, Mr. Speaker, in order, in the chronological ...

The Speaker: — Well the member's time has elapsed. I recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

Ms. Bakken: — Mr. Speaker, this minister talks about this like it's a piece of paper. This is about real people, Mr. Speaker. This isn't some multinational corporation nameless invoice. This is people. The Budneys and the Dorns are two Saskatchewan families, Mr. Speaker, who wanted to start a business. They wanted to create jobs in Saskatchewan. They wanted to help build this province.

Mr. Speaker, do you know what their mistake was? Their mistake was that they trusted this NDP government. These families were betrayed and they were destroyed. Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why did your government ...

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. I would ask the member, place your question through the Chair.

Ms. Bakken: — Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why did his government betray and destroy these families?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for SaskWater.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the member should be careful about the words that she chooses. And, Mr. Speaker, let me, let me remind the member of what the official receiver for the company said, because as you point out, unfortunately the company went into bankruptcy. And the official receiver was Bob Meldrum, Mr. Speaker, and I want to quote from the June 9, 1999, Regina *Leader-Post*, and here's what Mr. Meldrum said, quote:

We've looked at it and I have to respectfully disagree with Microgro (Mr. Speaker).

That's what he says. And he goes on to say:

Neither the amount owed by SPUDCO, if any, nor a crop-sharing agreement for 1999 would have saved Microgro.

And, Mr. Speaker, he also goes on to say that Microgro, that Microgro was paid, Mr. Speaker, its share in full in terms of what SPUDCO owed. I would be interested in the member's comments on the words of the official receiver.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

Ms. Bakken: — Mr. Speaker, let me tell the Premier how the Dorns and the Budneys spent Christmas of 1998. Both of these families had three young children. Now they were flat broke because of what their government had done to them.

So just before Christmas, Cathy Dorn was sitting in a bank office in Regina, handing over her teacher's pension that she had worked many years to build up. Judy Budney had to cash in her RRSPs (Registered Retirement Savings Plan) for their family to survive. A few months later, SPUDCO still had not paid their bill. SOCO was continuing to drive them into bankruptcy. They were out of business.

Mr. Speaker, the Dorns and the Budneys are sitting in your gallery. These are the faces of the people whose lives were destroyed by the NDP. Mr. Premier, they deserve an answer. Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: how can the Premier justify ruining these families' lives and their business?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for SaskWater.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Mr. Speaker, let me make it clear. I feel sorry for these families, and I feel sorry for other families who lost significant money in the potato business, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the question is not . . . The people of Saskatchewan lost money too. SPUDCO lost money, Mr. Speaker. And there were a lot of people unfortunately who lost money in these ventures. One of the reasons was, Mr. Speaker, that the market for seed potatoes collapsed. The price collapsed, Mr. Speaker, and that created huge financial problems for Lake Diefenbaker Potato Corporation. It created very substantial problems for Microgro and its owners, Mr. Speaker, and it created problems for SPUDCO.

Let me point out, Mr. Speaker, that the financial problems that Microgro was experiencing began well beyond the timelines that the member talks about. I think the House should know, Mr. Speaker, that there was a garnishee order against Microgro in September 1998 while the contract still existed between the Government of Saskatchewan and Microgro. A garnishee, Mr. Speaker, in favour of Reed . . .

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

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Swift Current.

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, what the minister hasn't come

anywhere near explaining — nor the Premier, nor the minister that approved the strategy to ruin this company — is the note, the strategy approved by an NDP cabinet minister, that said with respect to Microgro that they would cause that company some financial expediency to impact their cash flow statement. That is what the evidence says clearly, Mr. Speaker, about what this NDP government did to businessmen and women in the province of Saskatchewan.

SOCO ended up driving the Budneys and the Dorns from business. They called the note on \$90,000 loan, Mr. Speaker, but at the same time SPUDCO owed them \$200,000. To the Premier: why wouldn't SOCO, one Crown corporation, accept a \$200,000 account receivable from another government agency as collateral?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for SaskWater.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well, Mr. Speaker, let me say clearly to the member that, as I was trying to answer in the last question, there were a number of other serious financial difficulties that Microgro was facing that had absolutely nothing to do with SPUDCO, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, they were under a garnishee order, as I just mentioned, from Reed Agricultural Services Inc. and Youngplants Canada Inc.. And it was SPUDCO that paid that garnishee order, Mr. Speaker. It was SPUDCO who paid that, Mr. Speaker, some \$30,000, Mr. Speaker.

There were also garnishee orders, Mr. Speaker. In September 1998 there were garnishee orders from Microplant Technologies Inc. of Spruce Grove, Alberta, Mr. Speaker. There was also, Mr. Speaker, a number of other requests for payment, Mr. Speaker, from firms that were contacting SPUDCO because Microgro was unable to pay the bills. And the fact that they were unable to . . .

The Speaker: — Member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

(14:15)

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

Call for Inquiry into Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company

Mr. Wall: — So, Mr. Speaker, amazingly the NDP say the financial expediencies they wanted to cause to Microgro to impact their cash flow statement, that was the NDP's way of helping these men and women in business in Saskatchewan. I don't think they need that kind of help from this NDP government, the kind of help that ruined their lives in this province, Mr. Speaker.

There is a reason that SOCO wouldn't accept the outstanding payments from SPUDCO as collateral, Mr. Speaker. And the reason was SPUDCO was in a tailspin. SPUDCO was going broke. SPUDCO had no money to pay its long-term obligations to Microgro, Mr. Speaker. It was the ultimate NDP squeeze

play, something like you'd expect to see on an episode of *The Sopranos*: one member of the family squeezing the company that is owed by the other member of the family, Mr. Speaker. It's not acceptable, Mr. Speaker. It cries out for a public inquiry. Will the Premier take off his seat belt, get up, and call a public inquiry?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for SaskWater.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well, Mr. Speaker, day after day in this House, we've had various allegations made by members opposite, Mr. Speaker. First of all there was the allegation that government acted without lawful authority. But in the end, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor said that our government had acted with lawful authority in terms of its investments in SPUDCO.

Then, Mr. Speaker, there was the claim by the Leader of the Opposition that we had somehow diverted dollars that Ducks Unlimited had invested, Mr. Speaker, that we had a trust fund, Mr. Speaker, that we diverted dollars from. Mr. Speaker, when the facts came out, in fact there was never a trust fund account that had been established. And we'd met our obligations to Ducks Unlimited in full, Mr. Speaker, and in fact will spend more than the money that they put in, Mr. Speaker.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we had the allegation with respect to selling decertified potatoes. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we've demonstrated they were certified. Again and again we have allegations from members opposite, and they're proven to be inaccurate at the end of the day. I'll look at the evidence here . . .

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

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Here is an update on what we found out about SPUDCO from this minister as he's just tried to highlight for the House. With respect to the question, did the NDP government not get the required legal authority to proceed, we know that Ernst & Young recommended this government get a legal opinion because they believed they were outside the law. Did they get that legal opinion? No. If they did get it, Mr. Speaker, have they tabled in this Assembly? No. They haven't answered those questions, Mr. Speaker.

We still await answers on this issue of the GMO (genetically modified organism) potatoes, Mr. Speaker. And with respect to Ducks Unlimited and Rafferty-Alameda, it is the government's own document signed by the then minister of SaskWater that says they have trust liabilities amounting to \$3.9 million to Ducks Unlimited and Rafferty-Alameda. These are questions that have not been answered to the people of this province.

And now we find out, Mr. Speaker, that one Crown corporation under the NDP squeezed out these families, these business people, to benefit another Crown — SPUDCO, Mr. Speaker. That's what the evidence shows, and the minister refuses to answer questions.

To the Premier: stand up for these families and call a public inquiry.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for SaskWater.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I really can't believe what the Leader of the Opposition is saying to this House. Mr. Speaker, I just cannot believe it. There is nothing that we can do, Mr. Speaker, to satisfy this Leader of the Opposition in terms of provision of information.

Mr. Speaker, he is obviously still not convinced that SPUDCO acted with lawful authority. He's clearly not, Mr. Speaker, despite the fact, Mr. Speaker, that Price Waterhouse has given an unqualified audit to SaskWater, and despite the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the Provincial Auditor has clearly sided with the government on this matter, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, these are two independent authorities that report directly to the legislature. And yet the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, knows better. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry but I don't accept his argument. Mr. Speaker, with respect to Ducks Unlimited, we see the same pattern. I'll speak to that in the next question.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the minister and the Premier can't believe why members on this side or the people of the province wouldn't trust them. They can't believe why the people of the province wouldn't trust them? Maybe it's because they've broken every single promise they made in the last election. Maybe it's because they refuse to come clean on SPUDCO.

Just yesterday in this House, Mr. Speaker, when we asked the Premier and the minister for evidence for their allegations against the plaintiffs and the accountants they hired, this NDP government accused those people of deliberately misleading those court proceedings. We asked for the evidence, Mr. Speaker, and the minister tabled two documents yesterday in the House.

Mr. Speaker, the counterclaim that we're talking about occurred in May. The evidence that supported their counterclaim they tabled in the House is dated in July 2004, Mr. Speaker. It's dated in July. The information he's brought to this House has not been truthful. Where is the evidence that supported that claim?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want the minister and the Premier to stand up and explain that point. Unless they've got a government-owned time machine, there's no way that that makes any sense. Will the Premier settle all this once and for all, and call a public inquiry?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for SaskWater.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the words of the Leader of the Opposition are nonsense, just nonsense. And, Mr. Speaker, let me speak directly to it. He clearly doesn't understand the court process. He knows full well, Mr. Speaker, that we sought leave. We sought leave to pursue the counterclaim, Mr. Speaker, and leave was denied.

Now the member for Cannington, the other day in the House, his own member said, provide me in full, please, and provide to members of the House the details behind the evidence for your counterclaim, Mr. Speaker. And so we did, Mr. Speaker, evidence that we weren't able to provide in court until we filed the defence in July, Mr. Speaker. But that evidence that was on hand in May, if the counterclaim had been allowed to proceed, we would have presented that evidence. We weren't allowed to present the evidence because Justice Ball ruled, Mr. Speaker, that we were not allowed to proceed with the counterclaim. But the evidence was . . . The information was prepared in May, and it was tabled with the courts in July.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Wall: — So the minister's argument, the NDP argument here is trust us, trust us. The evidence was there. We had the case in May. We had the case ready to go. Mr. Speaker, they haven't earned any trust from this House or the people of the province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — In order for that minister or that Premier to ask people to trust them, they have had to have earned that trust. We should ask the Dorns and the Budneys whether they trust this government, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Wall: — I think they'll say no. I think they'll say no. These questions remain unanswered in the biggest scandal to ever hit this province. That's what it is — ten times greater than the sponsorship scandal. And that Premier ought to take off his seat belt and stand in this Assembly and show his character and call a public inquiry. Will he do that, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for SaskWater.

Hon. Mr. Prebble: — Well, Mr. Speaker, let me say that the member's parallel with the sponsorship scandal is again more nonsense. And let me just put it very simply to the Leader of the Opposition and the House, Mr. Speaker, through you, and that is that in the case of the sponsorship scandal, clearly there is criminal wrongdoing. There is no criminal wrongdoing here, Mr. Speaker. The RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) has investigated this case; they have closed the file on it, Mr. Speaker. If the member in the opposition, if the Leader of the Opposition has evidence of criminal wrongdoing, let him bring it forward, Mr. Speaker, and we will examine it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

Funding for the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization Program

Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, for the last several days the Minister of Agriculture has been playing coy with the media. In response to direct questions, the minister is refusing to say if the province will live up to its commitment on funding for CAIS, and he keeps dropping hints that the federal government may change the formula. Whether or not that funding formula is changed, Saskatchewan farm families are hurting right now.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Agriculture do what all other Agriculture ministers are doing in Canada and pay the full provincial portion of CAIS?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I might point out that there is no Agriculture minister across Canada that is expected to do what this Agriculture minister is.

