



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

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authority of
The Honourable Don Toth
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. Don Toth
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall
 Leader of the Opposition — Lorne Calvert

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Calvert, Lorne	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
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D'Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Furber, Darcy	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
Gantfoer, Hon. Rod	SP	Melfort
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Harrison, Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Hon. Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Higgins, Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, Yogi	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
LeClerc, Serge	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Reiter, Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, Hon. Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Toth, Hon. Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Van Mulligen, Harry	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney
Vacant		Cumberland

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour to introduce four distinguished guests seated in your gallery. These individuals are members of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Saskatchewan Provincial Council. And I'd ask them to wave or stand as I acknowledge them.

Mr. Speaker, I'd first like to introduce Ed Lysyk of Regina. Ed is the president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Saskatchewan Provincial Council. Orest Gawdyda of Regina — Orest is a director at large of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Saskatchewan Provincial Council. Seated next to Orest is Orest Warnyca of Regina also. He is president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Regina branch. And also in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, is Eugene Krenosky of Regina. Eugene is the past president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Saskatchewan Provincial Council and now serves as a director at large of the Regina branch. I'd ask all members to welcome these distinguished gentlemen to their Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I as well would like to join with my colleague across the way in welcoming these representatives of the Ukrainian community — Orest Gawdyda, Ed Lysyk, Orest Warnyca, and Eugene Krenosky to our legislature here. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seated in the west gallery is a group of 14 grade 3 and grade 4 students from Lipton School. Mr. Speaker, maybe they could give us a little bit of a wave. The gallery is quite full. They are accompanied by their teacher, Ms. Marni LaBrash, and their bus driver, Ms. Janet Samoisette.

I met with them just a few minutes ago, and I must say they were very well prepared. They had a series of questions. We had our own little question period. The questions were excellent. I hope the answers were appropriate. And I would ask all members of the Assembly to welcome our grade 3 and 4 students from Lipton.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature today, 36 grade 10 students from the Melville Comprehensive School; their teacher, Perry Ostapowich; and Gladys Kohlenberg and Abe Weiler, bus driver.

And I want all my colleagues to notice how well-dressed and well-behaved this group is. And I think that goes back to Mr. Ostapowich being a very faithful teacher out there, bringing all his groups into the legislature and making them aware of how the legislature functions. So I would ask all members to welcome this group here today, and welcome to your legislature.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce a former student, that is someone who went to school at one time a few years ago. My buddy, Fred Kress, is seated in the east gallery, and good to see you here, Fred.

I know from long experience and association with my good friend Fred that he has a keen interest and always follows what goes on around politics and the legislature and follows our careers quite closely. So I ask all members to join me in welcoming Fred Kress.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Furber: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in support of a petition for new child care spaces. And the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to add at least 2,000 more new child care spaces in Saskatchewan by 2011.

Mr. Speaker, the petition is signed by folks from Prince Albert, Arborfield, Saskatoon, and Spruce Home. I so present.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition that calls upon the government to support Station 20, and the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately restore funding to the Station 20 project.

And this is signed by citizens throughout the city of Saskatoon, including people on Jackson Avenue, Leddy Crescent, Murphy Crescent, MacDonald Crescent, Spadina Crescent, Calder Crescent, Highbury Court, Schwager Crescent, Munroe, East Heights, Clavet, Mr. Speaker, William Avenue, Bayfield Crescent, 112th Street, as well as the 4040 8th Street East, Mr. Speaker. I so present to the House.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to rise to present a petition signed by residents of The Battlefords. Mr. Speaker, the petition calls for the immediate reduction of the education portion of property taxes for Saskatchewan families. Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads:

Call on the Legislative Assembly to be pleased to cause the government to immediately implement its promise to reduce the education portion of property taxes for Saskatchewan families by doubling the property tax rebate.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I present petitions today in opposition to the government's Bill 5, The Public Service Essential Services Act, and Bill 6, An Act to amend The Trade Union Act. The prayer reads as follows:

We respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan urge the new government to withdraw both Bills and hold broad public consultations about labour relations in the province.

And as duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And the petitions are signed by residents of St. Walburg, Meota, Paradise Hill, Livelong, Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Grenfell, Hafford, North Battleford, and Meadow Lake. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Moose Jaw residents, and it speaks to the shabby way that employees and our community was treated with the lack of consultation on the abrupt closure of the South Hill liquor store. And the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to reassess its decision to close the South Hill liquor store, allowing it to continue to serve the people of Moose Jaw and provide valuable revenue to the people of this province.

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

Mr. Speaker, I so present on behalf of my Moose Jaw constituents.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Wall of Fame Inductees in The Battlefords

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On Saturday, May 3, I had the pleasure of once again attending the induction ceremonies for the Frontier Mall Wall of Fame in North Battleford.

Three outstanding citizens of northwest Saskatchewan were added to the Wall of Fame. These three are: Marjorie Tatchell, who lent her musical talents tirelessly to the North Battleford City Kinsmen Band, St Paul's Anglican Church, and The Battlefords music festival, for her significant contributions to music and the community; Phoebe Cutbush, for her contributions to music and education within the community; and John Henry Fineday, a young man who recently passed away after a battle with leukemia, for his contributions to The Battlefords and the province through his multidisciplinary artwork.

The Wall of Fame was established in February 2000 as a vehicle to engage the community in honouring its citizens. It provides recognition of residents who have made significant contributions to The Battlefords and area in the fields of art, business, community service, education, entertainment, government, philanthropy, and sports.

I ask the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, to join me in congratulating the 2008 inductees for their lifetime of contributions and to the organizers, especially Linda Lewis, the event master of ceremonies, and Tamara Sonmor, marketing director of the Frontier Mall, for making the event itself such a success.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Radiothon Raises Money for Moose Jaw Union Hospital

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. \$326,204 — \$326,204 was raised for improvements toward the intensive care unit at the Moose Jaw Union Hospital during a 36-hour radiothon last Thursday and Friday.

Hundreds of donors called to pledge in funding for the new

medical equipment in the intensive care unit and for the ICU [intensive care unit] family room area of the Moose Jaw Union Hospital. Pledges came from citizens, from businesses, from medical and hospital staff, and from the Kinsmen Telemiracle Foundation, all who gave generously for the cause.

