



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

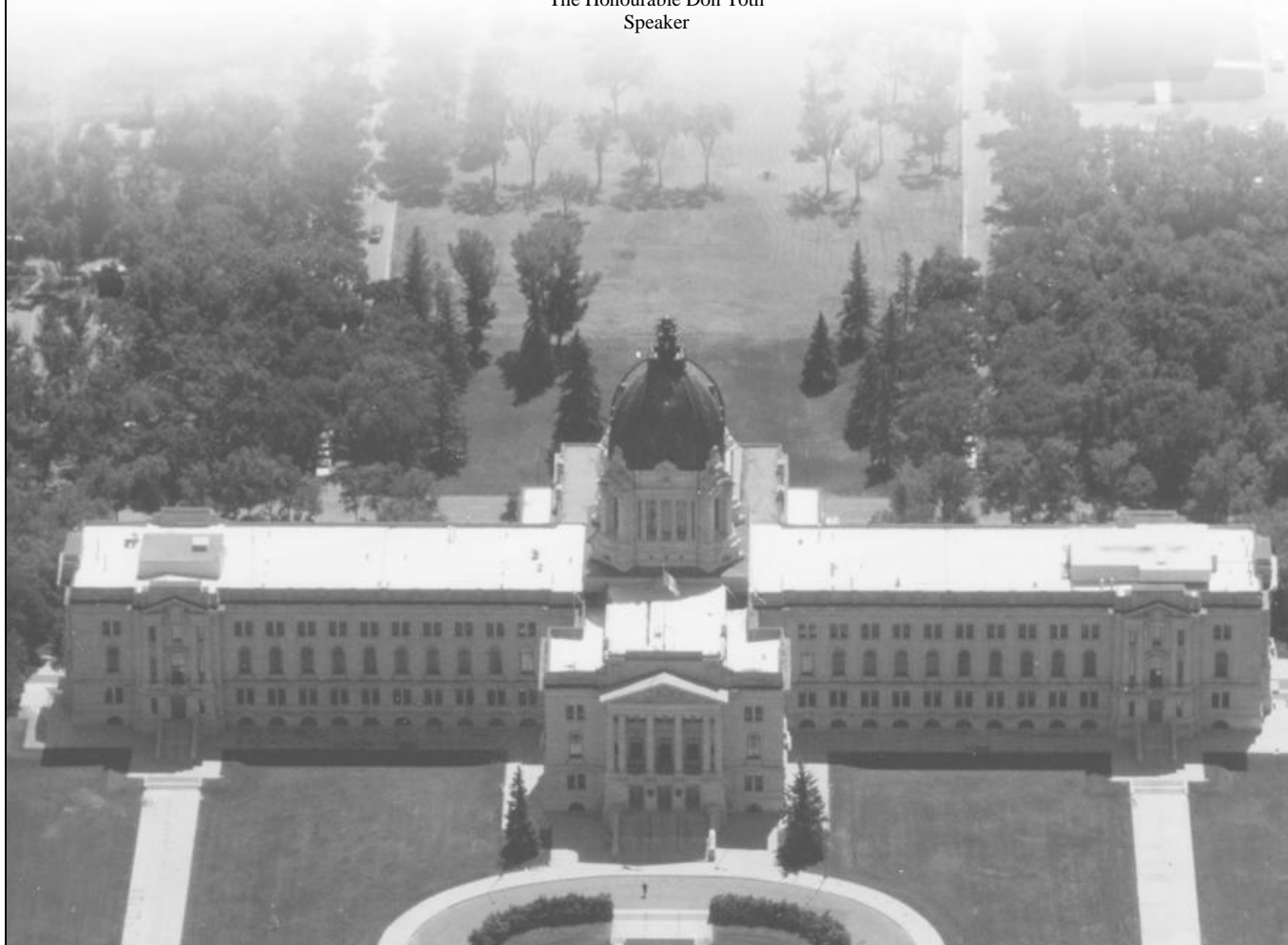
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
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
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Duncan, Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
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Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
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Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
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Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
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Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
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McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
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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
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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
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
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

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

Clerk: — Members, I wish to advise you that Mr. Speaker will not be present today to open today's sitting.

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through you and to you to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce some special guests from the MS [Multiple Sclerosis] Society that are seated in your gallery.

And I'll name them, if they just want to give a wave as I name them. First of all is Brian Duck who is a volunteer, government relations Chair for the MS Society, Saskatchewan's division; Erin Kuan who is the director of major gifts, national marketing and adviser, Saskatchewan division's office out of Saskatoon. Ken Mayhew is the chief development officer for the MS Society of Canada out of the national office out of Toronto; Susan Murray, a volunteer, director of the MS Scientific Research Foundation from Toronto; as well as Jack Aldcorn who is the president of the MS Society here in Saskatchewan, and Lindsay Bryson who is the communications director for the MS Society here in Saskatchewan.

I have the opportunity of meeting with them later on today, after question period I believe. They are also putting on a reception for all MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] so hopefully we'll have many attend that reception to listen to their concerns. As I say, I'll have the opportunity as minister to meet with them prior, and then we look forward to the general reception with all the MLAs. So if I could have all members welcome them to their Assembly. Thank you.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to join the minister in welcoming our guests from the MS Society. And I look forward to seeing them today at the reception. I want to thank you on behalf of the official opposition for all the work that you do in your various capacities to help with MS research, education, and to help people who are living with MS. Thank you very much, and welcome.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's really an honour for me to stand today to introduce a number of people who are both in your gallery and on the floor of the Assembly. This is many members of the disability income

program task team.

So with us today we have Merv Bender, community Co-Chair, representing the Prince Albert & District Community Service Centre and the Disability Income Support Coalition or known as DISC. We have Daryl Stubel, government Co-Chair, representing the office of disability issues within my ministry. Also representing DISC is Bev Duncan, Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities; Clarence Neault with the Gary Tinker foundation; Michael Richter, South Saskatchewan Independent Living Centre, and Maritza Tello with Phoenix Residential Society.

From the Ministry of Social Services, workers that have worked very hard with this Sask team are Jim Browne, Alan Hickey, Alan Jones, Doug Scott, Craig Torgunrud, and Lynn Tulloch.

Unable to be with us today but were members of the task team are Dave Nelson of the Provincial Inter-agency Network on Disability, Ian Wilkinson of the Saskatchewan Abilities Council, Elaine Naytowhow of the Sturgeon Lake First Nation, and Randy Passmore of Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome the chairperson, Judy Hannah, and many other members of DISC who have joined with us this afternoon. These individuals were instrumental in developing the framework for the new income support program for people with disabilities that I announced earlier this morning. So thanks to their partnership with the disability community and our government, we are celebrating a milestone today with disabilities in Saskatchewan.

So could all members please join me in welcoming all of these individuals to their Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, the member from Saskatoon Centre, for giving me the opportunity to join the minister in welcoming the guests in the gallery and on the floor of the House on behalf of the official opposition.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to single out one of the organizations in this important group, the Gary Tinker Federation, for the hard work that they do for people with disabilities in the North. I want to focus some attention on some of the work they do, Mr. Speaker, especially with learning disabilities. I commend the job they are doing. It's important. I just want at this time to acknowledge the work that they continue to do, the importance of northern people with learning disabilities, and the work they do with all northern people with disabilities.

But for myself, as a member and the past Chair of Gary Tinker Federation, it is an honour to have them here today and to see the important work they are continuing to do.

So at this time, I would like to acknowledge Gary Tinker, also

Clarence Neault. Welcome to your legislature, and thank you for the work you do on behalf of northern people with disabilities and especially the ones with learning. Thank you.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of First Nations.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with my colleague, the Minister of Social Services, and the member from Cumberland, to welcome these special people in the House today and to acknowledge Gary Tinker. I had the opportunity to meet Gary a number of years ago and learned that he had walked from La Ronge to Regina to raise awareness of people with disabilities.

On August 1 of this year will be the 20-year anniversary of that walk that Gary made. And he has done so much for people, not just in the North but for across the province. He is a delightful young man. And you don't have to spend very much time with him to realize that he may have a physical disability, but those of us who don't have his attitude have a real disability. So thank you very much for all the work you do.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature the Kiwanis Builder's Club from Davin School. And they're sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. They are four grade 5 students from Davin School, and they're accompanied by Larry Johnson, Lorraine Johnson, and Kathleen Gieg. And there were supposed to be quite a number of others, but a band concert intervened and so quite a few people had to play in the band. So this is a very strong representation of a bigger program. But I'd ask all members to welcome them to the legislature.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature, I actually have three groups, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The first group I'd like to introduce are from the hog industry across Saskatchewan: Jay McGrath, director of Sask Pork — if they could wave in the back row up there when I introduce them — Lambert Houwen from Regina with Hypor Canada, Dr. Patrick Charagu from Regina also with Hypor Canada, John Wurz from Sonningdale, Casey Schmidt from Humboldt, Ivan Stomp from Leroy, Neil Ketilson, general manager of Sask Pork from Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, what we're doing today is we put together a press release trying to assure the public on the safety of pork right across Saskatchewan and across Canada at a time, as we know,

when that industry didn't need any downturn in their markets. Actually with the H1N1 influenza has certainly hurt their industry.

And what we're doing today is reassuring the public and the consumers out there of the safety of pork. Our pork in Saskatchewan is probably as good as any in Canada, and for that matter, right across the world. And we're trying to highlight that today.

I also would like to say, Mr. Speaker, when the BSE [bovine spongiform encephalopathy] hit the cattle industry, consumers in this country and this province came to the forefront and bought beef more than they normally would. And I'm hoping, on behalf of the producers we have here today, that that happens again with the pork industry and pork products. I ask everyone today to welcome them to their legislature.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I also, in the west gallery, would like to introduce to everyone two school groups who had a joint effort to come into Regina from my constituency. The first one is the Grayson School — 24 students from that school, Principal Ben Appell, and teacher Tara Gerspacher. Also, from Stockholm, the Macdonald School students, 16 of them. Gwen Kada is their teacher, and their chaperone is Ms. Lavendure. I'd like to ask everyone to welcome them to their legislature, and I hope they enjoy their trip in.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to be able to introduce to you and through you some constituents of mine who have joined us today in your gallery. They are here with the House of Prayer that have been doing their very, very dutiful job to be with us and to offer some prayers, I'm sure for wisdom and other things for legislators. The folks from Swift Current that are here are Pastor Wendel Quincy and his wife Maureen, as well as Mike and Bonnie Johnston, from the constituency of Swift Current.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are many exhortations to prayer for those in leadership or government in the Scriptures. I think my favourite is what Paul told Timothy was that he ought to be praying for those in leadership that we may live quiet and peaceful lives. To me that Scripture says we ought to pray for those in government so they don't mess things up too badly. And in that spirit, we welcome them to their Legislative Assembly today.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Sutherland.