Mr. Speaker, the disproportionate numbers for Saskatchewan are really unjust in this system, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, five to six times the provincial per capita average is what those numbers come out to for Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, that's unjust.

We have been working diligently to try and make sure that, together with the federal government, we can provide 100 per cent funding. Why? Because we care about Saskatchewan farmers. We care about the agriculture future for this province.

Mr. Speaker, we have drafted a Canadian agriculture equity program which we have submitted to the federal government, and I would like to table this document at this time so that the opposition can have a chance to see the kind of thinking and the statistics that we're dealing with, so perhaps when they understand, if they understand, Mr. Speaker, they'll help us in this project. Thank you. I'd like to table that now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Thunder Creek.

Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, this government has a serious credibility problem. They say one thing and they do another. They did it on taxes during the election, and now they're doing it on CAIS.

The September 23 edition of the *Leader-Post* quotes our Agriculture minister as saying, and I quote:

We may have more flexibility than what we had earlier determined, so we . . . (may) be looking at the level of funding that we can apply to CAIS. If it is at all possible for us to fully fund CAIS, that's where . . . (we) would like to go.

Mr. Speaker, surely, surely the minister's tastes haven't

changed that much in two months. If that's where he wanted to go in September, why doesn't he want to go there now if this NDP actually has the ability to do it?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously the critic either does not understand or was not listening because, Mr. Speaker, very clearly we have more flexibility in relationship to the funding that we had and in relationship with the federal government, Mr. Speaker. We have been working with them. We have been negotiating with them to try and come to a more affordable CAIS program. Why? Because we want to fully fund CAIS. We want to make sure that our producers have the money that they need, Mr. Speaker, and they are not disadvantaged compared to other producers.

Mr. Speaker, we are convinced that if the federal government carries their fair share, Mr. Speaker, that we will have the funding that is needed to help move agriculture forward. We want more funds to go into the renewal portions of APF (agricultural policy framework), Mr. Speaker. We recognize that we cannot keep the status quo, that this is an industry which is a great investment, and we want to make sure that investment pays dividends to this province for many years to come. And we will work for support for that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Why is the Government House Leader on his feet?

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, rather than wait until tomorrow to review the *Hansard* record, I wonder if you might undertake to review the words of the Leader of the Opposition in the context in which he used the word truthful, at about the 19-minute mark of the question period, to see whether it was in an appropriate context or whether some ruling might come from you with respect to the use of that word there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Gantfoer: — To respond to the point of order.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Gantfoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that I too listened very clearly to what the Leader of the Official Opposition was saying during question period. I think what he was talking about is more clearly a debatable point in regard to the actual accuracy of the information that was given by the government and the information that was tabled in this House. And I think, Mr. Speaker, if you look at it in context you'll see that the words that were used and the phrases were completely appropriate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Members of the Assembly, I have often heard use of the word truthful or not truthful or untruthful. And I've made the distinction as to whether the statement is made . . . whether the statement regarding truth is intentionally not truthful or intentionally misleading and I look for words in that context.

If the intent or motive is not conveyed, the use of the word truth or untruth I have let go in the past, and that's my intention to do that in the future as well. Thank you for both members to raising the question.

(14:30)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased today on behalf of the government to stand and respond to written questions no. 554 through 783 — 229 of 230 questions, Mr. Speaker. So I would table responses to . . .

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Now just one minute, please. I found that I had several interruptions here and I would just ask the member to repeat the questions . . . the numbers. Has the Government Whip delivered all of the responses from 554 through to 784?

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We have tabled responses for question 554 through 783 inclusive — 229 of the 230, sir.

The Speaker: — The responses to 554 through to 783 have been delivered.

Why is the member from Saskatoon Southeast on his feet?

Mr. Morgan: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker. When the questions were being put forward the Speaker made rulings regarding props. I take significant offence to the issue that they would bring in the responses in a recycling bin or a garbage bin. If they want to bring them in an unlabelled box or something else, but in a recycling bin or a scrap bin clearly sends a message, Mr. Speaker, about what the opinion of the members . . . And the members opposite, the comments that they are making right now, Mr. Speaker, is a clear indication of what they think of the answers and what they think of the questions.

Mr. Speaker, our position . . . that those responses should be removed and brought back into the House immediately in an unmarked container if they want to be brought in a container.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order, please. The member's point of order with respect to props and extraneous items is well-taken. I would ask that the box be removed. I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Yates: — Due to the volume of questions we were unable to complete all the questions so we'll . . . question no. 784 we'll convert for debates returnable.

The Speaker: — Question no. 784 is converted to orders for return (debatable).

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 81 — The Municipalities Act

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of Bill 81, The Municipalities Act. The Act presents a significant opportunity to advance and strengthen our urban and rural municipalities and to create opportunities for more effective local government.

The impetus for this legislation, Mr. Speaker, came primarily from the municipalities themselves. I commend the proactive approach taken . . .

The Speaker: — Order please, members. Order, please. Order please, members. Order. I recognize the Minister for Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was getting tired yelling over all the noise from the other side. I commend the proactive approach taken by the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, Mr. Speaker, in establishing a committee to review the provisions of The Cities Act to determine which provisions might be applicable to smaller urban municipalities. I also commend the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities for having the foresight to recognize and seize the opportunity to create change that will benefit local RM (rural municipality) councils right across the province.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time for me to thank the volunteer members of the working committee that was struck to develop this legislation, and acknowledge each of them.

From the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, Mr. Speaker, Barry Guenther, Allan Earle, Keith Schneider, and Cam Baker. From the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, Murray Purcell, Ken Engel, and Dale Harvey. From the Rural Municipal Administrators' Association, Kevin Ritchie; and from the Urban Municipal Administrators Association of Saskatchewan, Mark Dubkowski.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, to the volunteer members of the working committee, I also recognize and appreciate the significant contribution of Merrilee Rasmussen and the work of the officials from my own department, Government Relations, and their colleagues in the Department of Justice in this developmental process.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, the development of this Bill was a collaborative effort. By working together, we've been able to

lay the legislative foundation necessary to increase the autonomy of municipalities and to reflect the modern principles introduced first in The Cities Act, while still staying true to the traditional values of local government in this great province of ours.

We recognize that Saskatchewan's urban and rural municipalities are in the best position to make local decisions for the benefit of their citizens. And over the past number of years, we have committed to working with local governments and their associations to increase autonomy and to reduce provincial oversight in matters that are truly of a local nature.

The Municipalities Act, the subject of this second reading speech today, recognizes and furthers this commitment, and, Mr. Speaker, I now want to make note of some of the things that the Bill will do.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, this Bill fundamentally changes and modernizes the relationships between the province and smaller urban and rural municipalities. The provisions of the Bill are crafted to enable municipalities to respond quickly and efficiently to local issues as they arise and to encourage creativity and flexibility in how these local issues are addressed.

But how is this accomplished, Mr. Speaker? The Act introduces the principles of natural person powers and areas of jurisdiction for urban and rural municipalities. These principles were first introduced in Saskatchewan in The Cities Act, and they've been carried over to this Bill. Natural person powers will provide municipalities with the same legal powers as individuals or businesses and will enable local councils to administer their corporate affairs with more flexibility.

It is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that the introduction of natural person powers in legislation does not necessarily increase the overall powers of the municipalities, but it does change the way in which those powers are set out. Where the former legislation was very prescriptive in nature, setting out in great detail everything that a municipality could do, this new approach is more permissive in nature, and the legislation provides for limitations to a municipality's authority only where it is appropriate and in the public interest. More specifically, municipalities are being held more accountable to their electorate as opposed to being held accountable to the provincial government.

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, this new philosophy is best illustrated by use of an example. And we take, for example, the issue of making an expenditure. That of course is an example of a natural person power because we each have the right and authority to spend our money.

Under the former municipal legislation, a great many provisions were dedicated to setting out how municipalities could spend money and for what. Every time a new situation occurred, the legislation needed to be changed to allow for it. And over the years, members who have sat in this Chamber for numerous sessions are aware that there have been frequent amendments to The Urban Municipality Act and The Rural Municipality Act to react to these situations as things changed.

This Bill, Mr. Speaker, takes a new approach. Simply stated,

municipalities have the authority to spend money. However, because the money that is spent is taxpayers' money, it is appropriate for some limits on this natural person power to be in place.

So, Mr. Speaker, in recognition of that public interest, this Bill requires councils to authorize all expenditures in a budget, or by a resolution of council, and to report on all expenditures to the taxpayers on an annual basis. And of course, Mr. Speaker, there are notice provisions so that the public is aware of actions that the municipal councils are taking. Natural person powers, Mr. Speaker, are generally balanced with measures for greater public participation, accountability, and transparency.

The second new important principle introduced in the Bill is that of areas of jurisdiction. Mr. Speaker, the establishment of areas of jurisdiction will provide more municipalities with more flexibility to govern, regulate, license, and deal with a variety of local matters and future issues within municipal jurisdictions as they arise.

And again, Mr. Speaker, this Bill uses the concept in a permissive manner, recognizing the capability of local governments to plan and act responsibly with limits being provided for when an overriding public or provincial interest is present.

Mr. Speaker, like The Cities Act, The Municipalities Act also contains a statement of principles and municipal purposes. These sections help to define the new relationship between the province, the municipalities, and their residents. This statement of principles and municipal purposes forms the basis of a new approach to local governments' accountability. More specifically, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, we are taking steps to ensure that municipalities are directly accountable to their citizens as much as possible, as opposed to being held accountable to the provincial government.

The Act contains a number of measures that improve the accountability and transparency of municipal governments to the public and ratepayers. Examples of these sorts of measures include providing for greater transparency regarding when a council or council member may meet in camera, by tying closed meetings to matters that are considered confidential under the local authority, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, or for strategic planning purposes.

And, Mr. Speaker, additional requirements for public accountability, including the requirement to give public notice before a council deals with a number of important issues including remuneration, borrowing or lending and requirements to publish a municipality's debt and debt limit as part of the municipality's annual financial statement.

Up to this point, Mr. Speaker, I've been talking about how the Bill will provide for more accountability and flexibility at the local level. However, the world is not perfect, Mr. Speaker, and occasionally, despite everyone's best efforts, conflicts do arise. So, Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that, like in The Cities Act, this Bill ensures that municipal bylaws or resolutions that conflict with any federal or provincial statute or regulation will have no effect to the extent of the conflict. This codifies the common law practice, Mr. Speaker, and ensures that when

necessary provincial and federal laws will override those at the local level if a conflict occurs.

Mr. Speaker, those who have worked with the previous statutes will see many familiar provisions in this Bill. For example, despite the granting of natural person powers, a number of financial matters will continue to be prescribed as before, including budget requirements and appointing an auditor. These are important matters of public interest, Mr. Speaker, and it is crucial to have a consistency of approach amongst municipalities.

With respect to property assessment and taxation, Mr. Speaker, The Municipalities Act has essentially the same provisions as the previous municipal Acts, including the continuation of a simplified assessment appeal process to provide a less onerous and intimidating process for persons who appeal their property assessment without the aid of lawyers or appeal agents.

This Bill does not contain any new powers of taxation for municipalities. However, Mr. Speaker, as was approved in The Cities Act, some expanded provisions regarding the use of special tax bylaws to raise revenues in all or a portion of a municipality to pay for a specific purpose have been included. Special taxes are intended to allow the costs of a service or project to be levied on only those properties that benefit. I should also note that special taxes levied in this manner can only be used for services that can be completed and that affected properties can pay for within one year.

(14:45)

As was the case in The Cities Act, the authority to supplement the Act with regulations has been included in a number of areas so that additional public interest may be accommodated if and when they are identified. The existing regulations, pursuant to the municipal Acts, will be reviewed over the coming months in consultation with the municipal sector, and new regulations for this Bill will be prepared and presented prior to this Act coming into force.