The radiothon was organized by the Moose Jaw hospital foundation and broadcast over CHAB radio. During the radiothon, members of the Five Hills Health Region heard testimony of the dedication of the medical staff and former hospital users who expressed appreciation for the work done in the hospital and the needed upgrades for the ICU.

Thank you to Kelly McElree, the executive director and all the members of the Moose Jaw Health Foundation board for the organization of the radiothon and to CHAB radio, the management, and staff for their dedicated efforts in the 36-hour radiothon — and of course to the citizens of the Five Hills Health Region for the \$326,204 success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Moose Jaw Teachers Role Models in Physical Activity

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to tell you about a group of teachers from Moose Jaw's Peacock Collegiate who are setting a good example for physical activity. A current hot topic for our youth is physical inactivity, so 13 of the school's teachers decided to become role models in physical activity.

The group started out by making a pledge to walk 10,000 steps per day. Then the idea to participate in the Regina Police Service Half-Marathon, a 22-kilometre run, became the challenge. The group had a 12-week training program to prepare for the race, and it was a huge commitment to go from rookie runners to a half-marathon in less than three months. But that makes the feat all that more impressive.

The highlighting of physical activity has made the students very aware of what kind of dedication the teachers have and the importance of setting goals. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join me in congratulating this dedicated group of teachers from Peacock Collegiate for leading and teaching by example and for truly walking — or should I say running — the talk. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Yorkton Couple Author Western Books

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yorkton is known for many things, and arts and culture is no exception. Local western writer, Elmer McInnes, along with his wife and co-author, Laurretta Ritchie-McInnes, regularly spend their holidays researching libraries and other information sources throughout the Western United States and Canada in search of

facts for their next literary project.

Elmer McInnes began researching and writing 15 years ago, Mr. Speaker, and has material for a number of books. But according to his wife Laurretta, things really began to happen and take shape when she became involved. Elmer agrees behind every successful man is a dang good gal.

Elmer's first book, *Gamblers and Gunmen Along the Northern Pacific Railroad*, was self-published last year and was very well received. He has now released his second book, *Bud Ballew: Legendary Oklahoma Lawman*, this time through American publisher Two Dot/Globe Pequot and has already received invitations to do speaking engagements in the US [United States].

Mr. McInnes is now halfway through writing his third book, this time about one-time North West Mounted Police officer Walter Ross, one time stationed in Yorkton.

I would ask all members of the Assembly to help me congratulate Elmer and Laurretta in his latest project and wish him all success in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

[13:45]

Autism Services Spring Gala

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On May 3, I along with members from Saskatoon Centre, Saskatoon Fairview, Saskatoon Nutana, Saskatoon Meewasin, Saskatoon Southeast, and Saskatoon Sutherland had the honour of attending the Autism Services 10th annual spring gala at TCU Place. The gala included a champagne reception, silent auction, a fantastic dinner, and an outstanding musical performance by Canadian vocalist Ibomeka. Thank you.

The gala was a fundraising opportunity for Autism Services, which is a non-profit organization that provides many services to the Saskatoon community such as group homes, home-based services for children, and social and educational support for individuals with autism and their families.

I would like to congratulate the organizing committee as well as executive director Shannon Friesen and the staff, board, and volunteers of Autism Services for organizing this successful event. The money raised will go a long way to help those with autism in Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to highlight the support to Autism Services by the Safeway in Market Mall, who have chosen Autism Services as its designated charity to support, and I had the privilege of sitting with two managers from that store location during the dinner, Mr. Speaker.

I would ask all members of this legislature to join me in congratulating Autism Services for hosting another successful gala and to thank them for their hard work in the Saskatoon

community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Meadow Lake.

Tale of the Missing Maps

Mr. Harrison: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to rise today to tell members of this House the tale of the missing maps. As you are aware, Bill 25 was scheduled to be up in committee last night. In order to better help them understand the Bill, the member for P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote requested copies of the maps relevant to the Bill. Maps were promptly provided by the Minister of the Environment.

However yesterday the panicked member for Regina Walsh Acres contacted the minister's office four times to try and get another copy of these maps. Hours later the minister was again accosted by the member who again demanded a map, saying she had left them in her constituency office. This might be a good time to point out, Mr. Speaker, that the office of the member in question is just minutes from this building. In the hour she spent hassling the minister's office, she could have had someone go retrieve them, have them faxed over, or if so inclined, have them sent over by courier pigeon, but she didn't, Mr. Speaker.

That evening in committee the truth came out. It turned out that the incompetent NDP [New Democratic Party] had lost the maps. We can only assume that, like thousands of other public documents, the maps ended up in a box in the basement of one of those former ministers — maybe the member for Regina Lakeview. Maybe the member for The Battlefords strayed off with them or maybe the member for Saskatoon Massey Place has them locked away in his secret safe. We'll never know, Mr. Speaker. And that, Mr. Speaker, is the tale of the missing maps.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Keepers of the Land

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my continuing effort to highlight the northern keepers of the land, I'd like to highlight Ken Larsen of Buffalo Narrows. Ken started in 1952 when he was seven years old to fish and trap for his dad, Olaf Larsen. By 14 years of age he had his own trapping and fishing business, and he trapped northwest of Cree Lake for 30 consecutive years.

In 1967 he participated in the centennial year dog mushing competition in Prince Albert and actually graced the cover of the Prince Albert worker festival brochure for 15 years because of his impressive dog team.

Ken also raised eight children, living off the land. His message to us, and I quote:

My message [has always been] I've always believed that the people are the government and the governments are the people but lately the [Fort] McMurray Oil Patch and other

exploration companies are destroying trap lines and some lakes are being acid killed. People don't know about it. The Government knows the lakes are being harmed and nothing is being done about it.

The cancer rate in Fort Chipewyan [Alberta] is high and this affects all of us so we need to stop just talking about our children but really begin to protect them. It's really clear that everyone is disrespecting our environment. We need to wake up and we need to stop Institutions from brainwashing our children by telling them that trapping and fishing are not valuable.

If I say something it is because I've seen it — not heard it.

The Athabasca Tar Sands were there when our grandmothers paddled the river and those tar sands shall be there after I've gone.