Ms. Schriemer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you four people from Montmartre, Saskatchewan, who are actually constituents of Mr. Speaker. And I would like to introduce them to you now. If

you want to give a wave?

Patsy Fisher, she's a town councillor and Co-Chair of the Montmartre centennial committee; Jolene Dusyk, a member of the centennial committee; Norma Englot, she's the mother of Michelle Englot who we know from curling, and was my babysitter which is why she's a little grey. And my Auntie Patsy, a resident of Montmartre, Auntie Patsy Pulai. Welcome to your legislature. Thank you.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to echo the welcomes on behalf of a couple of the members on this side of the House. One is a long-time family friend. Bev Duncan is in your gallery. Welcome, Bev. As well, a long-time constituent, a family friend as well, a neighbour from the lake, and I believe the principal for all three of my children — Mr. Ben Appell in the west gallery, does a lot of great work in the Grayson area now, formerly Yorkton school system, a constituent of Yorkton. And don't let the snow on the roof fool you, Mr. Speaker, he is very young at heart. Welcome, Ben.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise to present a petition that speaks to the need for the Government of Saskatchewan to recognize the essential role of all health care providers as valued members of the health care team, and specifically the members of SEIU [Service Employees International Union] West. And the government needs to realize the utilization and the value of the full range of professionals skills offered by these health care providers, and that there needs to be further promotion through the commitment of adequate funding and the installation of good faith in the collective bargaining process.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to maintaining quality health care services and job security for all public health care providers.

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

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I so present on behalf of Saskatchewan citizens in Swift Current, Maple Creek, Regina, Saskatoon, Dundurn, and Aberdeen. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I stand and present a petition in support of indexing the minimum wage. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all know that the indexing of the minimum wage would ensure that the minimum wage earners would be able to maintain a standard of living as the cost of living increases. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to indexing Saskatchewan minimum wage to ensure that the standard of living of minimum wage earners is maintained in the face of cost of living increases.

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

I present this petition on behalf of residents of Balcarres and Regina. I so present.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of wage equity for CBO [community-based organization] workers. And we know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that many of the folks who work for community-based organizations, the low wages result in high staff turnover. The subsequent lack of caregiver continuity has a negative impact on the quality of care clients receive. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the development and implementation of a multi-year funding plan to ensure that CBO workers achieve wage equity with employees who perform work of equal value in government departments.

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

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, these folks come from the city of Saskatoon. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of rural residents of Saskatchewan who question why the Sask Party government is leaving them behind with respect to providing safe and affordable water. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to financially assist the town of Duck Lake residents for the good of their health and safety due to the exorbitant water rates being forced on them by a government agency, and that this government fulfills its

commitment to rural Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by the good residents of Saskatoon and Duck Lake. I so present.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition in support of fairness for students here in Saskatchewan through the necessary expansion of the graduate retention program. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately expand the graduate retention program to include master's and Ph.D. graduates.

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

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who have signed this petition are students from the universities here in the province, as well as a number of health care professionals who have graduate degrees and are practising here in Saskatchewan. I so present.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise today to present a petition to repair Highway No. 123 that goes to the community of Cumberland House, Saskatchewan. The petition is signed by the leadership and the community members of the village of Cumberland House and Cumberland House First Nations. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Sask Party government to stop denying the money that was allocated to the highway and commit to immediately providing the repairs to this highway that the people of northeast Saskatchewan were promised.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

It is signed by the good people of Cumberland House and area. I so present.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Since the late 1970s, May has been observed across Canada as Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month. During the month of May, efforts

are made to increase awareness of this disease through fundraisers and educational programs. By wearing the red carnation today, we are all demonstrating our support for these efforts.

MS is a disease of the central nervous system and is the most common neurological disease affecting young people in Canada. Unfortunately there's no known cure at this time.

MS is more often diagnosed between the ages of 15 and 40, but has now been diagnosed as young as three. Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are between 50 and 75,000 Canadians living with MS, many of them here in Saskatchewan. There are 1,000 new diagnoses each year, and this is a startling statistic. Many of us know someone who suffers with this disease and its debilitating effects.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ask all members to thank the staff and volunteers of the Saskatchewan division of the MS Society of Canada, and especially those that are in the gallery here today, for the work that they do to help people living with MS, as well as the education and research needed to understand and eradicate a disease. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Batoche.

Multiple Sclerosis Society Working Towards a Cure

Mr. Kirsch: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government, I would like to commend the MS Society for the important role it plays in funding research to develop new and better treatments with the cure of MS as the ultimate goal.

Mr. Speaker, multiple sclerosis is a complex disease of the central nervous system. The disease most commonly affects young adults between the age of 15 and 40, but also affects children and the old. The disease is unpredictable, affecting individuals' vision, hearing, memory, balance, and mobility. It affects their physical, emotional, financial, and lasts a lifetime.

We do not know what causes MS, but the evidence points to multiple factors involving both genetic and environmental components of the cause. The disease has no cure. Conventional treatment approaches in MS focus on slowing disease progression and alleviating symptoms experienced. Women are more than three times as likely to develop MS as men. Atlantic and Prairie regions have higher rates than other regions.

The Saskatchewan division of the MS Society has been supporting research in multiple sclerosis and providing much-needed services and programs to people with MS and their families since 1981. Thank you to all the people who carry on the fight against this terrible disease. We all look forward to the day we can rise in this House and announce that we have found the cure for MS.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Elks Lodge Aids Hearing Impaired Youth

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Members of the Moose Jaw Elks Lodge No. 7 have helped to improve the hearing of one of our city's young residents. The Elks' national mandate is to assist with deaf detection and treatment in children.

Geno Schneider, who will be three this month, recently had a frequency modulated, or FM receiver system donated to him by the lodge with the help of the Royal Purple Fund for Children. Geno was born with mild to moderate hearing loss and he's not completely deaf, but can only hear certain tones.

Mr. Speaker, we speak what we hear and if we're not hearing all the sounds we need to develop, then there will be delays in learning. Geno's condition set him back but the family approached the Elks Lodge and requested support.

FM systems are an additional expense on top of personal hearing aids and are often not covered by insurance. They work like a small radio transmitter and receiver. While at daycare, Geno's aide wears the small FM transmitter with a microphone which signals to the receiver. The receiver is attached to the bottom of Geno's hearing aids. It is enhancing his hearing, speech development, and language skills. His mother and daycare workers have already seen an improvement.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in thanking the Moose Jaw Elks Lodge No. 7 for their continued contribution to Moose Jaw, our province, and for giving the gift of hearing to Geno Schneider.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Sutherland.

Montmartre Celebrates 100th Anniversary

Ms. Schriemer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to share the story of Montmartre, Saskatchewan. Its namesake, Montmartre, Paris, France is located on the highest point in Paris. In 1893, Hector Fabre, the first Canadian high commissioner to Paris, said to Pierre Foursin, a French pioneer, "You probably regret leaving your dear Montmartre. Go afar and choose a height of land. Build there your house and call the place Montmartre."

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he did just that, but in 1908 the railroad built their track 2 miles south of the settlement. The pioneers literally picked up the school and church and moved it downhill to the train tracks, completing the townsite in 1909.

In 1962, the mayor of our Montmartre, Dr. Lionel Prefontaine, and his wife Rita, went to Paris, France where they met the mayor of Montmartre, France. The two mayors exchanged paintings of their own Montmartres and an official sisterhood was born.

Mr. Speaker, today Montmartre, Saskatchewan is a vibrant and beautiful community whose citizens are proud of their history. It is increasing in population, and new businesses are opening.

The centennial committee has worked tirelessly at planning the celebrations which will be held on July 3, 4, and 5. There will be a myriad of entertainment and activities including a 20-foot tall Eiffel Tower made of steel that Malory Englot, a local businessman, designed and built and is giving to Montmartre. I wish to thank Montmartre and wish them the best on their 100th anniversary.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

In Anticipation of Mosaic

Ms. Morin: — [The hon. member spoke for a time in German.]

Mr. Speaker, this is the greeting which we offer to guests of the German pavilion at this year's 42nd annual Mosaic Festival in Regina. The event takes place from June 4 to 6 at 18 different host pavilions.

Mr. Speaker, Mosaic is a feature event that is looked forward to every year that provides visitors a glimpse of what it would be like to travel to the various host cultures' countries. Guests of the German pavilion, for example, can expect a delicious pig roast, bratwurst, schnitzel, sauerkraut, rouladen, along with of course a fine selection of German beers. Then guests can enjoy an assortment of German tortes while they watch the performances of the dancers and singers. For those that want to participate in the dancing, Mr. Speaker, they can do so in the beer tent with a traditional German band.

Each pavilion offers the same amount of variety. So to truly, fully enjoy the full experience, Mr. Speaker, visitors can purchase a three-day passport which allows them to travel by bus from pavilion to pavilion.

Mr. Speaker, Mosaic is a huge undertaking by both the organizer of the event — the Regina Multicultural Council under President Michael Cassano — as well as all of the host pavilions and their teams of volunteers.

I would like to ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating all participating pavilions and the Regina Multicultural Council for what is guaranteed to be yet another wonderful success, as well as offering best wishes to Andrew and Ida Grzesina, the ambassadors to the German pavilion and Katrina and Alexander Volman, the youth ambassadors. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Leadership Campaign Controversy

Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Lingenfelter phony membership scandal isn't going away. Yesterday NDP [New Democratic Party] leadership candidate Yens Pedersen repeated his call for Dwain Lingenfelter to quit the race.

The deadline for the report on the Lingenfelter phony membership scandal has now passed. But the question remains: will the NDP make this report public? We all know the NDP has a long history of covering up wrongdoing. So are they going to release the phony membership report, or are they going to cover it up?