Mr. Speaker, The Municipalities Act is a significant piece of legislation in that its creation can be attributed in large measure to the spirit of co-operation and collaboration that has made this province great. It came about through the dedication and commitment of the key stakeholders who work diligently in the public interest of having a standard set of principles and authorities for all municipalities while recognizing that in some cases traditional differences could and should be accommodated.

Mr. Speaker, as we've discovered through the development and implementation of The Cities Act, the relationship between the province and the municipalities remains in transition. As a result, our legislation affecting governance is evolving. Just as we are amending The Cities Act, I fully ... to see The Municipalities Act evolve and be subject to amendments in the next two years.

It is clear that our municipalities, Mr. Speaker, have much to offer in terms of the social, cultural, and economic development of our province. In terms of this legislation, Mr. Speaker, it is equally clear that we have listened to our municipalities and

supported their requests to modernize the legislation under which they are governed.

Mr. Speaker, accordingly, I am proud to move second reading of Bill 81, The Municipalities Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill No. 81, The Municipalities Act, be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to stand in this Assembly this afternoon to speak in response to the minister's movement of Bill No. 8, the municipal Act . . . 81, pardon me.

Mr. Speaker, I've listened very carefully to the minister. My colleagues and I have had the privilege of meeting with representatives from local governments, municipal governments, SUMA (Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association), and SARM (Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities), and we've looked very carefully at this piece of legislation.

As the minister indicated, and we recognize this, Mr. Speaker, this Bill is certainly trying to simplify the process. And indeed what it does is move some two or three Acts that were about 400 pages of information down to one significant Bill. However, Mr. Speaker, this isn't just a little Bill. It's not a two- or three-page Act. It's a Bill that composes almost 200 pages of information regarding how municipalities can operate and govern themselves, Mr. Speaker. No doubt it consolidates a lot of the former Bills and the Acts that have been brought together under one Act.

And we have, as we've met with the representatives from both urban and rural, have been informed that they have been working on this piece of legislation for a number of years. And the reason they've moved forward and come forward with the responses and ideas for this Bill is they felt it was important and imperative in a changing society that we look at ways in which we can simplify the process of how local governments operate and function, and bring them under one piece of legislation — rather than as the minister indicated, always having to go back to two or three other pieces of legislation to see how the legislations are compatible and work together with each other.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the piece of legislation that we have before us, the minister talked about the period of time that SUMA representatives have been meeting, and I believe it's about three years that they've been meeting together. Unfortunately it was just this past spring that SARM came on, and they began to talk to representatives from SARM about this piece of legislation and how they can bring the different Acts together to simplify the process of governance over municipal governments.

Mr. Speaker, the minister talked about accountability and transparency of this Act and how local governments were going to be more accountable. I guess, Mr. Speaker, I would have to say it's unfortunate the government isn't following the same action that it's putting in this Bill, that's been called by SUMA

and SARM in regards to accountability and transparency. And, Mr. Speaker, we have been raising a number of questions on a number of issues the past few days which have been really calling into question how the government has dealt with other people in regards to Bills that have been brought forward, or actions by this government.

Mr. Speaker, one thing I noted in the minister's comments, the minister did make the comment that this Bill . . . and in talking to municipal governments, municipal governments are in a better position or the best position to make decisions for their citizens. And I agree wholeheartedly with the minister in that regard, Mr. Speaker. I just wish the Minister of Education would take the same view and listen to school boards.

And the Minister of Education is now pushing forward with his own idea of amalgamation rather than looking at how school boards have, over the years, have worked to represent their citizens. And so I compliment the minister for Municipal Government for taking the time to indeed sit down and listen to local governments, and especially when you look at a Bill of this nature and the complexities of the legislation that's coming forward. And while there are many areas of agreement, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we also note that there are areas of disagreement.

And, Mr. Speaker, we met recently with SUMA, and SUMA did raise the fact that there were some concerns with the piece of legislation that they had before them. In general there's a lot of support for this piece of legislation, but there are some areas of concern. And they indicated, while we can address that later through amendments to the piece of legislation . . . However one would ask, why would we worry about doing it later? Why wouldn't we take some time to address those concerns and see if those can be dealt with immediately, rather than, as we've seen just recently, just the other day, November 15. The minister brought forward Bill No. 58, The Cities Amendment Act, and the minister indicated that “. . . members will recall our government passed The Cities Act in the spring of 2002 and the Act came into force on January 1, 2003.”

And, Mr. Speaker, the reason the Act was . . . or an amendment to that Act is coming forward is because of the fact that there were a good number of amendments in the Bill that are intended to correct wording errors and to make improvements to some of the provisions that were set out in the original Act. So what we find, Mr. Speaker, that a piece of legislation that came into force, or was debated and moved forward in 2002 coming into force in January 1, 2003, we are now . . . we now have an amendment to correct some of the errors and to improve some of the wording.

And that was some of the concerns that were raised with us regarding the municipal Act, about the fact that, yes, there are a few areas of contention, especially with SARM and SUMA, on some of the issues. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I indicated that SUMA would like to see this piece of legislation passed shortly. However SARM has asked us for further study; they'd like to do further research. And we appreciate that because of the fact that they've only been involved over the last six months or so in the real debate and negotiations as to how this Bill moves forward, and how this Bill is going to be enacted, and how it will affect them in their responsibilities of representing the

citizens of their RMs and of rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would seem to me that rather than bringing forward a piece of legislation and then in a short time, even a year down the road having to come forward with amendments, that SUMA recognizes already there are some areas that need to be discussed a little further. Some changes that need to be made, that it would be only appropriate that we take the appropriate time, that negotiations continue. And if amendments can be made prior to or during the committee discussion to clarify the legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that's what the route we should follow. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this piece of legislation is a fairly complex and all encompassing piece of legislation that needs to have appropriate review.

And Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the arguments one of the SUMA delegates gave was we would like to speak to our members about the piece of legislation to let them know exactly what the piece of legislation is going to do, how it's going to affect our ability to provide good governance, and how it's going to affect our aldermen or alderwomen or councillors, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And the implication was, unless the Bill is passed, they will not be able to discuss this with their ratepayers or with the other members of SUMA across the province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation has received first reading. This piece of legislation is now into its second reading stage. This does not take away from SUMA's ability to continue to continue to discuss what this Act does and how this Act will affect its membership or delegates. SUMA . . . I shouldn't just use SUMA and SARM because basically the legislation is going to be all encompassing local governments and how they provide governance to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, SUMA did say they have concerns regarding the condo subclass that is left outstanding. They'd like to discuss this a little further. They felt, as I indicated earlier, that changes are needed. We could do it through amendment. We've asked them to look at if there are things that needed to be looked at. Maybe they should be coming forward with some, as the minister indicated, ongoing discussion to correct that, Mr. Speaker.

And Mr. Speaker, SUMA has talked about concerns about the ability to grant loans to not-for-profit groups. They've had . . . SARM has had some concerns with the conflict of interest disclosure changes. And their concerns, Mr. Speaker, are no different than what we have in this Assembly in many areas about deterring people from running because of this clause.

And Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are . . . while there's agreement in many areas regarding this piece of legislation, there are some areas of concern. And Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would seem only appropriate that in view of the massive changes and the massive undertaking to endeavour to bring a number of Acts together under one so that local municipal governments can, as they would determine, function more appropriately and make it much more simple for them to provide appropriate governance to their taxpayers and to their citizens, it would seem that discussion continue. And I believe SUMA and SARM have indicated that they are going to continue that debate.

And the fact that this piece of legislation is on the table only . . . what it does is really broadens the opportunity for people at large to have a closer look at this piece of legislation and how it impacts them and come forward with some thoughts because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know, over the years, as a piece of legislation has come forward and on many occasions the government has . . . As we've got into debate in committee, the government has, on many occasions, come forward with some amendments to address some of the little things that have been brought to their attention in a piece of legislation and ensure that, rather than bringing an amendment down the road, address those concerns right now.

And I think it's appropriate that we give that opportunity, and therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Moosomin that debate be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That is carried.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 82 — The Miscellaneous Municipal Statutes Amendment Act, 2004

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 82, The Miscellaneous Municipal Statutes Amendment Act. This Bill will make a number of important legislative changes pertaining to the use of local municipal tax tools.

This omnibus Bill will amend The Assessment Management Agency Act; The Cities Act; The Urban Municipality Act, 1984; The Rural Municipality Act, 1989; and The Northern Municipalities Act to take effect January 1, 2005. The changes proposed in this Bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are intended to remove unnecessary complexities and simplify local property tax tools for the property tax system.

Since the 1997 implementation of the municipal authority to use a variety of tax tools which coincided with a revaluation that updated property assessment values for the first time in nearly 30 years, various organizations, businesses, and individuals have expressed concerns with the level of authority in property tax policy provided to municipalities. These parties see their levels of taxation as unfair and inequitable. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the provincial government was asked to look into the matter.

The changes to the Act are based on government's decision to remove unnecessary complexities from the local property tax tools in order to simplify the property tax system. Further limitations on local property tax tools may be presented in the coming months following the results of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities clearing the path initiative.

(15:00)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Bill in front of us today removes the never used authority of municipalities to phase in assessments; removes the seldom used authority of towns, villages, resort villages, rural municipalities and northern municipalities to phase in property taxes, while retaining this authority for cities; removes the authority of towns, villages, and resort villages to create a residential condominium property subclass for the purposes of applying municipal property tax tools, since the use of this provision has progressively decreased to the point where only a handful of municipalities still use it. And it combines the seasonal and residential property classes for the purposes of applying municipal property tax tools, since only a few municipalities set tax policies that distinguish between these property classes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, accordingly, I'm proud to move second reading of Bill No. 82, The Miscellaneous Municipal Statutes Amendment Act. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill No. 82, The Miscellaneous Municipal Statutes Amendment Act be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's certainly a privilege again to stand in this Assembly to address this, make a few comments to this piece of legislation, Bill No. 82, An Act to amend certain Municipal Acts in relation to Property Assessment and Taxation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think you and I can both appreciate . . . we all, all the members of this Assembly can appreciate what it means to have property taxes assessed on our properties. And certainly we've had an ongoing debate over the past number of years regarding assessment and how assessment is managed, how it is implemented, how it affects personal property and certainly property taxes. And one of the biggest debates that is ongoing in this province is the cost of education that has been levied against the property owners of the province of Saskatchewan.

But another debate that has taken place in this province over the last little while, Mr. Speaker, has been the debate regarding resort properties and how they are assessed. And how resort owners, and in particular, Mr. Deputy Speaker, seasonal property . . . seasonal resort owners, Mr. Speaker, and the impact of the changes that are coming down the pike as a result of assessment on resort properties. And Mr. Speaker, I think it's important for us to note that there's a substantial difference between seasonal property owners and those resort property owners who have decided to make their residence in a resort a year-round residence. And no one disputes the fact that we need to have some mechanism that recognizes that fact so that taxation is applied fairly across the board in the province of Saskatchewan without putting undue pressure on certain individuals who may have a primary residence in a community or city or farm and then have a small seasonal property.

And this piece of legislation, as the minister has indicated, has brought forward a number of changes and certainly has removed some . . . And some of the changes have actually just removing some redundant issues that have, as the minister indicated, have never or very seldom been used by municipal governments.

Mr. Speaker, what this does, Mr. Speaker, it certainly does make some interesting changes. And as we have been, as we've been informed and as we've been discussing the issue with SUMA and SARM representatives, there are some issues that they still have not, are not totally clear on and they certainly would want to take a closer look at this piece of legislation. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think others would like to look at this fairly closely as well.