Mr. Speaker, we need to hear the words of Mr. Larsen and we need to pay attention to his advice. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Biggar.

Seventh-day Adventist Centre Opens in Biggar

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In March I had the pleasure of attending the grand opening of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Community Centre and Chapel in Biggar, and took part along with the mayor of Biggar, Ray Sadler, head elder, Don Sinclair, and Stephen Little, pastor of Saskatoon Central Seventh-Day Adventist Church in cutting the ribbon.

Members of the church included Hazel Weber, Don and Marlene Sinclair, Marge and Mike Fortney, Doug and Fran Gorbenko, and Jason, Erica, Raine, and Wynter Weber, put on activities and chapel for anyone that wishes to drop by and join them.

At this time the centre is open three days a week and includes activities such as gospel and singalong, kids' story hour, suppers, and bible study. There are plans to hold a number of health programs such as the Break Free program aimed at helping people quit smoking, and programs on depression.

The centre and church is a positive addition to the downtown core of the community of Biggar and I'd like to thank the members for inviting me to the opening and wish them luck in their endeavours.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTION PERIOD

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Housing Crisis

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a growing sense across this province that people are being left out of the

economic boom they see going on all around them.

Two months ago after cutting the budget for housing, the Social Services minister then admitted that there is in fact an affordable housing crisis. Her response to the crisis, she struck a committee.

Mr. Speaker, the crisis is happening now and it appears to only be getting worse. The government needs to act now. Renters can't wait months for a report and then more months before any action comes of it. To the minister: what assurance can she give renters for action now before the crisis gets worse?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Social Services.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are committed to making sure that Saskatchewan is ready for growth and that we avoid problems that other provinces are experiencing where rapid growth has made it very difficult for individuals and families.

However becoming minister, Mr. Speaker, the previous government, the NDP, had put a number of programs in place just prior to the election — on the eve of an election — in hopes of gaining votes. We didn't know if those programs would work, Mr. Speaker, so it is only responsible to monitor the programs that the NDP had put into place. Obviously that member recognizes that their own initiatives are failing, and that's why I've asked the task force to take a look at the issue once again and come forward with more recommendations.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, that member put the task force in place after cutting the housing budget by \$5 million, their first at bat, Mr. Speaker. In north central we now have a saying that everything sells. Houses are selling at record rates, but renters are footing the bill through higher rents. Since May 1, May 1, 15 individuals or families have come to my office looking for help in coping with upcoming rent increases.

A single mom, eight months pregnant, was told this week that she would be evicted at the end of this month because her rental house had been sold. She was able to get another month because of a technicality, but she still can't find a home even though she's about to have a baby.

How does the minister justify sitting there on a \$1.5 billion mountain of money while cutting money for housing? And what does she expect renters in crisis to do right now, bunk up with the task force until the report comes out?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for

Social Services.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, our government already announced the largest increase in the Saskatchewan employment supplement. Seventy per cent of the clients that are using that supplement, that are relying on them, are single parents. Mr. Speaker, we recognize that single parents need help, and we have stepped up to the plate, and we have addressed that problem.

Mr. Speaker, can that member please tell me why Bob Pringle, which was a former NDP Social Services minister, had this to say on March 18, 2008, and I quote:

Well if I look back to three years ago when we had an independent study done at the Saskatoon food bank, I was saying clearly to government [and that would have been the NDP, Mr. Speaker] that the clients at the food bank were spending 70% of their income on shelter. There's nothing left and the issue wasn't really addressed. So I think that we're . . . there was some work done in a flurry before the last election but I think the problem with housing is it's a longer-term proposition and you have to keep up as you're going. So with this rapid boom we had a crisis before then and this just . . .

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, her first response in their first budget was cutting the housing budget by \$5 million. I think that speaks more about their priorities. And when they're caught, then they move to the task force.

But during the election campaign, the Sask Party refused to consider any form of rental rebate. They preferred to stick their heads in the sand and hope that their half-hearted property tax plan would somehow trickle down to renters. Their Premier called it, and I quote, "a market obligation." And he argued that quote, "If we can make permanent property tax relief in Saskatchewan, it's going to lower the cost of housing, whether it's rental or principal residences . . ."

And now instead of a permanent solution, the Sask Party budget gave homeowners just enough for a half-eaten pizza, and the crisis for renters just got worse. That's not even trickle-down economics, Mr. Speaker; it's open the faucet and nothing comes out.

To the minister: her task force and her government didn't do anything to help struggling people pay last month's rent. What help will they provide when this month's rent comes due, or will it be another round of all support short of anything resembling real help? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Social Services.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, to explain this cut that the member keeps referring to — and I have explained it in the past — it was based on the Sask Housing Corporation's estimate of the cost of operating all of the housing programs.

The provincial contribution towards the housing programs is 10 million, 10.4 million, which is 5.1 million less, but it is due to the timing of the capital projects. It does not change any of the projects that are going forward. It does not change any of the money available to the present allocation to any of the programs that we have in place.

Mr. Speaker, we have dedicated through an expression of interest, there will be \$47 million given to more housing and housing projects. That call for expression went out. The responses came in in December, Mr. Speaker. In addition, 26.4 million for Aboriginal and Métis housing.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Family Support Services in Humboldt

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess there really is no justice for the people of Humboldt. Not only will people living in and around Humboldt go without court services, they may soon have to travel to Saskatoon for family support services as well.

Partners for Rural Family Support is a family support CBO [community-based organization] that works in the community of Humboldt and the surrounding area. The funding they received from Health Canada has run out, and they are on the brink of being forced to close their doors.

To the minister: has she contacted her cousins in Ottawa, and will they be reversing their decision?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Social Services.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I am meeting with the gal who is looking after Partners on Friday, and we'll have that discussion then.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Higgins: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I hope, when she meets with the gal, that there is something productive that comes out

of it. Mr. Speaker, Partners works with families to provide health and safe environments, free from violence. They work with victims of family violence, but they also work with youth to encourage non-violent approaches to difficult situations. They are very concerned about what the loss of service will mean for people in their community if they don't receive core funding.