One columnist today writes that there is no good outcome for the NDP, but the best of all the bad outcomes is to release the report and let the chips fall where they may. Another columnist yesterday wrote how this scandal is another huge step backward for the NDP, and I quote:

... Lingenfelter ... first elected to the provincial legislature more than 30 years ago, is not exactly the candidate of changing times. Back to the '70s is more like it. What's disappointing is that this, from all indications, is the best ... the NDP has to offer.

Mr. Speaker, it's the same old NDP. They're the party stuck in the past about to elect a leader stuck in the past. At the very least, will the current leader of the NDP do the right thing before he leaves office and demand that his party release the Dwain Lingenfelter phony membership report?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Northern Athlete Earns College Scholarship

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Northern athletes are challenged to compete in sports by travelling great distances and having rare hours of practice before playing against southern teams whose players have played together for years.

Frieda Daigneault of Ile-a-la Crosse has a granddaughter who plays hockey in Hay River, Northwest Territories. There, few girls play hockey so Frieda's granddaughter, Michelle, played contact hockey with the boys from the ages of 7 on to 14. Speed was Michelle's advantage against hard-hitting opponents.

Finally at 14, by moving to Edmonton, Michelle played with the girls' teams. And her proud parents, Alec and Trina, drove a 24-hour round trip to watch her play and practise. At 16 Michelle moved to Ottawa to play with the Nepean Junior Wildcats, and her parents would not see her until the end of the season as the distance was too great.

Michelle plays at national tournaments including Canada Winter Games. And at the National Aboriginal Championships, Michelle has made the first line all-star every year since she was 14 — including this year.

Next year, Michelle will play for an American college with a scholarship. She will obtain a university education. It will mean she will see very little of her family for many years. The North is beautiful but demanding, especially on its children who must sacrifice contact with their culture, family, and friends for sport and education in the world beyond.

I am proud of Michelle Daigneault whose family is rooted in Ile-a-la Crosse and to tell her that her parents and grandparents

wish her Godspeed in her dreams and hopes. Michelle, keep going strong as we're all behind you and we're very proud of you. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTION PERIOD

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Seniors' Income Plan

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, last fall the Sask Party announced changes to the senior income plan with great fanfare. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's one group that isn't benefitting from the changes. Seniors receiving level 2, 3, or 4 care in long-term care facilities or hospitals, those seniors still receive no more than \$25 a month or as little as \$5. To the minister: why were these seniors in special care homes forgotten by this government?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services and Housing.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've said many times in the House, the party that forgot seniors, quite frankly, is sitting on the other side of the Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — The seniors' programs were not looked at or addressed for 16 years under the NDP. So what we did was we increased the Saskatchewan Income Plan, or the seniors' income plan. We increased it by 110 per cent. It is income dependent as that member well knows.

Level 1 and 2 care was not funded under their government. We have not changed that program. But anyone with an income that qualifies for the seniors' income plan will qualify.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm really proud of the work we have done for seniors and under the former premier when we announced the universal senior drug plan that cost over \$50 million, not 10 but 50 million, and benefited 115,000 seniors — not 10,000 — 115,000. But you know, Mr. Speaker, this is a common excuse from this minister to talk about holdovers from past practice. But that doesn't answer the question of why didn't she change it when she was making other changes to the program. To the minister: why are some seniors winners and others not?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Social Services and Housing.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — With the initiatives that we took in this government, in a very short time period of being a government, added 10,000 more seniors who would receive income support than under that government, he stands there and he said he's proud of their record. Well let's just talk about their record for a minute. Let's talk about the gold plan that they gave to seniors. What did that give seniors? Well it gave them a free provincial park entry. It gave them a free angling licence, and it gave them a pin. That's what they did for the seniors of our province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, on this end we have 10 million. On this end, we have 15 million. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to talk about another issue that came up. On the same day that changes came into effect, January 1, the monthly rent in one woman's long-term care facility increased by \$20. And long-term care facility fees can increase on a quarterly basis, so these seniors are no better off.

More importantly there is a natural human need to retain some dignity and have control over how even a small amount of money gets spent. Maybe it's a small luxury, a convenience, perhaps a small birthday present for a grandchild. But many seniors in care can no longer afford to do these things. To the minister: will she admit that she was wrong and give these seniors in care homes the same benefits as other seniors?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Housing and Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, we have said time and time again — and not just this minister but minister after minister in this House has said — you know, give us some time. We have invested a lot of money through my ministry in particular, through many ministries, to clean up the mess that we inherited from that government. Let me see. That was the party, when in government, that was going to increase — increase — the care home fees for the seniors. They were going to do that quite considerably without caring it was 90 per cent of the income, that they were going to do until they got caught. That's what they were going to do for the seniors of the province. Beyond that they did nothing but a nice, shiny gold pin.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Fees for Park Usage

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, under the Sask Party, families are paying more for everything. This weekend, they will pay more to go to the park. Last December the Premier

described the fee hikes as reasonable. And the minister went even further saying, quote: "People thought that maybe it's so cheap that maybe we're not going to come to visit the parks." The Sask Party's excuse was that the government has to spend money on parks, the same type of excuse they always give. It's an excuse that's beginning to wear thin. To the minister: why is the Sask Party's solution always the same — make families pay more?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This government has provided over \$700 million in tax cuts to the people of this province, Mr. Speaker. The camping fees in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are the second lowest in the country and we're very proud of that. They're something that we've kept affordable for Saskatchewan families.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I just want to add in here that our sites, our sites for requests are double compared to the sites for 2009 over 2008, Mr. Speaker. The people of this province are recognizing the value of camping fees and camping sites in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and they're coming in droves, far over what we experienced last year, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — There's a little more chatter going on. I'm finding it increasingly hard to hear. I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, other governments don't agree that paying more will help families appreciate their parks more. Earlier this week, the federal government announced a freeze on entry fees for national parks and national historic sites. Saskatchewan MP [Member of Parliament] Gerry Ritz said, quote: "This fee freeze will encourage more people to visit while vacationing in our region." Mr. Speaker . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I asked before. Keep the chatter down so people can hear in the gallery. I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, normally the Sask Party marches in lockstep with their Conservative cousins in Ottawa. To the minister: why is it that the one time the Sask Party charts a different course from their friends in Ottawa families end up paying more?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the government of the members opposite, minimal park upgrades for our provincial parks under the NDP. Our government, Mr. Speaker, has committed to more park upgrades in a year and a half than the NDP did in four years, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite left our parks in such a condition, the requirement of

this government to upgrade them into the beauties that they actually are, Mr. Speaker, have been quite astronomical. We have committed over \$20 million to go to our provincial parks over the next four years, over the next year and a half or two years, and this will continue, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, families aren't just paying more to go to provincial parks. In Regina they're paying more to enjoy Wascana Park. As of April 1, organized events requesting space in Wascana have to pay a new \$25 application fee. Area usage fees can be as high as \$400 a day. Next year they're introducing something called a lake access fee. And even charities would be charged \$100 to hold events in front of their Legislative Building. To the minister: why is the Sask Party making charities and community organizations pay more to hold events in Wascana Park?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sports.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — I'm going to return back to the question the member opposite had earlier, Mr. Speaker, and then I will answer the other question, Mr. Speaker. The . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. Recognize the minister.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — All park fees and camping fees collected in our provincial parks are returned back into the Commercial Revolving Fund which again goes into supporting our provincial parks, Mr. Speaker.

In answer to his last question, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to say that the Wascana Park is governed by the Wascana Centre Authority, and as such I've had no discussions with respect to them, dealing with them respecting the fees the member is referring to. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it seems that the style of answering questions that the Premier had yesterday is now spilling over to the ministers. He answers the question the second time after another question has been asked. But I'm going to go on with another question.

The Sask Party claims that the new fees for Wascana Park are to cover added maintenance costs. But their budget for maintenance isn't any larger this year than last year. Fundraisers like the Canadian Cancer Society Relay For Life have to pay more for access to the park. Meanwhile the Sask Party blows more than \$7 million on the Vancouver Olympics.

To the minister: why do families have to pay more for

necessities and for simple pleasures like going to the park when the Sask Party has money to burn on pet projects and photo ops?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — I'll respond to the member's comments about pet projects. So I gather then he thinks that tax cuts, \$700 million worth of tax cuts and projects are something that is considered under his particular comment, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, all people in Saskatchewan can use Wascana Park for free. They always have and they always will, Mr. Speaker. What the member is referring to is something that's dealt with under the Wascana Centre Authority. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the member for The Battlefords asked the Minister of Environment what her government was doing about renewable energy. She replied with a laundry list of programs that she said totalled more than 2 billion. As someone who's sat around the NDP cabinet table, Mr. Speaker, many of the programs she mentioned sounded very familiar. Two billion dollars a year, Mr. Speaker. This minister wants us to believe that she scrapped the NDP's climate change targets because those targets would cost SaskPower \$65 million a year. But she says she's spending \$2 billion a year on renewable energy already, so that can't be the reason.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: what is the real reason the Sask Party abandoned the NDP's climate change targets?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite would have been listening, a big chunk of that money that I was talking about is going to go to a clean coal project which I'm pretty sure the NDP walked away from. It had nothing to do with anything that their government did since they abandoned clean coal for this province, Mr. Speaker.

But again back to the member's \$320 million fund. Mr. Speaker, I think the NDP would have a little bit more credibility if they weren't riddled with contradictions on this file. The NDP Environment critic has a little list of where this \$320 million is going to go to. They can't keep their stories straight week by week and not even within their own question period because the member for Coronation Park said yesterday that that \$320 million would have gone directly to SaskPower to offset emission reduction costs, Mr. Speaker. So before they start

throwing accusations about funding, perhaps they could get their own stories straight.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Morin: — Political rhetoric is the best this minister has to offer when they broke their promise to the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, how they choose their so-called targets isn't the only unanswered question. Saskatchewan people find many elements of the Sask Party's so-called plan deeply confusing.

The Sask Party talks about an initial price of \$15 per tonne for companies that exceed their maximum allowable emissions. Mr. Speaker, I know that this figure is not in the legislation, but then neither are the minister's so-called targets. And she says we should take her at her word, that those targets are firm. So the price must be firm as well, I'm assuming. To the minister: how did she decide on an initial price of \$15 per tonne?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I said all along that the position of our government is to balance the economy with the environment. And we have to consider making sure that Saskatchewan, while we currently are leading the country, Mr. Speaker, that we remain in a good position. And we will make sure that the decisions that we make keep Saskatchewan competitive.