Mr. Speaker, I would however at this time like to move, seconded by the member from Martensville . . . Martensville, pardon me:

That the Assembly do now proceed to item no. 4 — private members' public bills and orders, adjourned debates.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from Moosomin, seconded by the member from Martensville:

That the Assembly do now proceed to item no. 4 — private members' public bills and orders, adjourned debates.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Deputy Speaker: — All those in . . . I believe the nos have it. All those in favour, say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Deputy Speaker: — All those opposed, say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Deputy Speaker: — I believe the nos have it. Call in the members, standing vote.

The division bells rang from 15:05 until 15:15.

The Speaker: — Order. The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member for Moosomin and seconded by the member for Martensville:

That the Assembly do now proceed to item no. 4 — private members' public bills and orders, adjourned debates.

Would those in favour of the motion please rise.

Yeas — 28

Wall	Toth	Elhard
Heppner	D'Autremont	Krawetz
Draude	Hermanson	Bjornerud
Stewart	Wakefield	Morgan
McMorris	Eagles	Gantefoer
Harpauer	Bakken	Cheveldayoff
Huyghebaert	Allchurch	Brkich
Weekes	Kerpan	Merriman
Chisholm	Dearborn	Hart
Kirsch		

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion, please rise.

Nays — 29

Calvert	Addley	Lautermilch
Hagel	Van Mulligen	Serby
Atkinson	Cline	Sonntag
Crofford	Prebble	Forbes
Wartman	Belanger	Higgins
Thomson	Nilson	Beatty
Hamilton	Junor	Harper
Iwanchuk	McCall	Quennell
Trew	Yates	Taylor
Morin	Borgerson	

Clerk Assistant: — Those in favour 28. Those opposed 29.

The Speaker: — I declare the motion defeated.

Motion negatived.

The Speaker: — This debate resumes on second reading of Bill No. 82, The Miscellaneous Municipal Statutes Amendment Act. I recognize the member for Moosomin . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Debate resumes on Bill No. 82. I recognize the member for Martensville.

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've spent some time this afternoon listening to my colleague over there go through the various parts of the municipal Acts and the miscellaneous municipal statutes, and so I move that we adjourn that at this time, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Martensville that the debate on Bill 82 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 86 — The Labour Standards Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2)

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Labour.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of The Labour Standards Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2) and will formally move second reading of the legislation at the end of my remarks.

This Act improves what is already among the strongest whistleblower protection provided under any labour standards legislation in Canada. It strengthens existing whistleblower protection by clarifying that the lawful authority to whom an employee can report violations of the law includes their direct or indirect supervisor, also providing the director of labour standards with the authority to investigate and issue a decision respecting an employee's complaint of wrongful dismissal or discrimination as a result of reporting an illegal activity. And it gives an employee or employer the right to appeal the decision of the director to an independent adjudicator.

Mr. Speaker, section 74 of the Act currently allows employees to report violations of any federal or provincial law to a lawful authority. The Act does not however define lawful authority. This amendment rectifies that situation by specifying that a lawful authority includes: any police or law enforcement agency, with respect to an offence within its power to investigate; any person whose duties include the enforcement of federal or provincial law, with respect to an offence within his or her power to investigate; or any person directly or indirectly responsible for supervising the employee.

Mr. Speaker, the courts, in considering the current section, have not agreed on who falls within the definition of lawful authority. This amendment makes clear this government's intention to protect workers who report illegal activity.

Mr. Speaker, currently, alleged violations of section 74 are investigated by a labour standards officer once a complaint is made. If it is determined that a violation of section 74 has occurred, the department will recommend the prosecution of the offender to the Department of Justice.

The amendments before you authorize the director of labour standards to investigate complaints of discrimination against an employee under section 74 and to issue a decision regarding his or her findings. If it is found that a whistle-blower has suffered discrimination for reporting illegal acts, the director can order the employer to comply with section 74, restore the employee to his or her previous position, and/or pay any wages that the employee has lost as a result of the employer's failure to comply.

We are further amending the Act, Mr. Speaker, to provide a mechanism for employees or employers who wish to appeal a decision by the director of labour standards. The Act currently provides for adjudicators, who have the powers of a commissioner under The Public Inquiries Act, to hear appeals from wage assessments made by the director. These amendments also allow adjudicators to hear appeals of decisions made by the director relative to section 74.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments to The Labour Standards Act will strengthen the protection that Saskatchewan workers have by specifying that they can report illegal activities to their bosses. They further strengthen that protection by allowing the director of labour standards to investigate complaints of discriminatory

action taken against whistle-blowers without the need for potentially lengthy and expensive court proceedings. And we have balanced that authority by providing all parties involved with the right to appeal a decision to the director.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments will help ensure that no one is punished for reporting illegal acts, and I invite all hon. members to support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to move second reading of Bill No. 86, The Labour Standards Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Labour that Bill No. 86, The Labour Standards Amendment Act, 2004 be now read a second time.

I recognize the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to speak to Bill No. 86. As the minister has outlined, some of the . . . many of the details . . . I just wanted to start off by making note that my colleague from Saskatoon Southeast introduced a Bill, Bill No. 201, which is very similar to this. And we, at the time, asked the Minister of Labour to work with us on that particular Bill.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister laid out, the Bill gives the labour adjudicator the powers of a commissioner pursuant to The Public Inquiries Act. And the question around there, The Public Inquiries Act powers, possibly give the labour adjudicator power to subpoena. So it's questions like that that we need to clarify in the future. We'll certainly look at the Bill in detail and give this to our committee that looks into the labour standards areas, and we'll talk to all the stakeholders involved and make our decision in the future.

As the minister has pointed out, this Bill I believe would force an employer to pay a deposit to have their appeals heard. And if they should win the appeal, the money is refunded. And if they lose the appeal, they would lose the money.

And other parts of the Bill include employees can report violations of federal and provincial laws to a direct or indirect supervisor or a law enforcement agency. I don't see any particular problem with that. If there's something illegal going on, naturally that's where the whistle-blower Act should take into account and protect the person that is bringing those problems forward. And also it would allow the director of labour standards to investigate and issue a decision respecting employees' complaints of wrongful dismissal or discrimination as a result of reporting an illegal activity. I believe that's fairly straightforward and common sense, that if that's taking place, that the person making the complaint is protected by law.

And also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it goes on to say it enables the director of labour standards to order employers to cease any discriminatory activity towards an employee, to restore an employee to his or her previous position — and again that's fairly common sense and straightforward — and also to pay any

wages that the employee lost as a result of the employer's violation of section 74, The Labour Standards Act.

So as I said, Mr. Speaker, we will look at this Bill, we will talk to the stakeholders, and we will certainly take into account any problems that may arise from those discussions with the stakeholders. So at this time, I would like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Moosomin that debate be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That is carried.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 87 — The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2004

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Labour.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2004 and I will formally move second reading of the legislation at the end of my remarks.

This afternoon I'll take just a few minutes of the Assembly's time to detail what the amendments do and explain how they benefit Saskatchewan.

First, Mr. Speaker, we are amending section 4 of the Act to allow members of the Labour Relations Board to complete their active cases even when their appointments may have expired, rather than require any hearings to be stopped and a new panel appointed. The amendment will facilitate more efficient operations of the board and result in fewer delays. But rest assured, Mr. Speaker, that no board member will be assigned to any new cases once his or her appointment has expired.

In addition, section 4 is being amended to allow the Chair or a Vice-Chair of the board to hear fair representation and employee trade union dispute applications alone. The number of applications concerning disputes between an employee and their union is increasing. Many of them can be resolved expeditiously with a single-member panel.

All other applications will continue to be heard by a minimum of three members comprised of a Chair or a Vice-Chair and an equal number of employer and employee board members, as is currently required by the Act. This amendment will improve case management and will allow full panels to deal with more complex cases.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments provide the Chair of the Labour Relations Board with the authority to make regulations prescribing rules of procedure for matters before the board, including preliminary procedures and prescribing forms. The fact of the matter is that all tribunals make rules in order to operate. By making regulation rather than rules, there is a formality and a transparency brought to the process.

Legislative drafting and Saskatchewan Justice will draft the regulations to ensure clarity and compliance with legislative drafting rules and protocols. In addition, the regulations will be published in the *Saskatchewan Gazette*.

The amendments, Mr. Speaker, will also repeal the existing section 18 and replace it with a new section that clarifies certain procedural powers of the Labour Relations Board. The proposed amendment clarifies exactly what the board's powers are, particularly at the pre-hearing stage. The amendments to section 18 do not favour one of the parties over the other. Rather, they establish a level playing field and reduce the increasing number of judicial review applications related to what are purely procedural matters.

(15:30)

By way of this amendment, the Labour Relations Board will have the same procedural powers as the Canada Industrial Relations Board described in the Canada Labour Code. The Canada Industrial Relations Board is the federal equivalent to our Labour Relations Board. We chose this model because the procedural powers found in the Canada Labour Code have been in existence since the early 1970s. And while they have been amended occasionally, they have stood the test of time and have been found to exemplify procedural powers and have proven fair to both sides.

Most jurisdictions in Canada have borrowed some of the provisions of section 16 and 16.1 of the Canada Labour Code. The proposed amendments also add a new section, 18.1, that gives members of the Labour Relations Board the same privileges and protections as a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench.

As the members know, the Labour Relations Board is a quasi-judicial tribunal, and the board members, including the Chair and the Vice-Chairs, essentially function as judges when they carry out their statutory duties and responsibilities. As a result, these privileges and protections are necessary.

Mr. Speaker, with this Act we are also proposing to amend the first collective bargaining agreement provisions. The amendments will require the trade union and the employer to commence bargaining within 20 days of certification of the bargaining unit. Additionally the amendments will permit the Labour Relations Board, upon the application of one of the parties, to assist in the settlement of a first collective agreement if the parties have not reached an agreement within 90 days of the certification of the trade union.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that collective bargaining can be a long and difficult process, but it can be especially difficult for a newly certified workplace negotiating a first contract. These amendments will mean more timely settlements with less disruption in the workplace, and that's good news for everyone involved.

Now let me point out that the Act already permits the Labour Relations Board to assist in the conclusion of a first collective agreement. This amendment simply allows either party to apply to the board for assistance if 90 days have passed since the board certified the bargaining agent.

Mr. Speaker, strikes and lockouts are very difficult situations, and this provision will help to prevent work stoppages by providing another way for the parties to reach an agreement when negotiations are deadlocked.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we are proposing to amend the related businesses section of the Act to make it the same as the wording of a similar provision in The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act. There is no statutory reason for the language to be different and the amendment does not alter the intent of the provision in any way.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the amendments to The Trade Union Act will provide processes that lead to the more timely and less disruptive resolution of labour relations issues. Mr. Speaker, a more timely, less disruptive resolution of labour relations issues means reduced costs and uncertainty for both employees and employers. Those are very good reasons indeed for passing this legislation, and I invite all members to support it.

Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to move the second reading of Bill No. 87, The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2004. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Labour that Bill No. 87, The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2004 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A pleasure to speak to Bill No. 87, An Act to amend The Trade Union Act.

Mr. Speaker, since I've been elected in 1999, the people of Saskatchewan have come to me when I was Labour critic, and come to our party, the Saskatchewan Party, and have said again and again that what we need is some balanced labour laws in Saskatchewan. And what balanced means is to protect the rights of the workers and protect the rights of the employers.

And one of the areas where it was pointed out that it was unfair and it remains unfair today is the Labour Relations Board. Again and again the decisions by the Labour Relations Board has been unfair and biased and, Mr. Speaker, I just, at first notice of seeing this Bill, it seems that the government today is strengthening the Labour Relations Board. And what we've seen, the actions in the past of the Labour Relations Board, is not fair to the employers . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, well the member across says, who. Well I'd just like to say to the member across, who is saying that the Labour Relations Board is not partial, it was Justice Baynton saying in his ruling that the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board exhibited a clear bias in its ruling favouring UFCW (United Food & Commercial Workers Union) — a judge from the Saskatchewan bench has agreed with . . . has stated that, Mr. Speaker. And now we're seeing that the government is trying to impose that on the businesses of Saskatchewan.