Amy Jurgens, the program co-ordinator, said, "I truly believe the people of rural Saskatchewan deserve the same opportunities for equal treatment when it comes to the services this province provides." Mr. Speaker, this opposition believes that also. With over a billion and a half dollars in the bank, will the minister step up and help the people of Humboldt before it's too late?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Social Services.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said during the prior responses, I'm meeting with the woman who operates Partners — and I'm sorry her name is just eluding me right at this time — on Friday.

However this government is committed to helping families and females for sexual assault and domestic violence. We put an additional \$1 million in this budget for this year, which is an unprecedented increase for facilities and transition houses for women who are exposed to domestic violence and abuse.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Higgins: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister should know that transition houses are mostly in larger communities in this province, and Partners is an organization that delivers services in rural Saskatchewan, and this is a difficult area especially when we come to issues of violence. And, Mr. Speaker, what we have to look at, since this government's been elected, Humboldt has lost or is at risk of losing the Court of Queen's Bench, family counselling services, family violence intervention services, youth education services including anti-bullying education, anger management sessions, parenting classes, and suicide intervention workshops.

Mr. Speaker, the list goes on. Mr. Speaker, the question is simple. For the minister, with over a billion and a half dollars sitting in reserves and more money coming in daily, will she step up to the plate and support the community of Humboldt before it's too late?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Social Services.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — You know it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, that all of a sudden that member is standing up and defending Partners when my ministry is maintaining the funding that they had in place for Partners. And I'm meeting with them on Friday to see what more they need or what they want to talk about. So we maintained the NDP funding.

But what is Humboldt receiving over and above what the NDP would do? They are getting a brand new Highway 368. That's what they're getting under this government. They're going to get their hospital built, which has gone to tender, and my understanding is the bids are coming in. That's what Humboldt's going to get under this government. They're getting a new high school. That's what they're getting under this government. And the NDP just gave promises. They were empty promises. That is millions of dollars being invested in the city of Humboldt and surrounding area.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Higgins: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister can say infrastructure till the new paint lines on the new highway dries. But it does not help issues of family violence and issues within the communities that are not there unless Partners survives.

Mr. Speaker, they went and met with Station 20. We didn't see anything come out of that except the same old no. Mr. Speaker, this has been over and over. She can meet. That's good. But, Mr. Speaker, she needs to make a commitment to Humboldt and the communities surrounding Humboldt to provide these services.

Mr. Speaker, she's talked, the minister has talked about working more closely with CBOs. Will she . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Please allow the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow to place her question.

Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, the minister has said that she wants to work more closely with CBOs. What we're asking is, would she please commit to the Humboldt region and to Partners today? Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Social Services.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — I will repeat since the member obviously can't hear me. I am meeting with this particular CBO on Friday. I have already committed as much as the NDP ever committed to that particular organization.

But in addition, to Humboldt and area we're committing to a new highway. We're committing to building a hospital. We're committing to a new high school. Mr. Speaker, the city needs

more lots because it's growing so rapidly. We're committing to help them with the money for the infrastructure through a loan. Mr. Speaker, we are committing millions of dollars to Humboldt and surrounding area.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Taxation Policy

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, number one among all of the ideas being quoted by the Sask Party prior to the last election was the promise to reduce provincial income tax for low-income residents.

My question to the Finance minister is, when?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the election process we made some fundamental commitments to the people of Saskatchewan. And it is with a great deal of pride that we announced 40 of those promises being kept in the budget, not the least of which were meaningful tax relief for property tax owners struggling under the burden of property tax for educational purposes. That certainly is a commitment that we made and a commitment that we're realizing, and we're going to continue to do that.

We also said on an ongoing basis that we're going to monitor other tax positions that need to be looked at, and certainly things like basic personal exemptions and the rates of income tax are issues that we're closely monitoring, and it is important. And as we unroll our promises that we made, we will make sure that these other additional needs are also considered.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour said, and I quote from a May 2 article in the *Leader-Post*: "The government is looking into the idea of a higher personal tax exemption, and will likely have a clearer stance on the issue by the end of the year . . ." But the Finance minister told the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] he's focused on property tax and won't be turning his attention to income tax until after the next budget, so nothing until 2010.

Would the minister be so kind as to end the public's understandable confusion as to where his government stands on this matter?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the public understand in this province that there was a huge deficit created by that government in terms of dealing with these fundamental issues. For how many years, Mr. Speaker, did that government rebuff the idea that there should be lower taxes for families? How long does it take for us to move ourselves out of the high burden of educational property tax?

Certainly we have the opportunity because our economy is growing and people across this province are expressing their confidence in this new government's direction by making this economy prosper, and we are going to do everything we can to make sure we remove the barriers and the impediments to that growth. Part of that is going to be that we make sure that we maintain a competitive position on our tax position and not have the highest tax jurisdiction in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Mr. Speaker, low-income wage earners are especially sensitive to very high inflationary pressures in areas such as food, shelter, transportation. These inflationary pressures are very real. They are here today. People need help now. The Sask Party made the promise. They have the money — \$1.5 billion in the bank. The question is, what is the minister waiting for?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, it always strikes me as being a little bit strange when that member comes up and asks questions about keeping their word in a campaign on an election platform. I recall with some interest that in the very first budget when that member was the minister of Finance after not wanting to talk about a provincial sales tax increase during the campaign, all of a sudden, oops, we've got to have a 1 per cent increase in the provincial sales tax.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize, we recognize, we recognize the need for making strategic investments in our economy. We recognize the need to make sure that we remove the impediments to growth, and we recognize that our citizens have to share in this prosperity, and that's what this government is going to ensure.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Well, Mr. Speaker, historians will look at the record of the previous NDP government and they will look at the record of the previous Devine government, and the

people that continue to work . . .

The Speaker: — Member from Regina Douglas Park.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — And the advisors and the people that work in their administration that come from that Devine administration, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what is a fact is the Sask Party was in favour of indexing the minimum wage before the election; now they're not so sure. We know that lowering the provincial income tax for low-income earners was their number one idea, but now they're not so sure as to when they'll get around to it. Were these comments simply election ploys by the Sask Party, or can the Finance Minister assure low-income workers that they too can share in the wealth in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the citizens of Saskatchewan realize very clearly that in order to have the wealth shared in, it has to be created. In order to make sure that the economy grows and continues to grow, there needs to be the removal of the impediments to that growth that have long been in place by that NDP government.