But as for targets, Mr. Speaker, NDP leadership candidate Yens Pederson said just yesterday targets are but a signal of how seriously the government takes the problem. He said, Mr. Speaker, the real issue is not a target but action.

So the difference between the NDP leadership candidate's position and ours, Mr. Speaker, is not only do we have targets, but we will be taking action. We have legislation. We will have regulations, something that the NDP absolutely failed to do.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Morin: — Apparently the minister can't answer the question that was posed to her despite the fact it's her Act under her ministry.

Mr. Speaker, we don't know how this figure was chosen. There's nothing in the background material released with the minister's legislation to justify this recommendation, and the formula for determining the price is complicated. We don't

know if the government has any data on the impact these provisions could have on how much companies will pay. We don't know what will be considered appropriate offsets.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: is there any data at all backing up the suggested \$15 per tonne charge, or did the Sask Party just copy what Alberta is doing?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, the decisions that we will be making are going to be laid out in our regulations. The regulations will be discussed in a series of consultations with industry and environmental NGOs [non-governmental organization]. The member opposite knows that the carbon compliance price is not in the legislation; it is in the regulations. And that will be done in consultations with others. But, Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite is worried about what . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. Just to remind the opposition, they're cutting into their question period. I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — But, Mr. Speaker, going back to the NDP's absolute contradictions on positions, the member from Regina Lakeview just stood up and was worried about the cost to Saskatchewan families. Well, Mr. Speaker, their whole plan was, and I quote, "And this is one area where people can contribute, is to actually pay for new production which is near zero emissions."

Mr. Speaker, that was his position when he was the NDP Environment minister. He has no place to be worried about the position of Saskatchewan families today when he was going to make them pay.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

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

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party could have maintained the 32 per cent reduction by 2020 and taken the \$320 million that the former administration left them to offset the cost to Saskatchewan ratepayers.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, there are also questions around enforcement. After all, meaningful action to address climate change will mean a significant change in how people do business . . . and if there needs to be meaningful penalties for non-compliance, if this is going to work. But the Sask Party wants an equivalency agreement with Ottawa, to eliminate, quote, "the need for criminal provisions for non-compliance under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*."

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: how can we trust this government to get results on climate change when their starting point is letting people off the hook for breaking the law?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pretty shocked by the member opposite's position that she's going into this expecting every industry, including SaskPower, to break the law. That's their suspicion of industry in this province?

And, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite can't keep her story straight. Yesterday she said that \$320 million was going to be used for technology, for carbon capture, for other things, and today she's saying that they're going to use it for offsets within SaskPower. They have no position because they don't know what their position is, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Official Opposition.

Mr. Calvert: — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, unfortunately we're not going to be able to use it for anything and neither are they because they've already spent it. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do have some questions to the Minister of Environment around the equivalency agreement.

But before I ask those questions, I have this very simple question. Could she look in her files, pull out a yellow sheet, and read from the yellow sheet to tell us precisely how she set the value of \$15 per tonne for carbon.

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, as I've said, we will be consulting with industry and environmental stakeholders going forward on the regulations that go along with our legislation . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I would point out in a letter that I wrote — and I'm sorry; I don't have it on a yellow sheet — but I would point out in a letter that I wrote to the then Environment minister, the member for Regina Lakeview, asking about the NDP government's position. He said that the NDP government would be buying offset credits at a price of \$15 per tonne.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Official Opposition.

Mr. Calvert: — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to hear the minister now volunteers she learned that figure from the New Democratic Party government at the time. They also

apparently learned appropriate targets to be set. So if they're going to keep this promise, why will they not keep the promise of the targets they portrayed in their campaign to the people of Saskatchewan?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I know that members opposite like to ask us to table stuff, and I'm willing to table this if they're interested, and they can discuss their own \$15 per tonne. But, Mr. Speaker, our position has been clear that the position that our government will take is to balance the economy with the environmental protection of this province, and that is the position that we have taken.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday on CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] David McLaughlin, the president and CEO [chief executive officer] of the National Round Table on Environment and the Economy said that "Understand that it's not just going to be environmental concerns. We do have to factor in economic concerns." He goes on to say, Mr. Speaker, and I quote, "Starting out, I think it's legitimate what the Saskatchewan government is talking about."

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Official Opposition.

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, having listened to that very same interview, the minister may want to look at the entire transcript.

I want to move to the question of the equivalency agreement with Ottawa. Will the minister stand in her place today and admit there is today no equivalency agreement with Ottawa — that it is her hope that one can be negotiated perhaps as early as this fall?

In that circumstance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question to the minister is this. Can she be unequivocal in her response today, that whatever equivalency agreement that she is able to negotiate with Ottawa will be equivalent to the federal plan no matter who will be the federal Government of Canada?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I have been consistent all along that what we announced on Monday is that the federal government, the Minister of Environment, the Hon. Jim Prentice and I have signed an agreement in principle to work on an equivalency agreement that would allow Saskatchewan to establish a technology fund for reinvestment in technology for Saskatchewan. That is the program that we are working on. That is the equivalency agreement that we will be working toward. And I am confident in my negotiations with Minister Jim Prentice that that is the negotiations which we will reach,

Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Official Opposition.

Mr. Calvert: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is clear that the minister and the Sask Party government want to establish an equivalency agreement with the federal government, the current federal Conservative government.

Just yesterday, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the federal watchdog, the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development in Canada, says that the federal plan is extremely lacking, lacking on a number of points. But one very significant point is that the federal plan has no way to report on reductions in greenhouse gas emissions — no way to report because they have no way to measure. Now we are going to sign an equivalency with that kind of plan. I hope not, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So my question to the minister is: does she today, can she provide to this House and the people of Saskatchewan today a report on how she intends to measure greenhouse gas emission reductions?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that there is a clear understanding of what the equivalency agreement is. It will allow Saskatchewan to regulate. It is a made-in-Saskatchewan plan based on equivalent outcomes. And, Mr. Speaker, to get a baseline information on the emissions currently in our province, we are going to be engaging third party verification for sectors to determine what those emissions are, and we'll be reporting year over year to see what the reductions are, Mr. Speaker. So I can offer up some officials in my ministry to go over the technical information if the members opposite are interested in that, Mr. Speaker.

We are not signing on to the federal plan. We are signing an equivalency agreement for a made-in-Saskatchewan plan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Mr. Calvert: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the minister had suggested, the Sask Party government had suggested they have adopted the federal targets for emission reductions. We do not know — apparently this is to be established in regulation — we do not know the baseline on which the Sask Party intends to operate from, but we have not heard, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have not heard yet how they intend to measure.

The Government of Canada has said, the environmental watchdog, it is impossible for us to measure reductions. Now the minister says that she may have a plan on how to do this. So

my question, I guess, to the minister is: will she share her plan, her understanding, her ability with the national Government of Canada so that they might in fact measure reductions?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm thankful for the member opposite's confidence in my abilities that I could perhaps help out the federal government. But again, Mr. Speaker, the equivalency agreement will allow Saskatchewan to have a made-in-Saskatchewan plan. Saskatchewan will be the regulator. We will have third party verification on emissions in our province, Mr. Speaker. We will have a technology fund for re-investment in technology in our province.

And, Mr. Speaker, I can understand the members opposite being a bit concerned about an equivalency agreement because, Mr. Speaker, it is something that, considering their negative and contrary relationship with any federal government, the NDP would never have been able to achieve.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services and Housing.

Income Support Program for People with Disabilities

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to inform the House that earlier today our government launched a historic new income support program for people with disabilities. The new program will be implemented beginning October 1, 2009. The implementation of this new program means that thousands of people with disabilities in Saskatchewan will no longer need to depend on social assistance for their basic living cost.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — For years people with disabilities and their organizations have been telling government that they needed a new, dignified, less intrusive income support program. So in this year's Throne Speech, we promised to ensure that people with disabilities in Saskatchewan receive the support they need. Today's announcement represents another promise kept by our government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — The new program will be separate from the existing Saskatchewan assistance program and will be based on the goals and principles recommended by the disability income task team. Mr. Speaker, the two primary goals of the new program will be to ensure a socially acceptable income for people with disabilities and to encourage and empower people with disabilities to participate fully as possible in their community life.

On October 1 of this year, an estimated 3,000 Saskatchewan people with disabilities will begin to receive benefits through this new program. A new community advisory committee will work with ministry officials immediately to develop an assessment process to ensure additional individuals can be added continuously. Over time enrolment in the new program is expected to reach between 8,000 and 10,000 people.

I believe our announcement in a historic new income replacement program represents a milestone for people with disabilities in Saskatchewan. I am proud that our government is delivering on a commitment to ensure that people with disabilities can participate as fully as possible in our society.

Once again I wish to thank the members of the disability income task team, the Disability Income Support Coalition, and those community members and ministry staff who participated in consultations earlier this year. Their input has been invaluable in shaping the new future, as we begin today, for people with disabilities in Saskatchewan. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I want to first thank the minister for sharing the ministerial statement. This is indeed a very good announcement, and I too want to join in with the minister in congratulating the task team, both the public servants and the community folks, who made this a reality, their hard work and diligence on this very important piece of social policy.

I also want to take a moment to thank the members of this Disability Income Support Coalition for their hard work and their tenacity to see this through. It's a network of people who were deeply committed to see this happen, and it's the first step. Second steps are actually happening and we see . . . on the journey to make this a reality for those living with disabilities.

I will have to take a moment to review the report. It is on the website. I did take it down and I did take a look at it. I'm very glad to see the community advisory committee established, as this kind of work needs to be monitored — not only in the beginning stages but throughout the years — as this is an important piece.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our role in opposition is to ensure transparency, accountability, and fairness in all that government does, and we will continue to do that. But the aim for all of us here in this House is to help the province of Saskatchewan serve all of its citizens well so they can become full participants in our society.

Some specific areas that I've heard concerns about, and we will be watching and continuing to monitor, is adequacy of income. And I see that recommendation 26 speaks specifically to indexing. And that one is a very important one because I think that takes the politics out of some of these things. Also we've talked a lot about adequate transportation and housing. Accessible, safe, and affordable housing is so important. And I see recommendation 28 talks about support for employment and

education opportunities, so important for those living with disabilities to become full participants of our society.