And we discussed this issue. And why is it important? Well the reason it's important to get this situation straightened out in the

Labour Relations Board is to attract investment into the province, to create more jobs. That's what we want to do at the end of the day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to do in this province. And these rules and regulations, and in particular the Labour Relations Board, has driven businesses out of the province, has driven jobs out of the province.

And we can only see by the record of the government that we have a declining population in this province. We have a declining investment from the private sector in this province, and it's exactly the wrong way to approach labour relations. We all agree that labour needs to be protected. There should be labour relations Bills in place and The Trade Union Act needs to be in place to lay out the rules and conditions of certifying and decertifying and also lay out the rules of the Labour Relations Board.

But, Mr. Speaker, all this does is sends a signal out, not only to people and businesses in Saskatchewan, but to businesses and potential investors in Canada and around the world. Something this government doesn't understand is that we need to attract investment into this province and its . . . there's not enough investment dollars in Saskatchewan, even in Canada, to do what we have to do.

We look at what the ACRE (Action Committee on the Rural Economy) report brought down a few years ago and the billions of dollars of investments that's needed in this country, in this province, to grow the province economically. We want to have this province growing. We want the population to be growing. We've seen in the last ten years Manitoba has increased its population by 100,000 people. At the same time, Saskatchewan has lost population, lost investment, lost potential, Mr. Speaker.

We talk about . . . We argue about things like this. Well the reason is we need more people in this province, we need more taxpayers. We need more investment to do what, Mr. Speaker? So we can do something about reducing waiting lists, surgical waiting lists. We need something to do about . . . Mr. Speaker, to do something about the high education tax.

So that's the point that we need to look at when we look amending bills, The Trade Union Act, is to look at the big picture, not some very narrow view of the world as this government does in order to pacify their friends. Mr. Speaker, what we need to do is change The Trade Union Act, change The Labour Standards Act so that it's fair and balanced. We all agree it has to be fair and balanced. But the pendulum has swung too far, Mr. Speaker, and we need to bring that back to the centre where it helps everyone in the province, not just a few.

And, Mr. Speaker, we will look at this Bill. We will talk to the stakeholders. And I'm sure there's going to be many people in businesses around Saskatchewan will have a lot to say about this Bill in the future and its negative effects that it will have on investment and potential investment in this province. So at this time, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member for Biggar has moved that debate be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — All those in favour say, aye. All those opposed say, no. I believe the ayes have it.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 80 — The Education Amendment Act, 2004/Loi de 2004 modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur l'éducation

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Learning.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to outline for all members of the Assembly today the substance and purpose of the amendments incorporated in this short amending Bill.

As members know Saskatchewan school divisions will undergo a major restructuring over the next year. In this regard we have released a map that has been submitted by the education equity task force setting out their recommendations and boundaries for the new school divisions. The government has accepted the map and has moved forward with their proposals in allowing them to serve as the basis for the new school divisions.

Mr. Speaker, the legal process for establishing a new school division involves the issuance of a minister's order by the Minister of Learning. Such orders include the . . . a number of matters including the boundaries of the school division, the size of the boards of education of the division, and the boundaries of the subdivisions to be used for electoral purposes. The order also includes the necessary provisions for holding the first election of the board of education for the school division.

Orders will be issued as early as possible in 2005 to establish all of the new school divisions. For the period up to December 31 of '05 the new divisions will exist as the legal entities, but will not become fully operational. During this period the existing school divisions and the boards will continue to function in the usual way. On January 1 of 2006 the existing divisions will be disestablished and the new divisions will then replace them in all respects.

As I've noted, Mr. Speaker, one of the first steps to be taken when a new school division is established, is the election of a board of education to govern the division. Under our existing legislation a new school division can be established at any time, and the first board election can then be held as soon as the division is legally established. Our existing legislation provides that a term of office for the first board continues until the next regularly scheduled province-wide school board elections.

It's our government's intention that elections will be held in the new school divisions as early as June of 2005 and that the boards will assume office on July 1. This will give the new boards six months to begin making the necessary arrangements, including such key matters as hiring a director of education, hiring a secretary treasurer, and determining a suitable location and facilities for the board office or offices.

Province-wide school board elections are held in October every third year, in accordance with the provision of The Local Government Election Act. The last elections were in October

2003 and the next ones will be in October 2006. Mr. Speaker, it is the virtually unanimous view of trustees and school division officials that if elections are to be held for these new boards in June 2005, that it does not make sense to require elections to be held again for these new divisions just 16 months later.

Candidates for election to the new boards need to be clear that they will be making a commitment to participate in the development and implementation of the new divisions over a realistic period of time. We then need to ensure stability and continuity by giving the elected trustees a reasonable amount of time within to undertake their necessary activities.

The logical conclusion, Mr. Speaker, is that elections should be waived in the new school divisions in 2006 and these boards should be given a term of office until the following scheduled elections in October 2009. Our existing legislation does not include any provision whereby a scheduled election can be waived in a school division. Through this amending Bill currently before the Assembly, a new provision is being incorporated in the Act to address this problem.

The new provision will achieve two objectives. First, with respect to the new school divisions established in 2005 it will eliminate the requirement for a school board election to be held in those divisions again in October 2006. Second, with respect to the term of office of the trustees elected in June 2005, the new provision will prescribe that their term of office will continue until the following province-wide school board elections in October 2009.

Mr. Speaker, I want to clarify that these legislative amendments apply only to those divisions affected by the restructuring. Those divisions that are not affected by the restructuring, and in some cases some of the separate school divisions, will not be affected. In these divisions current trustees will complete their term of office and elections will be held at the regularly scheduled time in October 2006. I also want to indicate that in some of the separate school divisions new seats will be added on a by-election basis.

Mr. Speaker, all of the partner organizations in education and their individual members, have emphasized the importance of the government making decisions about restructuring, announcing and implementing those decisions as early as possible. It's understandable that those who will need to be involved in the restructuring at the provincial and local levels will want to have as much clarity and certainty as possible as we move forward with this major education initiative.

The amendments in this Bill will assist in achieving this objective and will help ensure that restructuring will occur as smoothly as possible. As such I am therefore pleased to move, Mr. Speaker, that Bill No. 80, An Act to amend The Education Act, 1995 be now read a second time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Learning that Bill No. 80, The Education Amendment Act, 2004 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Cannington.

(15:45)

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And this time I won't be using the wrong term since the right person is the Chair . . . in the chair to use that term. I know that the Speaker may have been concerned last time I was up speaking that I was trying to demote him when I kept calling him the Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this particular Bill has . . . will have huge ramifications across Saskatchewan. Our education system under this Bill is going from an institution that has been in place for roughly 50 years to something very, very different. Now it's not to say that amalgamations and changes within the school division boundaries haven't changed over that period of time, but the general outline and operation of the schools have remained relatively stable in that sense.

And I believe most people across Saskatchewan believe that that stability has lent itself to a very good educational system, that the students coming out of this province have had to take a back seat to no one, Mr. Speaker. And fact is, if you take a look at people from Saskatchewan, that has been one of our major exports in the last hundred years, Mr. Speaker, has been highly qualified and successful people outside of this province.

You take a look at Alberta. Alberta is built by Saskatchewan people, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You take a look at major corporations around the world — not just in Canada but around the world, Mr. Speaker — and they are led by Saskatchewan people. Unfortunately though they had to leave Saskatchewan to be successful.

But the education system here in Saskatchewan gave them the opportunity to take their skills and utilize them and be successful and build successful societies, Mr. Deputy Speaker, around the world. It's just too bad that they couldn't do it here at home in Saskatchewan.

So the problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is not the failure of the education system in Saskatchewan that the minister is trying to change, but it seems to be for some other reason other than just to enhance our education, Mr. Speaker. And I don't understand why the minister is so bent on this rush to this change.

Now the Boughen report came down a little over a year ago, a year and a half or so ago, with looking at making changes to education taxation. And there was some . . . the direction in that, Mr. Speaker, was that there needs to be reform in the property tax base of funding education in this province. So the recommendation was — and the government followed on half of this recommendation — was that . . . And as the minister from North Battleford has pointed out, increase the PST (provincial sales tax) in return for which there would be a lowering of the property taxes, correspondingly.

So the government took half of that advice. They raised the PST, and did nothing for property taxes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, not a thing. Not a thing. In their budget they presented back at the end of March, there was not one reduction in property taxes. But they sure did jack up the PST, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So they take little bits and pieces that suit their own particular

political purposes. They didn't want to reduce the property taxes because they viewed that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as somehow being an advantage or a change for rural Saskatchewan, because rural Saskatchewan was raising this issue in particular. It was an issue in urban Saskatchewan as well, but those that were outspoken on this particular issue were from rural Saskatchewan. And very, very, very few of their members represent even small parts of rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, so to them it was not an issue.

Property tax reduction for education was not an issue for them, but it was for the rest of the people in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, including the people in urban Saskatchewan. So the government then decides that they want to camouflage that issue, to divert attention, to put up a smokescreen, Mr. Deputy Speaker, around the property tax issue. So what does the minister of Education come up with? Well, the NDP minister of Education . . . we're not going to make changes to the property tax structure, we're going to change everything about the education system.

Well except, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're not going to change anything in northern Saskatchewan. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're not going to change anything with the separate school boards. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're not going to change anything in Regina or Saskatoon or Lloydminster. So what did that leave? That left about 40 to 50 school divisions in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that is going to be rolled back . . . 59, was it?

An Hon. Member: — Yes.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Fifty-nine school divisions across rural Saskatchewan that are going to be rolled back to twelve. Twelve, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to cover the entire province of Saskatchewan.

You know, we're going to ask the school boards and we're going to ask the directors of education to cover half of the province of Saskatchewan with 12 representatives, and yet as MLAs (Member of the Legislative Assembly), Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are 58 of us representing those same areas.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know it's been suggested to me that perhaps the MLAs should each represent one school division. You know, and so in Regina there would be one representative for the public school system. There would be one representative for the separate school system. In Saskatoon there would be one representative for the public school system, and one representative for the separate school system. You know, and I'm not sure how the people of Saskatchewan would view that as being fair representation, but that's what they're asking for the school divisions to do, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are going to be a considerable number of dislocations as the minister forces this down the throats of people. And there was very, very, very limited consultation. Consultation under the NDP term means, we have a plan, and we're going to come out and tell you how it's going to work — not how should things work, how would you like to see things work. No, it's we have a plan, and this is going to be how it works.

Now I know the minister can say, well yes we went out and had the NDP consultations and we made a change. Indeed they did. The original proposal that the minister had come forward with was that there be 12 public school divisions — excuse me, 14 — 14 public school divisions and they rolled it back to 12.

An Hon. Member: — Thirteen to twelve.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thirteen to twelve? Ah, I was giving them more credit than I deserve, Mr. Speaker. I was giving them 14. And so they rolled it back to . . . They took away one more, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and rolled it back to 12.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that the divisions in my own area have some very great concerns about this. And I know part of the concerns is, is how the subdivisions will be divided and what the criteria will be for making the determination as to how many representatives will be on any particular board and how that decision will be made. Will it be made based on population? I know that for the electoral purposes, the government counts the number of people resident in a particular constituency. It's not related to the number of voters you have in that constituency, only to the number of people.

And I know that there are members opposite who feel this is an imposition on them because part of the funding that they are provided in supporting their efforts as an MLA relates to the number of voters. So now all of a sudden those are coming into question. But in other places, having the number of people rather than the number of voters is of benefit to the NDP, so that's the direction they have gone to.

So how is it going to work for the selection of the school board divisions? Is it going to be based on the number of people? Is it going to be based on the number of students? Is it going to be based on the number of schools? Is it going to be based on the assessment, because obviously the assessment reflects the monies available to the school board?