It's always interesting for me to listen to the members opposite talk about the Devine administration when they already are tiring of hearing about the failure of their administration over 16 years.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Nuclear Reactor Site and Study

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, the government is in discussions with Bruce Power on construction of a nuclear power plant in our province. Bruce Power has been in talks with the Government of Alberta about the possibility of building a reactor near Peace River. We know Bruce Power has had concerns about the nuclear reactor site and now feels Saskatchewan may be a better option. According to the Minister of Energy and Resources, Bruce Power, and I quote “. . . indicated to us, as well, that the site selection might be more appropriate in our province, so we are interested in that and are looking at it.”

To the Minister of Energy and Resources: what sites are being looked at? Is Lake Diefenbaker one of those sites?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Enterprise and Innovation.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for that question. And I'll answer it by saying that any talks that we have had with Bruce Power to this point are very preliminary and mostly of an introductory nature. Bruce Power is interested. Make no mistake, Bruce Power is interested in building reactors in Alberta or Saskatchewan, and they're weighing the possibilities. And they do, they like the attitude of our government towards growth.

But as far as narrowing choices down to specific locations, the only one I've heard of so far is Meadow Lake . . . or not Meadow Lake, west of Edmonton, Alberta — Peace River.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the government wants to go to Alberta and brag about competing for a nuclear reactor but doesn't want to tell Saskatchewan people what their plans mean for us.

CBC has obtained a copy of a SaskPower report on nuclear energy in Saskatchewan. The report indicates that Lake Diefenbaker is the preferred site for a nuclear power plant. The CBC also indicates the government had no plans for releasing this report.

To the minister: why hide this information and . . .

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, the CBC indicates that the government had no plans for releasing this report. To the minister: why hide this information and is Lake Diefenbaker the preferred site?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that the NDP siting study has made its way into the public domain. I've had a conversation with the president of SaskPower, and she assures me that it wasn't released by anybody from the corporation. I leave it to others to speculate where indeed that report came from.

The member opposite is correct that that study was not going to be released by this government because it is under a confidentiality agreement that was signed by her and her government, Mr. Speaker — an embarrassing situation for a member to be asking that question in this circumstance.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, some months ago . . .

The Speaker: — I call the members to order. The member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Some months ago the Premier of Saskatchewan, the new Premier of Saskatchewan, indicated that he would release that report. But we learned today that 40 per cent of Saskatchewan people get their water supply from Lake Diefenbaker. That includes the city of Regina, city of Saskatoon, city of Moose Jaw, as well as many, many other small urban communities.

The SaskPower report apparently indicates that there are concerns about risks to drinking water if a reactor were to be built at Lake Diefenbaker. To the minister: is the reason that he is not releasing this report because he did not want people to know about the environmental risks associated with Lake Diefenbaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Mr. Speaker, I can confirm for the member opposite — in case she's forgotten — that her government undertook this study. It's a cost of about \$60,000. It was performed by Stantec.

Its relevance today is limited. It's of some historical significance, but that's about it, Mr. Speaker, because, quite frankly, SaskPower will not be building a nuclear reactor in Saskatchewan. The build, own, and operate model is obviously something that the previous government was considering, but it's not something that this government is considering at the present time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Atkinson: — . . . the Minister of Energy and Resources is in Calgary. He talks to the oil and gas patch, and he indicates that Bruce Power is looking at Saskatchewan to build a nuclear power plant at the cost of \$10 billion. Mr. Speaker, it's in our province. It's in our province — \$10 billion for an nuclear power plant.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite need to tell us, where is the preferred site? Is it Lake Diefenbaker, where 40 per cent of the drinking water in our province comes from, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. I recognize the Minister of Crown Corporations.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the benefit of the member opposite and all members of this

Assembly, this was the NDP siting study. This was done by SaskPower on the direction of that NDP government. Under that agreement, it was partially funded by AECL [Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd.], and members opposite signed a confidentiality agreement. That's why that report was not released.

Also to reiterate my answer to the last question, SaskPower is not in the process of looking at a nuclear reactor whatsoever. The build, own, and operate model is something that members opposite considered. We will be working with the private sector to see what is appropriate for the government at this time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

[14:15]

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, Bruce Power is looking to our province to build a nuclear power plant. That nuclear power plant . . . Bruce Power has been invited by the Government of Saskatchewan. That nuclear power plant will have to hitch itself to a distribution system, Mr. Speaker. SaskPower is the distribution system in our province.

We ask a very simple question. Where is Bruce Power planning on locating its nuclear reactor, and is it Lake Diefenbaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Mr. Speaker, I just have to reiterate for the members opposite this is an NDP siting study. This was done when they were in government. I'm not sure which members opposite have seen the study and which ones didn't . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Mr. Speaker, the report was done for the previous NDP government. It was funded partially by SaskPower, partially by AECL. It was subject to a confidentiality agreement. I can't speculate on how this document became part of the public domain.

But what I can assure members opposite, that SaskPower will not be building a reactor. SaskPower will be in discussions with companies like Bruce Power, like Cameco, like AREVA, like others, and we will invite them to bring their proposals forward because we will look at it in an environmentally responsible manner, never compromising the safety for Saskatchewan people.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — Order. Order.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the chairman of the Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee.

Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

Mr. Kirsch: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report Bill No. 37, The Parks Amendment Act, 2008 without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be considered in the Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill and that the Bill be now read the third time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 37, The Parks Amendment Act, 2008 and that the Bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 37 — The Parks Amendment Act, 2008

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport that Bill No. 37, The Parks Amendment Act, 2008 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

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

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Committee on the Economy.

Standing Committee on the Economy

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 25, The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill and that the Bill be now read the third time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of the Environment has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 25, The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, 2008 and that the Bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

THIRD READINGS**Bill No. 25 — The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, 2008**

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of the Environment that Bill No. 25, The Wildlife Habitat Protection Amendment Act, 2008 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

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

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER**Unparliamentary Language**

The Speaker: — I have a statement to make to the Assembly. Before orders of the day I wish to remind members of your role in ensuring that the debates of this Assembly are conducted in a respectfully and dignified manner.

Yesterday during question period the member from Regina Rosemont, Mr. Wotherspoon, used a phrase that upon review implied improper motives on the part of another member of this

Assembly.