And also, Mr. Speaker, as we've raised in this House on a few occasions this is very important to serve the basic needs of people living with disabilities. But we know at the UN [United Nations] level, and Canada as well, is talking about the declaration on the rights of people living with disabilities, and I think on this moment too, I would urge the minister to raise this again with her counterpart at the federal level.

So once again, I thank the minister for this announcement and the opportunity to respond to it. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Allocation of Child Care Spaces

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, on Monday of this week I had the pleasure of joining Jeff Fox, CEO of the Moose Jaw YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association] and Jennifer Petracek-Kolb, director of the Play N' Learn Child Care Centre in Moose Jaw. I was there to celebrate the first allocation of the 1,000 new child care spaces announced by our government in the provincial budget.

[14:30]

I was very pleased to attend this celebration during Early Learning and Child Care Month. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is an important month to acknowledge as we take time to recognize and thank early childhood educators for the important contributions they make to Saskatchewan's children and families. In Saskatchewan, with our growing economy, we have an ever-increasing demand for early learning and child care as more parents want to enter the workforce or pursue post-secondary education.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we recognize the value of our early learning and child care opportunities for our youngest citizens in supporting positive social and emotional development, early literacy, and school achievement. This is why early learning and child care is a priority of our government.

In the first year of our mandate, we added 500 licensed child care spaces. This year I was very pleased to announce that we have added an additional 1,000 licensed child care spaces at an investment of \$4.2 million. The 1,000 new funded spaces will bring our total number of licensed spaces to 11,400 by the end of 2009-10. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Moose Jaw YMCA received 120 of those new spaces. And they will be opening up two new child care facilities.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Funding for each new child care space includes capital support of \$3,360 per space for development and an additional \$615 per space in start-up funds for the purchase of furnishings and equipment. As well, \$246 per space is provided to purchase materials to enhance early learning

achievement.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to point out a few other enhancements for early learning and child care which will support the provision of quality services to Saskatchewan children. Early learning and child care received an additional \$1.2 million to support the training of early childhood educators, and there was also \$375,000 for child care for children with exceptionally high, diverse needs. Child care centres received a 7 per cent annualized CBO lift in 2008-09 and an additional 3 per cent in 2009-10 to support recruitment and retention of early childhood educators. Better wages support the recruitment and retention of trained staff, which I recognize is a challenge right across Canada.

I want to congratulate the Moose Jaw YMCA for their tremendous commitment to fulfilling the need for child care in their home community.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, communities across Saskatchewan are in need of licensed child care. Over the next few months, many communities in Saskatchewan will also be allocated new spaces. Community celebrations will be held when these new spaces open. It is our goal to have all of the new spaces open before the end of the fiscal year. Children and parents in Moose Jaw were extremely pleased to see this quick action by our government, and I'm sure many communities will be wanting to expand on their own initiatives.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, while we celebrated this investment in Moose Jaw, this investment in quality early learning is truly an investment in the future of our province. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for sending across a copy of his statement today. And I have to say that I was very pleased to hear the announcement the other day that was made in Moose Jaw of 120 new licensed child care spaces. It's good news for Moose Jaw families, and it truly is good news for children in our community.

Mr. Speaker, there is a couple of concerns though. Looking at the minister's comments, he makes a statement that "In the first year of our mandate, we added 500 licensed child care spaces." Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those are purely spaces on paper that were announced last year, and they have yet to be implemented, and Saskatchewan families across this province are waiting.

Then again this year we've seen 1,000 spaces announced, bringing the total number — and this is out of the minister's notes — the total number of licensed spaces to 11,400 by the end of this fiscal year. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the minister was in committee and then again in this House, he has quite clearly stated that in actual fact in this province today there is 200 less child care spaces than what there was when that government was elected.

So, Mr. Speaker, when he is announcing new spaces, I wish he would wait to celebrate until he is cutting the ribbon and children are coming in the doors because that's the important part for Saskatchewan families, is they need the spaces — actual spaces, not just paper spaces.

And, Mr. Speaker, these are the comments of the minister. You don't have to take my word for it. You can easily . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well the member from Indian Head, the Minister of Health, says good. Well that's fine. You know, he can look in *Hansard* and he can quite clearly see . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. I recognize the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, when we went through committee and we talked about the loss of spaces and what has been holding up last year's announcement of spaces from being implemented, the minister gave some very valid concerns and talked about the issues and the excuses for not one of last year's announced spaces actually being up and running and open to accept children in this province or to support Saskatchewan families. And one reason that he gave was the difficulty in recruiting and retaining workers in this sector. Now it's just a suggestion but, I mean maybe, just maybe, the minister could look to support increased wages to help solve this issue instead of announcing new paper spaces, and Saskatchewan families wouldn't have to wait so long.

And I know he talked about the 7 per cent that was put in and the loss that we've seen in home daycares which are important in various areas across this province because not all areas are conducive to child care centres where there is large number of spaces. Many areas across the province rely on child care homes. So maybe he needs to look at adding a little bit more into the wages in this CBO sector to make sure that we aren't still waiting even longer and that he actually meets his targets of 11,400 spaces at the end of this fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, the capital grants, the furnishing grants, these are all very welcome in this sector. The training for early childhood educators is also welcome, and I'm very pleased to see that the minister has continued on with these initiatives and investments that were begun about three years ago.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is one thing I have to say. I do welcome the announcement in Moose Jaw. And I have to say that Jeff and Jennifer that are in charge of the Play N' Learn and also the young parents' centre that has opened in Moose Jaw, who have applied for these spaces and are working to put them in place, they are very dedicated. They are very organized, and they are hard workers and very good planners.

So I'm sure they will easily meet the minister's projection of having these spaces up and running in our community of Moose Jaw well before the date or at least by the date — I don't want to put any additional pressure on them — but at least by the date that's been announced at the end of this fiscal year. I know the work that they have done so far in our community is appreciated. They are very dedicated to the children in our community and that shows in the centre and the work they do on a day-to-day basis. So we're very pleased to hear that.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, overall the announcement is very good and all of us who are concerned with Saskatchewan families who are waiting for opportunities to enter the workforce or waiting to build their careers will also appreciate the minister's announcement, and look forward to the actual implementation of the spaces. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I wish to table the answer to question 373 through 391.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government Whip has tabled questions 373 to 391. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Gantfoer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would like to ask leave to move a motion in regarding the fall sitting days.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked leave to move a motion. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

MOTIONS

Sitting Days

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

That notwithstanding rule 3(2) of *The Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the first sitting day of the fall period of the third session of the twenty-sixth legislature shall commence on Wednesday, October 21, 2009, and the fall period of the parliamentary calendar shall be adjusted to incorporate 25 sitting days with the fall period being concluded on Wednesday, December 3, 2009.

I so move.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved:

That notwithstanding rule 3(2) of *The Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the first sitting of the fall period of the third session of the twenty-sixth legislature shall commence on Wednesday, October 21, 2009, and the fall period of the parliamentary calendar shall be adjusted to incorporate 25 sitting days with the fall period being concluded on Wednesday, December 3, 2009.

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: — Carried.

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Deputy Speaker: — Before we commence with adjourned debates, pursuant to section 286, *The Election Act, 1996*, I am submitting 95 hard copies of the *Report of the Chief Electoral Officer*, volume II, *Campaign Contributions and Expenditures, Twenty-Sixth Provincial General Election November 7, 2007*. I so table.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 80

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Norris that **Bill No. 80 — *The Construction Industry Labour Relations Amendment Act, 2009*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Furber: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter the debate on Bill 80 this afternoon.

And unfortunately — as was the case with Bills 5 and 6, the Bills that the Minister of Health suggested wouldn't need legislation — unfortunately there's been no consultation with groups respecting Bill 80. There was no consultation at all prior to its introduction, during drafting, or at any other point. And it's become the norm for this government to do that.

Now if I could, I'd like to set the climate a little bit under which this legislation is introduced. Now we have a boom that began in Saskatchewan prior to '06. We had massive growth in industry and construction and we had a construction trades group, highly skilled, hard-working people, who responded to the demand and have done exceptional work in this province to build this province physically. Now that's what they've done in response to the boom.

Additionally it's interesting what the impetus for this Bill might be considering there hasn't been a strike in this industry since 1982. So was it the labour unrest that caused the Bill to be introduced? Frankly the legislation is regressive and dangerous for a number of reasons.

[14:45]

Plain and simple truth is, if the apprenticeship system and construction unions work together to create a pool of highly skilled, highly educated workers in this province, Bill 80 as it stands today will decrease the number of people at the top of their trade and decrease the frequency and quality of good training in these trades. If you decrease training and training opportunities, you decrease the level of skill of the workforce, you decrease the quality of the work; therefore you decrease the safety for the people of the province.

It's interesting that this Bill all but guarantees a decrease in the quality of work. It forces present unions to abandon their focus on apprenticeship and training and focus only on the lowest bid. It's a race to the bottom of wages, work quality, and apprenticeship and training. It guarantees that common standards are used across the board, most of which will be lower standards and not higher standards.

Now I guess it's not surprising, when you've got a Premier who says that they're going to go to war with the working men and women of this province, that you'd introduce a Bill like this.

I found it interesting in a piece of legislation that I scrutinized, specifically the Labour Market Commission. Now the Labour Market Commission by all accounts was working well. It was a commission where business, organized labour, and government all agreed that it was working well and serving the province well, but they made the mistake of including the word labour in the title and so it had to go. Irrespective of the fact it was working, irrespective of the fact that the Chamber of Commerce of Saskatchewan wanted it, liked it, and agreed it was working, they made the mistake of including labour in the title so it was trashed. It's unfortunate that they would take that attitude to the working men and women in this province.

Now I just want to add one thing and that's that, you know, being a New Democrat means that you're responsible for legislation. You're responsible and you have to work hard to ensure that all of the people of the province of Saskatchewan benefit from government.

Now the same is not necessarily true obviously with this government, considering they're going to go to war with the working men and women in this province. And it was telling. During the election we had two forums in Prince Albert, one of which was sponsored by the chamber of commerce, and one of which was sponsored by labour.

Now the chamber of commerce put on their forum first and I was pleased to attend — considering that we'd done such hard work on the royalty regime structure in this province, on manufacturing taxes, on personal income taxes. The business tax review lowered business taxes. So we set the climate for the economic boom that this province sees today. And the Liberal candidate showed up. The Green Party candidate showed up. The Sask Party candidate showed up. And we were there, and we had a healthy debate.