Now if it was going to be based on assessment, I think there would be some value to that, Mr. Speaker, because then those areas that are being asked to contribute will also be asked to provide the representation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I strongly suspect that that is not going to be the measure by which the government determines who will be . . . or the number and the locations of the subdivisions, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I guess another interesting question that needs to be asked: if a person is already a member of a school board, can they also be a member now of this super school board within that area? Does that cause a conflict? All of a sudden you have someone who is familiar with how school boards have previously operated. Now they can influence those new people, who may not have been on a school board previously because there's a very, very narrow time frame in place here for making the decisions that need to be made — decisions such as where is the school board office going to be? Is the school board going to be leasing buses? Are they going to be contracting buses? Are they going to be owning buses? What is the number . . . What are they going to . . . Who is going to be the director of education? How many assistant directors of education are there going to be? You have a very, very narrow picture to make these kind of determinations.

My own local school board, Mr. Deputy Speaker — Oxbow and Arcola — went through amalgamation about six years ago. In a meeting with them earlier I asked them, how long did it take to get the amalgamation completed? Their response was, it took five years, Mr. Deputy Speaker. From the time they entered into their agreement to the time it came out at the end that they had completed the amalgamation was five years, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And one of the major holdups was not at the administrative level between the two divisions, but it was in getting common ground between the two units of the teachers' federation, Mr. Speaker, because they had separate agreements with each of their respective boards. And they had to argue it out between themselves to make a determination on where they wanted to go to before they actually went to the board to argue with the board and negotiate to get a determination for the entire division, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So those now, in the case of the division that my home will be in, you're looking at, I believe, five or six school divisions. So you're going to have five or six different agreements with the local STF (Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation) groupings, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They're going to have to work out amongst themselves before they even approach the board to make a determination on what happens . . . and the CUPE agreements, when it comes to buses.

So all of these things, you're going to elect a board of . . . a new school board sometime between June and October, and they're going to have to have this all ready to be implemented on January 2006.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it doesn't sound like it's possible to do. So what's going to happen? What is going to in all likelihood happen is the Minister of Education is simply going to say, this is how it's going to be. There will be no, there will be no consultation with the people in the area. There will be no local input because the time frames will be too short, just as, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there has been very, very, very limited local input into the decisions that have been made to date, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Most of the trustees in the previous boards received a very, very small stipend. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the boards of the old union hospitals received a very, very small stipend. When I mean small, I mean 10, 15, \$20 a meeting. But as soon as they became the new, big, health districts, those costs, those per diems, Mr. Deputy Speaker, went up to 150, 250. The Regina Health Board and the Saskatoon Health Board were \$500 a day for meetings. So when the government argues that there's going to be savings here, I'm not exactly sure where these savings are going to take place.

In asking my local board that went through the whole amalgamation process once already and asking them where were the savings, they said, at the end of the day, by the time that the dust all settled, there were no savings.

(16:00)

So when the minister says, well we're going to take savings in administration to put into the classroom, the people who are

actually delivering the education in the classroom are saying, there is no saving at the end of the day. Unless the minister has some kind of trick cards up his sleeve that he is planning on making changes that are some cost-saving measures within the education system, there certainly hasn't been any significant savings in the past through amalgamation. There has certainly been dislocation and reallocation of resources, but there hasn't been savings, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You know, when I look at my own area, my own . . . the new super school board that will be in place, there will be some reallocation. There is no doubt about that. And there may be some savings, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the provincial government. But those savings will not in turn be translated back into that local school board, nor will there be any benefit translated to the students.

Because of the variations and the differences in the mill rates in the five or six different divisions, Mr. Speaker, there will be a reallocation of funding. There will be an equalization of the tax mill rate, not necessarily an equalization of the tax load in each area because that will again depend on the assessment, but there will be perhaps an equalization of the mill rate. And that mill rate transfer of monies will now occur from the areas that are currently the zero grant boards into those areas that were receiving grants from the government.

But in our particular area, that change will result in a grant from the government of about 1.5 or \$1.9 million for the year 2006. And in the year 2007, in all likelihood, that entire new division will be back into a zero grant board position, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So the whole objective that the government was expounding on was that to eliminate zero grant boards in the very maps that they're drawing, are going to return us to zero grant boards a year after amalgamation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So the savings that occur will be a transfer of resources from one area into another within that school division with the net beneficiary being the Government of Saskatchewan.

The taxpayer in that area will not save a thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And fact is, the taxpayers will either remain at the same cost or rise to cover the additional costs that the province will no longer be putting in. So the property taxpayer gains nothing from this in our area, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But there is a huge, a huge concern that this change will result in the closures of more schools. It will result in more erosion in local . . . small communities to the larger centres. It will mean a very, very serious loss of autonomy within the areas, Mr. Speaker. You will no longer have easy access to your local school board member. You'll be lucky to even know your school board member, Mr. Deputy Speaker, unless the government is including in this scheme monies for the school board members to tour their area to make contact with people, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That would just simply add more money to the cost structure and mean that there's even less savings on this mythical amount that the government has been expounding on.

So there are a great, great deal of concerns on this, Mr. Speaker, that have been brought forward, specifically in my case, by the

Souris Moose Mountain School Division. They have written letters to the Premier, to the Minister of Learning, to the Leader of the Sask Party, to myself, and to the other MLAs in the area. And as of yet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I haven't seen any of the responses coming back from the government side on this particular area to answer the questions that the school boards have been presenting.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe it's incumbent on this minister to start answering some of the questions that the school boards are asking, such as how are professional services going to be provided in the new school boards? Right now they don't have to travel great distances to the schools within their divisions. But if you centralize it all into one location, then you are going to have huge travel costs for professionals to go out into the various schools.

Again that adds to the cost; it doesn't reduce it. Or it means if the same cost structure is maintained, then those students are going to have less access to professional services. Or even worse, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those students are going to have to take time out of school to travel to those professionals because the professional is going to be utilizing their time in travel to the different school locations rather than providing the services to the students. So the alternative is for the student to lose their time in the classroom, in their education, to access the professionals.

And we already have, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a shortage of professionals in almost all areas in education. And the fact is try and find a physics student or a chemistry — not student, lots of students — teachers, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Try and find a physiotherapist. A speech therapist, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is becoming extremely difficult in this province.

And yet the minister makes, is going to make that access even more difficult by expanding these boards and requiring the few professionals that we have to cover greater and greater areas with the alternative being the students taking their time out of the classroom to try and get to one of those students.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think the minister needs to seriously reconsider this Bill, to back off on it and let people have some meaningful — meaningful — consultation and input before he rams this down the throats of Saskatchewan. I move that we adjourn debate on this issue.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Cannington that debate be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That is carried.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 85 — The Film Employment Tax Credit Amendment Act, 2004

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation.

Hon. Ms. Beatty: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am pleased to rise in the Legislative Assembly today to introduce second reading . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. Order. Would the member please come to order. Debate has now adjourned on the education Bill and we have now moved on to the next Bill. Order.

I recognize the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation.

Hon. Ms. Beatty: — I am pleased to rise in the Legislative Assembly today to introduce second reading of The Film Employment Tax Credit Amendment Act, 2004.

The film employment tax credit program, in place since 1998, provides a refundable 35 per cent tax credit to film producers in Saskatchewan. The way the program was initially designed resulted in it being difficult to predict and manage a budget for the program on a fiscal year basis.

When producers register in a program, they estimate their total production budget. Producers usually register early in the film employment tax program to allow them to use their expected tax credit as collateral when they seek financing for their project. However, if producers have finances in place, they often register at the same time as they file for their film employment tax credit. This is claimed when the production is complete, sometimes years later. As a result, draw on the film employment tax credit program is difficult to predict on a fiscal basis.

Therefore, this amendment will allow the Lieutenant Governor in Council to set a time period for producers to register and file their film projects in the film employment tax credit program.

These amendments are being proposed after consultation with film industry representatives. These changes will assist us in being better stewards of the program, making it easier to predict and manage the film implement tax credit program.

I therefore ask your support and move second reading of The Film Employment Tax Credit Amendment Act, 2004.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — It is moved by the Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation that Bill No. 85, The Film Employment Tax Credit Amendment Act, 2004 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Chisholm: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to speak this afternoon on Bill 85, An Act to amend The Film Employment Tax Credit Act. It appears that this Bill will prescribe the period within which a production must be registered if it is to qualify for the film tax credit. The purpose of this change is to provide the government with more timely information so that the amounts involved — that is the cost of the tax credit if you like — can more accurately be calculated.

In the explanation provided in the explanatory notes, it indicates that the proposed amendments will allow the registration period

to be prescribed which will dictate the time frame when it must be registered and therefore limit the time period whereby the tax credit would be applied for and affected. Although we have no particular difficulty with this Bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we would want to determine from discussions with those involved in the film production industry that these parameters that are now being set are workable and acceptable and do not negatively affect their industry.

This Bill points out some of the problems inherent in the whole budget process. The whole process of estimating the future, of estimating the future number of dollars into the future. This government does not have a very good record, particularly in the past five years of estimating its revenues or estimating the amounts of expenditure required to meet its promises.

The CAIS program would be that most glaring example that we face today. In December of 2003 the program was ratified by this government, an agreement reached on the conditions and the funding with the federal government. At budget time, for the present year we were in, less than \$100 million was budgeted for potential claims on the program from the provincial treasury, where in fact it must have been known from the experience of the 2002 predecessor program, the CFIP (Canadian farm income program) program, and from the knowledge of the drought of 2003 that the real requirements to meet the obligation of this government would have been two to three times as much money.

If Bill 85 in fact will be beneficial in the budget preparation process, I do not want to see that we would hold unnecessarily up this Bill. However, Mr. Speaker, at this time, I move to adjourn debate on Bill 85.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford that debate be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That is carried.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 76 — The Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute Amendment Act, 2004

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

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the end of my remarks, I will move second reading of The Prairie Agriculture Machinery Institute Amendment Act, 2004.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments proposed in this Act will enable the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute, or PAMI, to undertake research and development in the beef sector. The changes will allow us to incorporate the operations of the Western Beef Development Centre, or WBDC, into PAMI.

PAMI and the WBDC are both well-known research organizations in Saskatchewan. PAMI is recognized for its

expertise in machinery technology, while the WBDC is known for applied research and technology transfer to our cattle sector. While each will continue to do some work in their traditional areas, this merger provides the foundation for additional research that can be targeted at the beef sector.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the growth of the livestock industry is a key part of the province's strategy to grow the economy. Research into new technologies that will benefit livestock producers will play a critical role in that growth.

Combining the energy and expertise of PAMI and the WBDC presents a number of opportunities for the future. PAMI's leadership in researching and developing technology related to farm machinery and equipment can be applied to increasing the competitiveness of the beef industry. Such research and development may lead to replacing or assisting in the mechanization of labour-intensive functions of the beef industry, such as manure handling, feeding, and watering.

In addition, PAMI has a proven track record for attracting not only government funding for projects but also private sector research dollars, dollars that could be applied to the beef research area as well.

(16:15)

Mr. Speaker, the boards of the Western Beef Development Centre and PAMI have already endorsed this new business combination. The University of Saskatchewan is ready to take the necessary steps to complete this transfer of the WBDC's operation and assets to PAMI as soon as this amendment is put in place.

Manitoba is also an important partner in the operations of PAMI as facilities are maintained in both Humboldt and Portage la Prairie. Saskatchewan officials have had a number of discussions with Manitoba officials to ensure they are aware of the proposed changes.

To ensure continued industry involvement under this new arrangement, I have written the Government of Manitoba outlining our plans to establish a beef advisory panel that would be accountable to the PAMI board. This panel would be dominated by members from industry and would ensure a solid connection between the board and other stakeholders with respect to future research and ongoing technology transfer. To strengthen the research capacity of the new operation, Saskatchewan Agriculture Food and Rural Revitalization has committed to fund two new beef research chairs as part of PAMI's new expanded mandate.