At the time I wasn't sure whether I heard the member correctly and chose to review the verbatim record before interpreting the proceedings. In reviewing the record I find that the manner in which the member for Regina Rosemont chose to present his views could be interpreted as implying that the Minister of Education was attempting to deceive the public on the adequacy of funding for education.

Members will be aware that it is improper to impute unworthy motives to another member for their actions. This parliamentary tradition is set out in paragraph 484(3) of Beauchesne's, 6th Edition and confirmed in rule 50(f) of the Assembly's rule book.

I appreciate that it is not always possible or desirous to prepare in advance every remark or intervention that is made in the Assembly. Nor is it reasonable to expect that members will review every remark or intervention prior to delivery to ensure that they abide by all rules of debate.

Indeed, history records that often the most effective and compelling debates occur when members passionately and forcefully present their positions. Nevertheless, I do wish to caution members on their choice of language, particularly when participating in a lively proceeding such as question period.

Challenging the position of another member is acceptable; questioning their character is not. A personal charge or accusation against any member may only be done by the way of a substantive motion.

Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Taylor: — By leave, Mr. Speaker, to move a motion requesting leave of absence.

The Speaker: — The member from The Battlefords has requested leave to move a motion regarding absence of a member. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

MOTIONS**Leave of Absence**

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. By leave of the Assembly I would move:

That leave of absence be granted for the member for Regina Northeast for Friday, May 9, 2008 to Friday, May 16, 2008 to attend the 39th British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference in Gibraltar on behalf of this Assembly.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from The Battlefords:

That by leave of the Assembly leave be granted to the

member for Regina Northeast for Friday, May 9, 2008 to Friday, May 16, 2008 to attend the 39th British Islands and Mediterranean Regional Conference in Gibraltar on behalf of this Assembly.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Withdrawal of Statement

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I'm here to withdraw the statement that was perceived to attack the minister's character. The intention wasn't there.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 40 — The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 40, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act. I am proud to outline today for all members the background and impetus for our government introducing this important Bill which will ensure that on the fourth Saturday in November each year the Ukrainian famine-genocide will be remembered and recognized.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the Ukrainian community in Canada and abroad for calling upon all of us to remember that respect for human dignity and rights requires our eternal vigilance. This is a painful and tragic truth that should never be forgotten.

The lesson of the Ukrainian Holodomor, the infamous 1932-33 event where millions of Ukrainian people died as a result of starvation forced upon them by the Soviet regime, informs the Ukrainian community's call for the remembrance of past and present genocides. The Holodomor compels us to remember how a foreign government created a man-made famine and forced men, women, and children into starvation and death.

Most historians agree that the famine of 1932-33 was caused by the inhumane government policies of Joseph Stalin's regime.

The creation of collective farms was seen as a means of achieving state ownership of all land under Soviet rule. The Ukrainians defied this plan. They refused to give up their land, language, and national identity to comply with Stalin's policy of collectivization.

In an act of unimaginable vengeance, Stalin set impossible grain quotas on the Ukrainians as a means of forcing them to comply with Soviet policies. Ironically Ukrainians harvested record crops in 1932-33, but were not allowed to keep any of their grain. If they were caught hiding grain to feed their families, they were shot by Soviet authorities. All of the grain which was harvested was shipped to other parts of the Soviet Union or sold to Western countries.

Stalin's regime committed a horrendous act of genocide against up to 10 million Ukrainians. An ancient nation of agriculturalists was subjected to starvation, one of the most ruthless forms of torture and death.

An equally horrific aspect of the Holodomor was that the world remained silent as it occurred. This is largely as a result of an attempt by the perpetrators of this genocide to erase it from the pages of history. On Stalin's orders, those who conducted the 1937 census which revealed a sharp decrease in the Ukrainian population as a result of the Holodomor were shot, while the census results were suppressed.

Many survivors of this tragic time in history and their descendants live in Saskatchewan and have contributed greatly to our province's cultural, economic, political, and educational life. We in Saskatchewan understand the amazing gift that the world was deprived of because of this famine and genocide for we have been such significant benefactors of the gift of Ukrainian values, traditions, and contributions to our province.

In this, the 75th anniversary of the famine-genocide in Ukraine, Saskatchewan will be joining the Senate of Canada, the province of Manitoba, the province of Ontario, the United States Senate, the United States House of Representatives, the United Nations, and 40 other jurisdictions in condemning the Holodomor and recognizing it as genocide.

Ukraine has recognized the fourth Saturday in November each year as the annual day to commemorate the innocent victims of the Holodomor. Therefore it is appropriate to extend this same annual commemoration in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the call to remember the Holodomor is an international event. Here in Canada it is being led by groups like the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, which is currently sponsoring the international remembrance flame as part of an effort by Ukraine's foreign ministry to mark the 75th anniversary of the Holodomor famine and genocide.

[14:30]

This event promotes the enduring lesson of the Holodomor and raises awareness of the disturbing fact that engineered famines are still being used as a ruthless weapon of torture and death by governments against ethnic and national groups around the world.

Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 40 is an important piece of legislation that represents more than the simple act of remembrance. This Act reminds us that we must not forget that when we choose not to remember, this is a form of apathy. And as history has taught us, apathy has a price. By remembering the Holodomor we are helping to remember a historical truth and to ensure that similar tragedies are not repeated in our lifetimes.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move therefore that Bill No. 40, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act be now read a second time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Deputy Premier has moved second reading of Bill No. 40, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I too would like to join my colleague in thanking not only the Ukrainian representatives in Saskatchewan, but all those across Canada. And we as well on this side will be supporting Bill 40, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act. We join Manitoba and Ontario where the Bill is presently in their Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, last week the Holodomor Remembrance Flame, a flame that'll be travelling around the world this year in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the famine genocide that occurred in the Ukraine in 1932 and '33, arrived in Regina. The flame, while in Saskatchewan, visited the cities of Yorkton, Saskatoon, and North Battleford as well as Regina.