But you know, when it came to the labour-sponsored event, the Green Party was there; the Liberals were there. We of course showed up. But the big cop from Prince Albert — afraid to go, afraid to show up at a labour-sponsored debate.

So it's no surprise at all that they would introduce this legislation today considering the massive unrest. We haven't had a strike since 1982, but they're going to beat up on working men and women in this province. And I guess it's proven through this Bill. It's unfortunate.

Now the member from Prince Albert Carlton says that I'm grandstanding. But he wasn't there. Everybody showed up, but he wasn't there. So it's not grandstanding at all; it's mere fact, and I'm just pointing it out. And he doesn't like it. That's not my problem.

Now Bill 80, as I'd said, decreases apprenticeship and training opportunities. It decreases opportunities for Saskatchewan firms. Interestingly in committee I witnessed the Minister of Highways brag about how the increased activity in construction in Saskatchewan would largely be taken up by Alberta firms. And consistent with the Minister of Highways, this minister has introduced legislation that helps enable out-of-province firms to take work from the hands of Saskatchewan people. At they're at least one thing — they're consistent.

Now Bill 80 does a number of things, most of which are negative, and I will allow another member from our esteemed party to continue the debate.

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

Mr. Van Mulligen: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. One of the ideas that the public might have about the impact of the Legislative Assembly on their lives is that they equate the budgets that we put forward with their pocketbooks because they will know from experience that sometimes taxes go up in budgets; sometimes taxes go down in budgets. But nevertheless, it's the budgets that affect people's pocketbook.

But, Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out that — and even for the edification for the member from Saskatoon Northwest — that it's not just budgets that affect people's pocketbooks. Legislation can also directly, substantially affect people's pocketbooks. And so people don't need to feel poorer or richer simply because of budgets that are passed in this province. They can also be affected very, very directly by legislation that is put forward by the government.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is one of those pieces of legislation that very directly, very substantially affects people's pocketbooks. No ifs and buts, no questions about that — none.

Mr. Speaker, everyone who has looked at this legislation concedes that this is a piece of legislation that will reduce the powers of trade unions in Saskatchewan. This is a piece of legislation that is to the benefit of those companies that employ those workers and, at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, this means less money in the pockets of workers. This is why so many workers are upset about this piece of legislation because they know it will affect them directly where it hurts — in their pocketbooks.

It really means a lower standard of living for our construction workers in our province. They know it will affect them that way. They know it will affect their families. This, they know.

And they know also that this is no surprise coming from the Saskatchewan Party because the Saskatchewan Party has always, always in their history — and their precursor, the Progressive Conservatives or whatever name they go by, Mr. Speaker — the right wing has always stood up for the bosses and the right of the bosses to operate in our province and always to the detriment of the workers. And that is why it is no surprise that this piece of legislation would come from the Saskatchewan Party . . .

The Speaker: — If members would like to have a debate amongst themselves, I would ask the members to sit down behind the bar rather than across the floor. I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

Mr. Van Mulligen: — So, Mr. Speaker, if people want to know about why this piece of legislation has resonated so poorly with so many working people in Saskatchewan, it is because they see it as having a direct impact on their pockets. They see it as having a direct impact on the livelihoods. They see it as having a direct impact on the standard of living of their family. That's what this is all about.

What this Bill is all about, it takes . . . If you can conceive of a set amount of money that is expended on projects that are affected by this Bill in our province — let's say, take for the sake of argument, that it's \$2 billion — it means that \$2 billion, now less of it will flow into the pockets of the workers. More of it will flow into fewer pockets, those the pockets of the bosses that own the companies. And that is what this Bill is all about.

And, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons I raise this, it's not just a question of fundamental unfairness in my view, but it's also a question of why in the world that, given what is taking place in the economy, when you need to find measures that help to stimulate the economy — and every economist will tell you it makes a lot of sense to put more money into more peoples' pockets as opposed to reducing the amount of money in many people's pockets and concentrating that in a few pockets — why in the world would you come up with this legislation at this time in our history?

I can't think of a more badly timed piece of legislation than this piece of legislation. This is a government that at the beginning of the year prided themselves on, we're going to advance money out of this current budget year. We're going to move it out of the next budget year into the current budget year so that money will be available to stimulate the economy. That's our greatest challenge; that's what we need to do. But then they come forward with this piece of legislation that does exactly the contrary.

So we know where they stand in terms of stimulative impact on the economy, Mr. Speaker. This is a straight ideological Bill that suits their political thinking. They don't really care about the impact it has on the economy. And this will be a poor impact on the economy, because everyone knows that if you've got 1,000 people with X amount of money in their pockets, they are more likely to spend it than two or three people that have that money in their pocket, Mr. Speaker. And so everyone knows that. They know that, but they don't really care about that, and that's why wrong-headedly they're pursuing with this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker.

This is bad, bad policy. This is bad, bad timing, given what is taking place in the world economy. And as the government is fond of saying, we're not immune to what is taking place in the economy. It affects us here in Saskatchewan as well, and we're seeing some indications of that, Mr. Speaker, but the government is unmoved, unfazed. They don't really care. They're going to proceed with this piece of very bad legislation.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a party that, since taking office, has prided itself on acceding to whatever wishes the public might have, because frankly they've had the money to spend on favouring many priorities that Saskatchewan people had. They've taken a populist approach.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a Bill that goes, I think, in the wrong direction. This is a Bill that they will find out will not resonate very well with thousands and thousands of construction workers in Saskatchewan who will feel their pockets have been picked by the Sask Party government. And they want no more of this government. Mr. Speaker, that concludes my remarks. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to make a few comments for the record on Bill 80, *The Construction Industry Labour Relations Amendment Act, 2009*, CILRA, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know this Bill was introduced on March 6 by the Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour. Now this Bill, as we've heard many speakers before, drastically, Mr. Speaker, drastically overturns the orderly functioning of the construction industry in this province. And now this is the third Bill presented by this minister which, to say the least, has sent a chill through the unionized sector of this province.

Mr. Speaker, the stakeholders in the construction industry in this province are telling us that this Bill has the potential to add a great deal of instability to the industry. This Bill will impact on wages, safety, the apprenticeship programs, and the quality of the work, Mr. Speaker. They have also said, which we have also heard within the Assembly here, that they were not consulted about any of the changes, nor did they receive any indication that the changes were coming, nor did they feel that the changes were necessary, nor had they met to indicate that they require changes.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we are not opposed to changes. We're not opposed to improvement, but at least on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we believe in talking to the people of this province, unlike those members opposite and the Sask Party members opposite who continuously have shown us their lack of consultation with the people whenever they think of bringing forward legislation.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said, we believe in consultation and our record on this issue is clear. We consulted in the early '90s on the changes to *The Trade Union Act* and the CILRA has gone

through many changes. But at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, we had systems both within *The Trade Union Act* and within the CILRA that I believe were workable systems, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

Now, Mr. Speaker, all parties did not necessarily agree with what they wanted the system to look like or how it worked. But again the system worked. And we believe it created stability in the industry, which with today's changes will not lead to stability, Mr. Speaker, but in fact instability.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would just . . .

An Hon. Member: — How do you know that?

Mr. Iwanchuk: — . . . For the members here, like to read into the . . . The member asks, how do I know that? Here's a quote I would just like to read from Kerry Westcott, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners Local 1985, an organizer, what he has to say about this. Now he says this, Mr. Speaker, under the heading, "Do we need a change in how bargaining works for the building trades?":

Like the essential services act, Bill 80 is a solution to a non-existent problem. The organized building trades only do about 20 per cent of all construction work. Eighty per cent is already non-union or is contested spin off contractor's work. The 20 per cent we do perform tends to be the most complex work. The building trades have the capacity to do large complex jobs and complicated large mill renovations under 'shut-down' time constraints. What is to be gained by further marginalizing the building trades? What is the problem the Sask Party government is trying to fix?

Bill 80 is designed to put the building trades at the far margins of our industry. And we will be unable to influence wages or conditions in our industry."

And, Mr. Speaker, the members asked about the destabilization. Well here are people who worked there, unlike that member and the other members sitting out there who have absolutely no idea of what is going on. This person says, who works in the industry, he says that Bill 80 is designed to put the building trades at the far margins of our industry and it'll be very destabilizing for labour relationships and apprenticeships.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they asked about who . . . How do we know that? Because we talk to people in this province, and when they tell us that these are some of the impacts . . . Unlike the other members who simply go forward and put forward wild ideas about how things should work. And I think that the chickens will come home to roost over there, Mr. Speaker.

Now in terms of the chickens coming home to roost, because Mr. Westcott goes on to say:

There will be wildcat strikes, jobsite confrontations, neglect of the apprenticeship system, and way lower wages for all construction workers, union or not yet union.

Now I think that would perhaps answer that member's

questions, the part-time Minister of Labour who is trying to make now, at this point in time, trying to make some sense of all of this. Because it's questionable, I guess, whether he saw or understood or perhaps maybe he didn't even read this legislation. Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, our approach would have been to consult prior to the change.

Now again, this minister talks or they've . . . obviously the communications department has gotten together and said, how are we going to sell this so we really don't have to talk about what this will do to the people of Saskatchewan? And they came up with the idea to talk about it as freedom of choice. And again, every once in a while, Mr. Speaker, they talk about democracy. But their idea of freedom of choice means in this case dismantling of the proud history of the building trades in this province.

Mr. Speaker, and they boast of the democracy. But you know, anybody who knows this, knows this is a clear case of union busting. They're trying to dismantle and get rid of unions. Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to comprehend the approach taken by the Sask Party government. And I don't care whether they can paint it and their communications department can do whatever they want to it, but this is what it is. It is an attack on the working men and women of this province.

Mr. Speaker, there was no consultation. As I said, there's just been an attack on the building trades unions. And, Mr. Speaker, in listening to the part-time Minister of Labour answer questions around the Bills he introduced, Bills 5 and 6 — and I believe the member from Prince Albert said particularly Bills 5 and 6, now 80 — it makes us . . . Here we understand that he absolutely has no idea what he is talking about or what he is doing. That's clear from his words, from his written statements. That goes without saying.