I would like to thank all the stakeholders, including PAMI, the Western Beef Development Centre, and the industry for their work in supporting the beef sector and this initiative.

In brief, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the amendments to the Act affect the following sections: section 2 adds a definition for beef research and development; section 4 gives PAMI the responsibility to undertake beef and related research and development projects; section 5 gives PAMI the authority to undertake beef and related research and development projects, and provides authority for PAMI to enter into agreements to

undertake beef and related research and development projects; and section 27 allows provisions in the regulations to publish and furnish information arising from beef research and development activities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these amendments represent positive change. We are bringing together two respected research institutions dedicated to advancing the beef industry through research and development. Further, through these amendments we are demonstrating our continuing commitment to the agriculture industry and our goal of increasing the success and profitability of the livestock sector in this province.

Therefore I move that The Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute Amendment Act, 2004 be read a second time. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Agriculture that Bill No. 76, The Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute Amendment Act, 2004 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

I recognize the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is truly an honour for me to be able to stand and speak to Bill No. 76, the Act to amend The Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute Act.

It's one that I was very interested in and actually glad to see come forward. It may interest the Minister of Agriculture to know that I live almost halfway in between the Western Beef Development Centre and PAMI (Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute). So therefore, you know, it's in my backyard and both institutions I feel do terrific work — very, very valuable work. And the amalgamating or the working together of the two institutions, I'm being told, is something they're looking forward to. They're already, you know, starting to work together and the people involved are quite positive about this change.

The Western Beef Development Centre, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is located on what's called the Termuende Farm. And the Termuende family was a family that had farmed in the Lanigan area and upon the passing of the members of the Termuende family, they willed the farm to the University of Saskatchewan. There was a farmyard, kind of a unique barn, and some land that was willed to the University of Saskatchewan.

The University of Saskatchewan had been overseeing the Western Beef Development Centre for a number of years, but for reasons that, you know, we don't need to discuss with the Bill, had opted to perhaps not manage the farm and so an easy . . . or it appeared that a good fit was for PAMI to sort of oversee the management.

I believe right now, until this Act is passed, they are working under a management contract agreement. I don't know the details of that agreement but Mr. Gullacher from PAMI informed me that right now they have a management agreement and they're already working together. I spoke with Russel

Kirzinger, who's an extremely knowledgeable and well respected gentlemen at the Western Beef Development Centre, and he was quite excited about his conversations with Mr. Dave Gullacher on areas that he hoped to expand — beef research.

The research areas in agriculture, I believe, are going to be so hugely important to the industry moving forward and for the industry to adjust to changes because we are in a global marketplace. And yes, we've had a setback with the, you know, borders and different global markets being closed to our beef, but nonetheless we know that there is a future for the beef industry. And it's a huge industry and extremely important to this province.

So I'm glad that the, you know, the interested stakeholders or the stakeholders involved are positive about this move. They feel it's a good fit, and I hope that it is and that it expands their research abilities. And just as importantly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope that the government continues to support this facility as a whole because in last year's budget there was reduction of \$200,000 of support to PAMI.

I had asked the minister about the reason for that, that reduction in support at a time when I think more and more people involved in the agriculture industry are recognizing that the research is going to be detrimental to the industry expanding and adapting. And the minister felt that PAMI had got involved in enough private projects that they were going to be okay because they would get private funding. I hope that's true, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I also hope that the government continues its support — doesn't continue to reduce that support.

Going to the records, I see that in September 28 there was a budget approved for both PAMI and for the Western Beef Development Centre under the auspice of PAMI or under the management of PAMI, and so that's positive. I believe that's allowed the Western Beef Development Centre to continue functioning while it's in transition. And that's a positive thing.

So my caution and my worry, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the government doesn't just give lip service to its support to research for this really important research centre, that it doesn't just give lip service but also helps in sharing its funding.

Manitoba also contributes to PAMI and I'm sure they're watching and seeing what Saskatchewan's going to do and ensuring that Saskatchewan is paying their share. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member for Humboldt has moved that debate be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That's carried.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 58

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Taylor that **Bill No. 58 — The Cities Amendment Act, 2004** be now read a second time.

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

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. Mr. Deputy Chair, it's certainly interesting . . . it's a privilege to be able to enter into the debate on this Bill, amendment to The Cities Act.

Mr. Deputy Chair . . . or, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a number of our . . . one or two of our colleagues on, my colleagues on this side of the House have spoken to this Bill. It's a Bill that has six pages of amendments and new sections and so on to The Cities Act Bill, which was first . . . the first reading took place in this legislature back in June 2002. So basically, what this Bill does is it corrects that large Bill — I recall it was a Bill of some 70 or 80 or perhaps 100 pages, or perhaps more. I know it was one of the larger Bills that we dealt with in that session, and this Bill simply makes some changes that the cities found necessary, Mr. Deputy Chair . . . Speaker. So therefore we really haven't got a problem with this. This Bill, we think it can move to committee.

But before, I just have a couple of things that I would relate and perhaps take note of. The Minister of Government Relations last week moved first reading of the new municipalities Act, another large Bill, a Bill of 170 pages. And I think what this Bill 58 demonstrates is that we need to take the time to get it right the first time around as much as possible. I realize that there will always be some amendments that are needed in the future, but perhaps we don't need six or eight pages of amendments and new sections and so on.

So while we feel there's no reason to hold this Bill up and it can move to committee, I would urge at this time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we take our . . . do our due diligence on Bill 81, The Municipalities Act so that we aren't in the situation of having to deal with a Bill of some six or eight pages of amendments.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the minister that Bill No. 58, The Cities Amendment Act, 2004 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That is carried.

Clerk Assistant (Committees): — Second reading of this Bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I move

that Bill No. 58, The Cities Amendment Act, 2004 be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill No. 58, The Cities Amendment Act, 2004 be now referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That is carried. This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure.

Bill No. 62

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Quennell that **Bill No. 62 — The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004** be now read a second time.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Martensville.

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always interesting to get up in the House and speak on some of the issues that we have in front of us. The statute amendment law basically deals a lot with basically crime in Saskatchewan and how we're going to deal with it and what we're going to do. And I think if we look at the record in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's unfortunately not a pleasant story. It's not a pleasant story.

Any time that we find any stats come out from any particular organization, we find that Saskatchewan has the highest crime rates in virtually every single category in Canada — every single category. Now when you look at this province that we're all intensely proud of, we have to ask the question, why is that the case? Why is it the case that here in Saskatchewan we have more break-ins per capita than anyplace in Canada? We have more murders. We have more violence. We have more car thefts. And the list goes on and on.

You can take the whole category and go through it and probably aside from stealing fish out of the ocean, which is one that we just can't get in on or we'd probably be leading in that one as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan has the highest crime rate in Canada. It's a shame. And what makes that especially sad for this particular province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that when we look at the demographics of Saskatchewan, we find out that we have an unusually high number of seniors and an unusually high number of youth in Saskatchewan, and the category in the middle, we're very thin on.

Now why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that important to what I've just stated, that we have those high crime rates? It's very critical because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it means that the people who are

the victims of crime are either the very young or the very old — the very young or the very old. Because the group in the middle that we might say well they should be able to sort of take care of themselves or they shouldn't be quite that petrified about what's going to happen to them, those, the NDP, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have chased out of the province. Unfortunately they've done a very good job of that.

(16:30)

We saw that just a couple of days ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we had the last game that the Roughriders played. And one of the key things that always shows up whenever the Roughriders are involved in the finals or the semifinals, is that the announcers are no end of impressed with the number of people in green in the stands. And those aren't people necessarily coming from Saskatchewan over there to see their favourite team. A few of them are. But most of them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are people who used to live here and have now moved over there. They're still intensely loyal, Mr. Deputy Speaker, intensely loyal to this province, but the NDP have put them in a situation where in order to provide for themselves or their families they had to leave.

What a disaster, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP . . . And worse than that is that they've had almost half a century to correct it. But instead of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they've made it worse. What other football team can go to virtually every city in Canada and play a game and see all those people that used to come from their particular province cheering on their own teams? It's non-existent except — except, Mr. Deputy Speaker — in Saskatchewan, where the NDP and their methods have chased out, have chased out those individuals.

That leaves, as I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the very young and the very old who end up being the victims of crime. Not just a little bit of crime, but the highest crime rate in Canada in all of those. So we have our seniors living by themselves, knowing they can't protect themselves, knowing having a baseball bat beside the door, as primitive as that sounds, isn't an option for them because they aren't physically able to take that particular weapon and lay a licking on whoever comes in the house. Like I said, it sounds rather primitive, but for them that option isn't there.

An Hon. Member: — And they can't have a gun.

Mr. Heppner: — For some of the rest of us it might be there. They definitely can't have a gun because they'd be the ones that would be charged. Even a baseball bat, I'm sure that if they used that, they'd be charged with it.

And also the very young, the recipients, the victims of crime. That's a shame, Mr. Speaker, but that only happens here in NDP Saskatchewan. At some point, when you look at all the other factors that exist, if we look at education, I think we're one of the best educated group of people in Canada. So it's not that. Where do we go to find the cause of it? We have to look at the laws and the enforcement and the actions that this NDP government has taken over the years.

It probably reflects, as I just finished sort of indicating, Mr. Speaker, the socio-economic circumstances that the people of

this province find themselves in. And that's an underlying of the statement that I just made, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that our demographics have removed . . . see their removal of that middle-age group. The economic conditions of this province have forced that to have taken place.

We have in our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, overrepresentation of Aboriginal youth in custody. Why is that the case? I think this government has to take some responsibility for that. Especially whenever you hear them talk, they spend a whole lot of time talking about their social conscience. Well I suggest to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no social conscience in those benches across. If there was then over half a year . . . half a century of government we would have been able to, or should have been able to, institute some systems that would have brought down our level of crime and made this province a more secure place to live.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we look at the youth criminal Act, there's an interesting little statement that comes out. And that is that Bob Kary, dealing with the youth offender programs, says that Saskatchewan has the highest use of alternative measures programs per capita. And, Mr. Speaker, if we put a little period down there and went home we'd say, now wasn't that glorious? Here we have another action on these NDP with their so-called social conscience who've put into place, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the highest use of alternative measures programs per capita. Unfortunately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, unfortunately, that's not the end of the statement. The end of the statement goes like this, and despite this we still have the highest incarceration rate in Canada — still have the highest incarceration rate in Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the programs that this government has instituted aren't working. Their world view doesn't work. And maybe, I don't know, maybe if we went back to the university days of Tommy Douglas and dug out his thesis, they might find some answers in that. And I see Mr. Deputy Speaker is smiling. I know he's read it, know he's read it. I know that most people in those benches have read it. And that's why, whenever they write out their little documents during election time, they never mention it.

But I would suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the people of this province ought to access the university archives — either physically going there or use the Internet — and do some research and find out what the NDP idol really all thought. And it's not much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's not much. I will let the people who read that make up their own mind on it, but I'm sure that's what it's going to be, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this particular Act deals with the Queen's Bench Act, Queen's Bench Act, 1998, Young Offenders Act, and a whole list of other Acts. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, what we seem to have here is just a whole long list of change of names and terms. This government just loves to take a particular organization, change the name, and then they disappear because nobody out there knows it exists. We're forever changing names of different organizations. Don't change how effective they are, but we change the names.

It reminds me a little bit about the ad that's on television, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for one of those little smelly things you put inside your dryer to go ahead and make everything that you've

dried smell better. There's a bunch of these little kids playing hide-and-seek, and a little fellow's got his nose stuck in the corner of the chesterfield, and he's counting up to 10,000 or something because he loves the smell so much. But he's totally out of the game.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these NDP love to change the names of their organizations, and then they sit around and pat themselves on the back and say what a good job we've done. However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they're not part of the game because if they were part of the game, we wouldn't have those sorts of statistics that puts Saskatchewan in the worst place in Canada in all of those areas.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are a lot of things about this particular Act that we need to have some questions on. But I think at this particular point in time we're prepared, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to see Bill No. 62 move on.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been . . . the question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 62, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That is carried.