Mr. Speaker, a bit of background on this very important issue for Ukrainians. On Tuesday, April 15, 2008, President Viktor Yushchenko appealed to all world human right defenders to help recognize the Holodomor of 1932 and 1933 in Ukraine as an act of genocide against Ukrainian people. He voiced his appeal at the international conference, Modern Challenges to Human Rights and Freedoms, in Kiev. He said:

"I call on you, human right defenders of all the world, to help recognize the Holodomor of 1932-33 as an act of genocide against Ukrainian people" . . .

He also spoke for stepping up protection of human rights in Ukraine.

"A right gives a man power and protection at a time. This is a straight edge [he said] dividing progress and barbarism" . . .

. . . [President] Yushchenko declared 2008 the Year of Remembrance of the Holodomor Victims.

In 2006, the Ukrainian parliament [had] declared the Holodomor as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian nation.

The International Holodomor Remembrance Flame arrived on Canadian soil on Friday, April 18. The flame was presented during a ceremony at Toronto city hall, which also included the

opening of the exhibit, *Holodomor: Genocide by Famine* produced by the League of Ukrainian Canadians. The flame was accepted by Ukraine's ambassador in Canada, His Excellency Dr. Ihor Ostash. The flame was then accepted by Holodomor survivor Stefan Horlatsch, who was in our Assembly just last week, who symbolically lit the candle presented by the community's youth before departing on his journey escorting the remembrance flame to 15 Canadian cities.

Canadian events organized by the Canadian Ukrainian Congress, titled *Keep the Flame Alive*, will remember the victims of the Holodomor while ensuring that their story was transferred from generation to generation. Events will also launch a campaign urging the Canadian government to recognize the Holodomor as an act of genocide and support Ukraine's motion for such recognition by the United Nations. The International Holodomor Remembrance Flame, which will visit 33 countries, is the initiative of the international coordinating committee in co-operation with the Secretariat of the President of Ukraine and Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Mr. Horlatsch, who was in our Assembly, is a survivor of the Ukraine famine-genocide. He is the initiator of a symbolic walk across major Canadian cities to raise public awareness of this horrific period of the 20th century. On his visit to Canada, Mr. Horlatsch will carry the symbolic remembrance flame to mark the 75th anniversary of Ukraine's famine-genocide. In co-operation with the Ukrainian World Congress and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, this torch, as I have mentioned, will travel to 32 countries, ending its journey in Ukraine.

Mr. Horlatsch himself is an author of six books and was recently inducted as an honorary member of the Ukrainian Writers' Union. Mr. Horlatsch himself lost 11 members of his family in the genocide. As past president of the Friends of Ukraine, Mr. Horlatsch has participated in the opening of numerous Canadian libraries in 14 cities across Ukraine. The Ukrainian Canadian president, Paul Grod, had this to say: "In this, the 75th year since one of the greatest genocides of human history, Ukraine remembers and the world acknowledges."

That is the slogan of this year's commemoration of the Ukrainian Holodomor, where the lives of millions of innocent men, women, and children were suddenly eradicated by starvation in the very heart of Europe's breadbasket. The objective of the Holodomor was to destroy Ukrainian national consciousness and to quash the aspirations of Ukrainian people for independence, thereby eliminating a serious threat to the integrity of the Soviet empire.

The suffering of the Ukrainian people during the Holodomor is reflected in a great many publications and documents, as well as innumerable oral histories of survivors. With the opening of the archives in both the Ukraine and Russia, the overwhelming body of evidence continues to grow. The Holodomor was undeniably an act of genocide.

This year, Canadians join the international community in commemorating this tragedy to recognize the Holodomor as a genocide against Ukrainian people, and to ensure this heinous crime of using food as a weapon against the people is no longer used by despots in other parts of the world.

Mr. Speaker, this was not an easy, an easy road. There were many people for many years that had presented documentation and it was met with everything. But I found a poem which I thought kind of summarized that or best dealt with that. So if I may, I would like to read that now. This is a poem by Chrystya Hnatiw, and it was written in 1988 from "Land of Silent Sundays."

When in the breadbasket
of Europe
Ukrainian peasants
starved to death
the world was silent
as it was
when your people
perished
in the horrors of Dachau
as Nazi soldiers
drank "to life"
in brassy cabarets

When the King of Aryans
unfurled his Master Plan
we both
were targeted for extinction
and so our parents fled
the haunting sirens
the hideous war
leaving their loved ones
behind
yours died in Treblinka
mine lived in hell
in the Siberian snows
Yet now
our communities
wage a paper war
the battle lines are drawn
armed with statistics
briefs
and testimonies
we count
the dead
was it the famine
the holocaust
that had more dead:
whose trauma was greater?

Why all this now
when the Sabbath candles glow
and bread is plenty?

Mr. Speaker, this side will be supporting Bill 40, an Act to recognize the Ukrainian famine. And I look forward to the proclamation of this Act. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the question put by the Deputy Premier that the Bill No. 40, The

Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act be now read a second time.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. When shall this Bill be considered in committee?

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

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be considered in committee?

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, to the Committee of the Whole, and by leave now.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Premier has moved that the Bill be moved to Committee of the Whole and that leave be granted to debate the Bill at this time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Committee of the Whole. I do now leave the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY

Bill No. 40 — The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act

The Deputy Chair: — The business before the Assembly is Bill No. 40. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair: — Carried.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to.]

[Preamble agreed to.]

The Deputy Chair: — Therefore Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: An Act to recognize The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor).

Would the minister please move the Bill without amendment.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Chair, I move that the committee report the Bill without amendment.

The Deputy Chair: — Is it agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair: — Carried.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of committees.

Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the committee to report item no. 1, Bill No. 40 without amendment and ask for leave to sit again.

The Speaker: — When shall this Bill be read the third time? I recognize the Deputy Premier.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 40 — The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave to move that this Bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Premier has asked for leave. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Deputy Premier that Bill No. 40, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Third reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the committee sit again?

Hon. Mr. Gantfoer: — At the next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:45]

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 24

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Norris that **Bill No. 24 — The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2)** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, it's a, I would like to say a pleasure, but not a pleasure definitely to enter the debate here on Bill 24. Bill 24, as has been, as I heard the other day the member from Wakamow call it the oops Bill, and unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that this is not a laughing matter.