But, Mr. Speaker, what is here is the history books. And the history books are going to clearly show that at the time that the Supreme Court of this country is dealing with freedom of association and extending to the trade unions of this country the right of free collective bargaining, Mr. Speaker, also the most powerful nation in the world and its president, Barack Obama, are promoting the Employee Free Choice Act. And now here we have this part-time minister who is lost within all of this, not understanding his place in this history, and he's marching off totally in the opposite direction. He's doing the opposite thing of what is happening in the United States of America and what our Supreme Court is saying that he should do.

Now, Mr. Speaker, maybe this part-time Minister of Labour is just simply walking around in circles and now what he thinks maybe what he would do is if he . . . perhaps if he thinks if he can talk about freedom of choice and democracy long enough, maybe eventually he even himself will believe that all of this, all of these Bills, actually make sense.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite seem to lack the ability to understand that when you consult, that what democracy truly is about is the ability to consult with the people. And not only is that lost on this part-time Minister of Labour but on the, I would say, on the entire Sask Party.

Now let me explain in a little bit more detail to that part-time

minister and the Sask Party members that this, as I heard mentioned earlier by the member from Regina Douglas Park, that there are a whole bunch of people that this is not going to exactly play well with. And I think that this, if I may, Mr. Speaker, this is going to help put those folks into opposition.

And you know, I have been listening over the last few days in terms of the members' statements that they have been making, and I would say that what is happening is that, if you listen carefully in the way they're phrasing the members' statements and in their attacks, that in fact what they're actually practising for is the opposition. I think they're practising for the opposition, Mr. Speaker, and they should continue to do that. If I was them, I would definitely continue to do that.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I was just beginning to explain to those members about the recent Supreme Court ruling, I would just remind them about that ruling because perhaps a number of them have not heard about that. And there was a press release released on June 8, 2007, and I would just like to read that into the record:

This morning's ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada, which affirms a challenge to Bill 29 brought by the Hospital Employees' Union, the BC Nurses Union, and the BCGEU, is a major victory for the labour movement that will restrict government's future ability to strip away collective bargaining rights . . .

Bill 29, the Health and Social Services Delivery Improvement Act, is the controversial 2002 legislation that removed or rewrote contracting out, seniority and other provisions of health care and community social services collective agreements. The legislation restricts free collective bargaining on many of these issues. Bill 29 also excluded health care and community social service workers from the successorship provisions of the BC Labour Code.

In a 6-1 decision, the Court held that freedom of association as guaranteed by Section 2(d) of the Charter includes a procedural right to collective bargaining. In doing so the Court has overturned previous decisions that rejected any protection for collective bargaining.

Mr. Speaker, this right of collective bargaining in the workplace is now protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This decision overturns 20 years of legal decisions that, as far as labour was concerned, gave no meaning to the Charter's protection of freedom of association.

Mr. Speaker, members over there should understand that these are important rights now enshrined, now enshrined, in our constitution.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as the Supreme Court said, in the government to the BC [British Columbia], it was wrong for them. It was wrong for them to tear up agreements that were negotiated with unions and that they could not make legislated changes that would make null and void those agreements without negotiating with the unions. That is what the Supreme Court decision was all about, Mr. Speaker. It said that collective bargaining, that you had to collective bargain any changes

within collective agreements, that you could not simply pass Bills and make changes without first talking to the people who you had agreements with.

Now the court in its decision thereby not only conferred the right of freedom of association but extended to the unions the right to collective bargaining. Mr. Speaker, this right is now enshrined in our constitution and the rights which this government should respect, something which seems, Mr. Speaker, from the actions of, as I mentioned the part-time Minister of Labour, something which is completely lost on that part-time Minister of Labour.

Mr. Speaker, I secondly spoke and made mention of President Obama's administration putting forward the *Employee Free Choice Act*, Mr. Speaker, and I would just like to tell you a bit about what President Obama had to say about the free choice Act. Speaking to the *Washington Post* he said:

Here's my basic principle [he said] that wages and incomes have flatlined over the last decade. That part of that has to do with forces . . . beyond everybody's control: globalization, technology and so forth. Part of it has to do with workers have very little leverage and that larger and larger shares of our productivity go to the top and not to the middle or the bottom. [He said] I think unions serve an important role in that.

And, Mr. Speaker, the important part he said:

I think that the way the Bush Administration managed the Department of Labor, the NLRB, and a host of other aspects of labor management relations [they] put the thumb too heavily against unions. I want to lift that thumb [he said, Mr. Speaker]. There are going to be steps that we can take other than the Employee Free Choice Act that will make a difference there.

I think the basic principle of making it easier and fairer for workers to want to join a union, join a union, is important [he said].

That's what he said, Mr. Speaker:

I think the basic principle of making it easier and fairer for workers who want to join a union, join a union, is important. And the basic outline of the Employee Free Choice are the ones that I agree with . . ." [But he said] I'll certainly listen to all parties . . .

And those are the words of President Barack Obama, President of the United States of America. And yet, Mr. Speaker, this part-time Minister of Labour should note . . .

The Speaker: — Order, order. I just want to remind the member I think in times past we have been . . . It's been brought to the attention of members that we're to address the members in the Chamber by their proper title. And by referring to individuals as part-time members, I do not believe references proper title, so I remind members and will call you on that again if it's raised again. Thank you.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the

Minister of Labour should note that this Bill will allow workers to join unions if the majority of employees sign cards of support without the necessity of voting by secret ballot. Mr. Speaker, that should be . . . Perhaps the members who would hear that that this Bill, that this Bill that's being now put forward in the United States of America by President Obama's administration will allow workers to join unions if the majority of employees sign a card of support without the necessity of voting by secret ballot. Imagine that, Mr. Speaker. Just imagine that, Mr. Speaker. The United States of America is passing legislation to have unionization by card signing, and our Minister of Labour has taken that right away from workers right here in Saskatchewan. That same right that the President of the United States is putting forward for the American workers, here in Saskatchewan the Sask Party is taking away.

And on top of it all, if you think, Mr. Speaker, that that is not showing disrespect, they are saying that this is more democratic. They have the audacity to stand there and say that this is somehow more democratic, more democratic than the United States of America. This will be a good one for the history books, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would say that that Minister of Labour lives in denial. And denial is a fact that it matters which approach you take in industrial relations. On the record, in committees, over and over he says that it does not matter. He tells the public, Mr. Speaker, that he is more democratic than the government of the United States except that his policies are the same as the George Bush policies, and we all know what happened to George Bush, Mr. Speaker.

And I would also say for the record that the Minister of Labour probably thinks of himself as holding somewhat liberal views, but I think he's shown himself quite clear the conservative that he is. And, Mr. Speaker, perhaps he doesn't understand the policies that he's putting forward are the same as the George Bush anti-union policies the American people rejected in the last American election. And I think it would be well worthwhile for the Sask Party to pay attention to that.

[15:15]

Mr. Speaker, imagine the history books, what they will say about this regressive legislation and the Minister of Labour. What will the scholars in this area say when they see at the same time that the Supreme Court of Canada and the Government of the United States were creating true freedoms and equality for the working people and our own Minister of Labour, right here in Saskatchewan, was marching most certainly to his own drummer in the opposite direction.

Now what is at times lost on the members opposite, the Sask Party, is that this province attained this economic growth under the existing labour laws — laws based on equality and fairness, Mr. Speaker. And now what direction is the Sask Party now taking us? And what will the future look like in a few years, Mr. Speaker? Can you really have a functioning system, economic system, without, Mr. Speaker, without the buy-in of the people of this province, without the buy-in of the workers?

And, Mr. Speaker, what is unbelievable is the calling of these actions democratic and freedom of choice. Nobody is going to

believe that, Mr. Speaker, and I would say to that minister, to ask him how he could be so out of step with the world around him. And it isn't enough that he would just trample on the democratic rights of workers in this province with Bill 5, the essential services and Bill 6, amendments to *The Trade Union Act*. He wasn't done yet, Mr. Speaker, because now they bring forward Bill 80, a Bill which will dismantle the proud traditions of our trades in our province.

But he isn't talking about democracy this time, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, he isn't talking, he isn't talking about democracy, but this time the communications department has come up with something different. It has come up with something different, and they're now calling it freedom of choice. And freedom of choice he's talking about is for employers having the freedom to bargain on their own and employees having the right to join the union of their choice. Now this in and of itself, Mr. Speaker, is fine, and it doesn't sound like it's a huge problem. But what he is trying to say to the people of this province also as well is that there should be parallel models of certification existing simultaneously.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's a complex issue, but until you understand the workings of the construction industry, all of this so far might sound quite fine. But at closer look, Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that what'll be happening here is this has major impact and implications for the lives of the people involved in the construction industry.

Mr. Speaker, it's when you understand the impact of these changes on the building trades unions of this province and understand that in time that they will disappear, Mr. Speaker, that in fact what is in this Bill is a complete dismantling of the industry as it now is today. And are we ready to have them disappear, Mr. Speaker, to be wiped from the face of this province?

Now what I would say to these members, what is happening here — and say to the people of this province — what is happening here is he is doing what the Grant Devine government didn't quite accomplish because all the Devine government did in the '80s was cause us to lose a generation of tradespeople in this province, Mr. Speaker — a generation of tradespeople leaving this province; a generation of tradespeople losing their apprenticeships in this province; Mr. Speaker, tradespeople leaving in droves.

And, Mr. Speaker, history is unfortunately repeating itself. And this callous attitude of this party and this Minister of Labour and the Premier who's determined to continue his war on the working people of this province and those Devine Tories — or whatever else we have over there who changed their name and now are disguised as the Sask Party members — they are here, and they're here to do it again, Mr. Speaker. They're here to finish the job.

And, Mr. Speaker, I spoke of the trades disappearing, and what do we lose? What do we lose here? We lose our neighbours. We lose our friends. We lose the contributions of these working men and women to this province. We lose the charitable and volunteer work that we do. And, Mr. Speaker, all under the heading of the Sask Party's freedom of choice to develop by their communications department.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what also this Bills allows, it allows certification by project by project. And now again, a project-by-project certification, an idea in and of itself is probably . . . If you look at *The Trade Union Act*, each workplace is organized as one workplace by certification.