Clerk Assistant: — Second reading of this Bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — I move that Bill No. 62, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 be referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 62, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 be referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That is carried. This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Bill No. 63

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Quennell that **Bill No. 63 — The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2)/Loi de modification législative de 2004 (n° 2)** be now read a second time.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Martensville.

Mr. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate the opportunity to continue with my dissertation and bring to light some more of the things that this particular government needs to

do and should do.

What's interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I concluded my previous discussion of Bill No. 62 with how this government loves to do very little but change the name. And then maybe within a year or so the public catches on that there is this organization out there, and by the time they start dialing it, this group changes the name again. Bill No. 63, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a name change, is a name change. And I'll read the name to you and we'll see what that actually could mean: Social Services to Community Resources and Employment. Now what in the world could that all be involved?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I guess this is a Bill to clean up an Act, and that nothing could be more appropriate than for the NDP to clean up its act, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Bill No. 63 may as well move on as well.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 63, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2) be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That is carried.

Clerk Assistant: — Second reading of this Bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — I move that Bill No. 63, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2) be referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 63, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2) be now referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That is carried. This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Motion agreed to, the Bill read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Bill No. 72

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Sonntag that **Bill No. 72 — The Traffic Safety Act** be now read a second time.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This particular Bill, Bill No. 72, is quite a lengthy Bill so it is fortunate that the government first introduced it in the spring because it's taken some time to go through it.

What I think surprised me . . . although it's good to see that it's

a move in putting together a number of Bills to make the administration easier, easier to understand when it comes to road safety, driver and vehicle licensing, and motor carrier compliance issues in Saskatchewan, simplifying and streamlining that whole . . . or the number of legislations — I guess it wasn't just one — putting them together is definitely a positive move.

But upon reading through it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it surprised me that a lot of what's in it was an Act that we were speaking to not all that long ago. So it makes you wonder why we passed an Act — I believe it was — last session that then gets rolled into this Act. Why wasn't it all done in one step instead of all the time consumption that's been taken in introducing an Act, passing it, debating it, passing it and then turning around and having the same issues that were in that Act into another Act, and so on and so forth?

The barriers that is identified by, you know, the different stakeholders in the transportation industry is one of which that the rules, regulations, safety rules, etc., etc., within the Department of Highways that . . . they're quite onerous, lengthy, scattered. So therefore I'm sure that in particular the trucking industry will be very happy to see that this has been brought together. And I'm sure they'd be even more happy if it was streamlined even further because it still is quite a lengthy Act that covers a number of issues.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was brought to my attention by the trucking industry that they do have concerns that SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) is both the insurer as well as the regulator, and so they have some questions as to why that is so. And I think that there are a number of other questions that they have as well with SGI's regulations and rules that they have.

They feel that perhaps, although highway traffic safety can never be compromised — it's the ultimate of importance — but it has to be justifiable that certain regulations will indeed ensure significant better safety and not just be yet another barrier to the growth of the industry.

There are a few other people that are taking a look at this Bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They hope to get back to us fairly shortly, so I'm looking forward to their response. With that I adjourn debate.

(16:45)

The Deputy Speaker: — The member for Humboldt has moved adjournment of debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That's carried.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 73

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Sonntag that **Bill No. 73 — The**

Traffic Safety Consequential Amendment Act, 2004/ Loi de 2004 sur les modifications corrélatives découlant de la loi intitulée The Traffic Safety Act be now read a second time.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Bill No. 73, as identified by the minister, is just a consequential Bill to Bill No. 72. So without speaking further to the same issue, we're still waiting for the same responses. So therefore I adjourn debate on that Bill as well.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member for Humboldt has moved adjournment of debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That's carried.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 79

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Forbes that **Bill No. 79 — The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, 2004** be now read a second time.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Northwest on the wildlife amendment Act.

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in at looking at this Bill for the first time, it looked basically like a housekeeping Bill, a housekeeping Bill that was designed to protect habitat. In reviewing it, though, Mr. Speaker, I had some great concerns how you protect the habitat when you're taking 1300 hectares out of protection in one area. Mr. Speaker, it brings one to wonder: do we have a long-term strategic plan in this area, a plan that will look at conservation in a long-term, not adjustments in and out? Mr. Speaker, I had to wonder why we needed these changes in the Act in the first time. And reading the minister's comments, and I quote:

The amendment being considered today also corrects 20 land descriptions within the schedule of The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act that were originally described incorrectly.

Mr. Speaker, if we had done the proper consultation prior to this Act being implemented before, these errors may not have happened. Mr. Speaker, this government needs to understand that we need to have consultation before implementation. Mr. Speaker, it leads one to believe, who was consulted? I have a great concern to have the confidence in this minister that the stakeholders have been consulted prior to the implementation of the changes of this Bill. Mr. Speaker, he didn't have consultation and we ran into issues on the park closures in the summer, the wiener tax, and certainly in the reduction of conservation officers across this province. Mr. Speaker, I wonder why his department took the largest reduction in the

overall budget.

Mr. Speaker, I need to know if the minister consulted with the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation because, according to them, the answer was no. Mr. Speaker, how can you implement a Bill on wildlife habitation without consulting stakeholders such as the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation?

Mr. Speaker, I would even want to know did he consult with his own people, his conservation officers that are in the field? I'm sure there might be enough of them left to form a quorum.

Most important though, Mr. Speaker, did he consult with the mayors, reeves and the people in the affected area? I believe the answer to be no, Mr. Speaker. When I've contacted several of these people, they didn't even know what I was talking about.

Mr. Speaker, the largest area recommended for withdrawal relates to an interest in the northern village of Green Lake to be annexed — 1,300 square acres. Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what impact this will have on tourism, by taking 1,300 hectares of land around Greenwater Lake out of commission. A tourism attraction, Greenwater Lake Provincial Park, which attracts tourists for hunting, fishing, bird watching, and all forms of tourism. Mr. Speaker, could this have an impact on our tourism in Saskatchewan by taking this much land near a provincial park out of play?

Mr. Speaker, as the minister so states, 30 per cent of the funding from the Wildlife Development Fund is revenue generated by tourism for hunting, fishing, and other issues. Mr. Speaker, it would look to me that this has not been taken into account by the decision of the minister.

Mr. Speaker, I think most people in society believe that if a piece of land has value in being protected, it has value not only at the time that it was . . . protection was put in place, but protection into the future as well. Mr. Speaker, the question comes then: Why take it out? Was it not successful? What would be the reason to take 1,300 hectares of protected land out of protection?

It says, in the minister's words, that this area is being annexed to the village of Green Lake.

Then I would have to ask the minister, have you talked to the officials in the area to explain this to them? Have you consulted with these area officials to ask them, will this have an economic impact on your area? Will this have a tourism drain on the area? Mr. Speaker, again and again we continue to do an implementation plan long before consultation.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's incumbent upon the minister to come up with a better reason for taking out 3,000-plus acres out of protection and putting it into a non-protected area. Mr. Speaker, again and again we see this government continue to put implementation in front of consultation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister to consult with all stakeholders, both within his department, outside of his department, and those mayors and reeves in the areas affected, long before implementing this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I adjourn debate on this Bill.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Saskatoon Northwest that debate on second reading of Bill No. 79, The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Debate adjourned.

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

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would move that the House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Deputy Government House Leader that this House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

The Assembly adjourned at 16:53.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Toth	1857
Elhard	1857
Heppner	1857
Wall	1857
Hermanson	1857
Bjornerud	1857
Stewart	1857
Wakefield	1858
Morgan	1858
McMorris	1858
Eagles	1858
Bakken	1858
Brkich	1858
Weekes	1859
Kerpan	1859
Chisholm	1859
Dearborn	1859
Hart	1859
Kirsch	1859

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Deputy Clerk	1859
--------------------	------

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

Wakefield	1860
-----------------	------

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Van Mulligen	1860
Elhard	1860
Crofford	1860
Wall	1860
Atkinson	1860
Higgins	1861
Hart	1861

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Saskatchewan Film and Video Industry Receiving Recognition	
Hamilton	1861
Premier Klein Wins Alberta Provincial Election	
Dearborn	1861
Saskatchewan Goat Breeders Association Milkathon at Agribition	
Morin	1862
Michael Vidal of Saskatoon Receives the Little Hero Award	
Merriman	1862
Reopening of YWCA Housing Units	
McCall	1862
Retirement of Harry Hansen	
Hart	1862
Saskatoon Authors Highlight Saskatchewan	
Addley	1863

ORAL QUESTIONS

Microgro's Financial Situation	
Bakken	1863
Prebble	1863
Wall	1865
Call for Inquiry into Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company	
Wall	1865
Prebble	1866
Funding for the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization Program	
Stewart	1867
Wartman	1867

POINT OF ORDER

Van Mulligen	1868
Gantefer	1868
The Speaker	1868

ORDERS OF THE DAY**WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

Yates.....	1868
The Speaker.....	1868
Morgan (point of order).....	1868

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**SECOND READINGS****Bill No. 81 — The Municipalities Act**

Taylor.....	1869
Toth.....	1871

Bill No. 82 — The Miscellaneous Municipal Statutes Amendment Act, 2004

Taylor.....	1872
Toth.....	1873

Recorded Division (proceed to private members' public bills and orders).....

Heppner.....	1874
--------------	------

Bill No. 86 — The Labour Standards Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2)

Higgins.....	1874
Weekes.....	1875

Bill No. 87 — The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2004

Higgins.....	1875
Weekes.....	1876

Bill No. 80 — The Education Amendment Act, 2004**Loi de 2004 modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur l'éducation**

Thomson.....	1877
D'Autremont.....	1878

Bill No. 85 — The Film Employment Tax Credit Amendment Act, 2004

Beatty.....	1881
Chisholm.....	1881

Bill No. 76 — The Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute Amendment Act, 2004

Wartman.....	1882
Harpauer.....	1883

ADJOURNED DEBATES**SECOND READINGS****Bill No. 58 — The Cities Amendment Act, 2004**

Hart.....	1884
-----------	------

Bill No. 62 — The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004

Heppner.....	1884
--------------	------

Bill No. 63 — The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2004 (No. 2)**Loi de modification législative de 2004 (n° 2)**

Heppner.....	1886
--------------	------

Bill No. 72 — The Traffic Safety Act

Harpauer.....	1886
---------------	------

Bill No. 73 — The Traffic Safety Consequential Amendment Act, 2004**Loi de 2004 sur les modifications corrélatives découlant de la loi intitulée The Traffic Safety Act**

Harpauer.....	1887
---------------	------

Bill No. 79 — The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, 2004

Merriman.....	1887
---------------	------

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. L. Calvert
Premier

Hon. P. Atkinson
Minister of Crown Management Board
Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

Hon. J. Beatty
Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation
Provincial Secretary

Hon. B. Belanger
Minister of Northern Affairs

Hon. E. Cline
Minister of Industry and Resources

Hon. J. Crofford
Minister of Community Resources and Employment
Minister Responsible for Disability Issues
Minister Responsible for Gaming

Hon. D. Forbes
Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for the Office of Energy Conservation

Hon. D. Higgins
Minister of Labour
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. J. Nilson
Minister of Health
Minister Responsible for Seniors

Hon. P. Prebble
Minister of Corrections and Public Safety

Hon. F. Quennell
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Hon. C. Serby
Deputy Premier
Minister of Rural Revitalization

Hon. M. Sonntag
Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations
Minister of Highways and Transportation

Hon. L. Taylor
Minister of Government Relations

Hon. A. Thomson
Minister of Learning
Minister Responsible for Information Technology

Hon. H. Van Mulligen
Minister of Finance

Hon. M. Wartman
Minister of Agriculture and Food