The question that Bill 24 raises for us is the amount of thinking and the entire process around the LRB [Labour Relations Board]: the firings, the hirings, and the cost, Mr. Speaker, the eventual cost to the taxpayer of this province.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill 24 and this whole issue around the labour board has got the labour lawyers' association of Canada, got them to write a letter to the Premier expressing their dismay and in fact arguing as to what it was that is happening here to a board, a quasi-judicial board, which body is trusted to act upon and make decisions on a wide range of labour issues in the province, a quasi-judicial board that has to have the respect, that has to have the trust of all its stakeholders. Mr. Speaker, this is again something that goes directly to the ministry and directly to the Minister of Labour and the handling of this file.

Mr. Speaker, the Labour Relations Board is the foundation, is the foundation on which this government is building its labour policy. And, Mr. Speaker, this foundation, if we were to look at this foundation, has at this time I would say, Mr. Speaker, there are cracks in the foundation. The structure has not been built, and the foundation has in fact been condemned, condemned, Mr. Speaker, because, Mr. Speaker, because the Minister of Labour has come out on many times. He has misspoken, Mr. Speaker, statements, too many retractions, and, Mr. Speaker, too many I would say video appearances.

Mr. Speaker, what we need, what we should have instead is a thorough piece of work, a competent work, and, Mr. Speaker, you get that by consulting people. You can get that by consulting stakeholders. You get that by consulting the people of Saskatchewan. That is the way legislation, that is the way good public policy is made. But unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, when you don't do that, you get Bill 24. You get the oops Bill, Mr. Speaker. That's what you get.

And I guess perhaps it shouldn't surprise us with all that we've seen occurring in the legislature to see a Bill of this sort being presented.

Mr. Speaker, you also cannot get good legislation by not meeting with all your stakeholders. You can't get legislation from hiding from your stakeholders. Mr. Speaker, you can't get good legislation by doing it behind closed doors.

And, Mr. Speaker, much like, I believe it's Bill 31, the accountability, this minister and this government are failing on the transparency, and they're failing in accountability. Transparency, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what they were doing around Bills 5 and 6, transparency in what they were doing with the Labour Relations Board has caused, has caused people such as the Canadian labour lawyers association to become very concerned about the practices, about the hirings, the firings. And in fact before this new Labour Relations Board is starting,

they are already faced with issues of bias being levelled against them.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the way to do things. Mr. Speaker, this is not a way to build a labour policy for this province, and as I mentioned before, a policy built on a foundation that in fact has already, I would say, been condemned. And so, Mr. Speaker, the question will be whether that side starts over again and does things right by holding public consultation, Mr. Speaker.

The last time The Trade Union Act had amendments, this side of the House took time to form a committee, took time to consult with the people of Saskatchewan, took time to consult with all the stakeholders and then moved forward — moved forward, Mr. Speaker, after consultations and hearing all the arguments that had to be made, unlike this legislation, unlike this government who did consultations behind closed doors and had a great, large number of the stakeholders coming out and saying, we want public consultations. It is interesting that people who met with the minister came out and said, we want public consultations.

Mr. Speaker, and again I guess it goes to the ideas that we had talked in this House over in this session, their ideas of consultation, of democracy, of accountability and, Mr. Speaker, I would say where we are today is that this government has failed on those issues: failed on accountability, failed on transparency. They have failed on consultation, and I think they find themselves listening to a debate on a Bill 24, An Act to amend The Trade Union Act (No. 2), second try at doing this.

Mr. Speaker, this might be a change, where section 2 is amended by adding — no more than before — two vice-chairpersons. But again if there's a question here about who was doing the amendments, who was looking at this, that we missed this. We not only missed, the government not only missed consulting the stakeholders and the people of Saskatchewan, but they're also starting to miss in terms of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, going to relationships within the industrial relations is a very important matter. Over years people establish relationships — stakeholders with the Labour Relations Board, unions with their employers. They have established secure relationships, mature relationships, bargaining relationships, and those have all been turned upside down. We have not heard good reasons, good rationale in our committee hearings or here in the House that suggest that we should have done, that this government had any reason to put forward the Bills that they did.

Mr. Speaker, this remains for the future to determine how the partners will relate to this. I see every day in the papers, both sides already taking aim at each other in terms of employers and unions. And I think that comes about by a government, a government that should play the role, that should understand that the role in industrial relations — and I don't think they've got this one — is to give an environment in which the parties can negotiate. It is not to insert themselves in politically, Mr. Speaker, into that environment because when you do that, Mr. Speaker, you invariably take sides. You invariably tip the apple cart, and this is what has happened.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I would say that the approach taken here is in fact a very heavy-handed approach and that the minister and the Ministry of Labour have most certainly, most certainly, their actions do not bode well for labour relations in this province.

And again, we have constructively tried to point out the shortcomings but, Mr. Speaker, a Bill like 24, the errors continue. The lack of planning is abysmal. I would say abysmal. And the research, the research, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the research that we've seen, the questions we've asked in committees, the research is not only incomplete but suspect. And I don't say that lightly. Just the questions are not being answered, direct questions, good questions which the minister acknowledges, but in fact the test of research has not been met.

And, Mr. Speaker, the unfortunate part, one of the most unfortunate things that I have had to witness, is the complete oblivious, how oblivious the Minister of Labour is to the destructive approach that he is taking — absolutely, absolutely no appreciation for the nuances of labour relations and specifically collective bargaining. And this bull in the china shop, I mean this is definitely a perfect saying for what is going on here. This has definitely set a new low bar for labour relations in this province.

Mr. Speaker, acrimony, and I guess as we read in the paper we maybe will be looking forward to a summer . . . we will see what the summer brings. But with those few comments, Mr. Speaker, enough has been said about this Bill. Now at this time move the Bill to committee.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour, that Bill No. 24, The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2) be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred?

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — The Standing Committee on Human Services, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to allow the work of the standing policy field committees, I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — In order to facilitate the work of policy committees, the Government House Leader has moved this Assembly do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried. This Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:55.]

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Premier

Hon. Bob BJORNERUD
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Crop
Insurance Corporation

Hon. Bill Boyd
Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Ken CHEVELDAYOFF
Minister of Crown Corporations

Hon. Dan D'Autremont
Minister of Government Services
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Liquor and
Gaming Authority
Minister Responsible for the Information
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Hon. June Draude
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Minister Responsible for Northern Affairs

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