The difficulty in the construction industry is that projects are completed and then work sites change. And so within the industry, they had developed a procedure by which they would stabilize this so that if an employer was unionized, they would move that unionization, move that union certification from site to site. So then when you put it now and you say, well now we can organize by project by project, what will happen, Mr. Speaker? Will that mean that individual construction companies can come, attempt to organize, then unions attempt to organize on the site? Perhaps even before they can organize a union, the project will be completed and so there will be no union there.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, this allows for the opting out, in most cases, of the established employers who are part of REOs [representative employer organization] to opt out and then have separate certifications with unions. It also allows, Mr. Speaker, one union to come in and organize all the trades in one work site under one union, Mr. Speaker.

Now all of this leads to one thing, Mr. Speaker, it leads to the dismantling of the construction industry and the unions involved and employers as it exists today, and it makes it difficult to negotiate. When it's more difficult to negotiate, Mr. Speaker, it drives down wages, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, again I ask, why when the Supreme Court of this land thinks that collective bargaining is important, why does this party—the Sask Party—why do they fear collective bargaining? Why do they fear creating a level playing field for the party so that they can reach their own agreements? Why do they have so little faith in the people of this province? The construction industry is unique, and we should respect that and be mindful when we set out to make changes, Mr. Speaker. We should consult with people, and we should talk to them.

Now if you, threaten, Mr. Speaker . . . We all understand. We've all been involved in negotiations on different issues. And, Mr. Speaker, if you threaten the very existence of one party, obviously how can this be considered creating a level playing field? We lose, Mr. Speaker, because under this freedom of choice Sask Party style, we lose the collective bargaining process. We lose because not only the dismantling of the trade unions and the proud history of these organizations, but we also see the reduction of wages — of wages — Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this is a recipe for the race to the bottom, the race to the bottom to see who can do it cheaper because when you have, as we put forward, amounts of money — be that with the recent announcement, the provincial government's \$500 million infrastructure booster shot, and combining that with the 1 billion already committed to the infrastructure — we have money out there, Mr. Speaker. And now we bring this Bill in so that we can reduce the costs of labour.

The costs of labour, Mr. Speaker, they're expecting the men and women of this province . . . And what they're doing, I would

say, is taking advantage of the working men and women in this province by driving down the costs. So they are trying to save and get more work out of the working men and women in the province when in fact, what does collective bargaining do? Collective bargaining is an attempt, Mr. Speaker, an attempt to create a fair agreement.

At the end of that fair agreement, Mr. Speaker, done in the way that it should, what occurs is that you have a productive workforce. What is totally being lost on these members and this government is that you have a productive workforce, you have a committed workforce, and you get quality work.

Mr. Speaker, that's why when they say . . . And they talk about the freedom of choice. It has nothing to do about the freedom of choice. This is just a badly packaged deal which is all about getting it done more cheaply in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister in releasing this Bill put a backgrounder in with it as well. And in that backgrounder, it says in there, Mr. Speaker, that he wants done things quickly by attracting, and I quote from the Minister of Labour, his own material: “. . . [encouraging] additional construction companies and employees into the province and by encouraging more competitive bidding on projects.” Well stop and consider what is being said. And again I quote from the minister's material: “. . . [encourage] additional construction companies and employees . . .” so that we can do this quicker, Mr. Speaker. So that they could do it quicker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, when I read that and I think about it, it sounds to me like we don't have enough employees here so we will have to bring some in from out of the province. And the question is, will those companies or will those employees stay here?

Construction workers follow the work. Will we have out-of-town licence plates, Mr. Speaker, everywhere? And will those wages, as income taxes, will they flow out of our province? And will workers in Saskatchewan union halls be sitting on their hands while outside contractors bring in their own employees? And will these outside contractors, Mr. Speaker, as I spoke previously, be paying the rates our workers have negotiated through fair collective bargaining? Because that's why it becomes so important for this party opposite to dismantle and create an unlevel playing field — so that there cannot be fair and collective bargaining.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, our workers in Saskatchewan here are sitting on their hands while outside contractors bring in their own employees. And again my concern here is, what rates of pay will be paid? What impact — as Mr. Westcott said — what impact will the rates that we now have bargained in our industry, what impact will they have on these new people coming from outside the province? Will they be lower? Will any of that money stay here? What taxes will we collect? Or will most of that booster shot money and most of the money that we have put in leave the province?

Well, Mr. Speaker, with Bill 80 I think the Saskatchewan Party has made it clear what they are trying to do. And I'm not really certain what message, when this message finally gets out to the people of this province, what message is there here.

The government says they have a booster shot for the province. And, Mr. Speaker, this booster shot . . . And I think it's been well established now that they got this from the management of the province by the former NDP government. They say they also receive some federal funding. And they want everyone to come here so that all these projects can be done cheaply and quickly. And they are saying if you bring workers from outside this province and they later leave, that's okay.

But, Mr. Speaker, what about the working families of this province? This is their booster money. This is their booster shot money. And, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party had zero to do with the accumulation of this money. It was the hard-working families of this province who suffered through the hard Tory times of the '80s and then persevered while we dug our way out in the '90s.

And now they are spending the money created by the people of this province and saying that the Sask Party did it all and going on each day about their booster shot, when it is the hard work of the NDP government and the people of this province. And that, Mr. Speaker, and that is what we hear continuously, day after day, coming from that other side.

Mr. Speaker, people have often told me that they simply can't expect those kinds of statements coming as they do from the other side. And, Mr. Speaker, it is that they could so easily throw money around like that while here we have over 3,300 people receiving employment insurance benefits, and that they can talk about bringing people from other provinces when our own citizens sit receiving EI [employment insurance] benefits, Mr. Speaker, to some is bordering on outrageous. And yet how smugly they dismiss all of this with their calls of freedom of choice.

Mr. Speaker, as mentioned earlier by one of the former speakers, I think that people will see through this. People will see through this. And, Mr. Speaker, for myself I can hardly wait for 2011 because I think at that point in time, Mr. Speaker, people will see this, and I believe that what they will do here is they're going to show these folks the door. I think they're going to do that.

[15:30]

Now, Mr. Speaker, what is to me also most disconcerting — and I can't imagine that it's anyone's intention to create an unsafe work site — but, Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned. All this rush to get things done quickly, as the minister wants and as he stated in his background, all these things to get things done quickly raises a few questions.

Will there be sufficient staff over at the occupational health and safety branch to do the appropriate checks, and has the minister made sure that his department will be able to handle this expected influx of new companies and employees? Now, Mr. Speaker, during the budget or during the estimates I did not hear the minister propose any huge increase of money for the extra positions at the occupational health and safety branch. And, Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether all the inspections that need to be done will be done.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps we missed something or perhaps we were

not there, but we also hear that there is overwork at the department. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm not certain what we do with this huge influx that this party talks about, a huge influx of outside contractors and employees who they are going to allow to do these projects as quickly as possible.

Mr. Speaker, we all lose. We all lose when that Sask Party government dismantles the building trades. We all lose. And yet, Mr. Speaker, they do not think that this is a serious, serious issue. To think, Mr. Speaker, that you can simply put forward ideas and get things done cheaply or quickly and that that is an answer, misses a large point.

You build a workforce, Mr. Speaker, with respect. You build a workforce by paying decent wages, by providing decent benefits, and providing safe workplaces, Mr. Speaker. And you do that because, as the Supreme Court of Canada has agreed, you do that by building on a foundation. A foundation of respect, Mr. Speaker, a foundation that says, a foundation that says that you respect your fellow citizens, a foundation that says that you have a right to collective bargaining, a foundation that says, Mr. Speaker, that you do not, that you do not weaken one party so as to create an unlevel playing field.

But you look to equality and fairness, Mr. Speaker. You look to equality and fairness because at the base of it . . . And that is why, that is why I believe those judges, in the six to one decision, said that, we believe that collective bargaining should be, that collective bargaining should be part of our constitution, Mr. Speaker.

And that is the way that this country is going. That is the way that the United States of America are going. But they believe in equality and fairness, and yet here in Saskatchewan we have turned and we're going in the opposite direction.

What happened? What really happened in the United States? Why did the American people rise up and say enough was enough, and elect a new president? And why did immediately after did we change some of these basic fundamentals of the workplace? Because you have to have a workplace to have a healthy economy, and this is what's missing.

It is not only the business community. And we have to respect our people in the business community, Mr. Speaker. We have to respect the people in the business community and do the right things for them, which when we were in government we did in terms of changing the tax regimes and continually working to make improvements in that area. But you cannot do that by showing a disrespect for the working people of this province.

Now we hear at times that they talk about the union bosses and this is only somehow that this will take away the power of the union bosses or that this hurts the union bosses. Mr. Speaker, this does not hurt the union bosses — and I'll come back to talking about the union bosses in a second — but this goes and hurts the people on the jobs.

Mr. Speaker, we all lose. We all lose with this kind of legislation. We all lose because built into there is a disrespect. Built into that that tells you and I, Mr. Speaker, that says to us that craft unions, that crafts, Mr. Speaker, the proud crafts of carpentry, the proud crafts of everything, that that no longer

counts, Mr. Speaker. It no longer counts in the province of Saskatchewan because what you can do now, Mr. Speaker, is put everybody together.

Now the Minister of Labour talks about, Mr. Speaker, he talks about that we would put people together and that somehow this will work better. But, Mr. Speaker, you have to get the buy-in of the people. You have to get the buy-in of the people.

I think we all understand that if you go out and try and build something or accomplish something, that we first consult and we try and get the buy-in of the people so that we're all onside and moving in the same direction. And that is fundamental. That's so fundamental that, in fact, however . . . Perhaps not so fundamental that we need to put that in the constitution, but that idea of having to have a buy-in of all people so that we're all going in the same direction, so that we all have the same goals — that, in the end of the day, is what we should be trying to accomplish.

And yet what do we have here? We have received numerous phone calls. We have received numerous people asking for petitions. We have spoken to numbers of people and they are not happy, Mr. Speaker. And these are not just — like the folks across would say — the union bosses. And I would have those members across the way . . . And also understand that union bosses, as they would like to so many times call them, are taxpaying members of this province as well.

And so at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, what do we have? What will, as I spoke previously, what will the history books say about this attempt? And hopefully it won't be successful, Mr. Speaker. Hopefully this attempt will not be successful in dismantling the great traditions of our crafts, the great traditions of our craft unions.

Mr. Speaker, these go back to history, go back a long time in history — years — to the great buildings that have been built, whether they be the cathedrals, the great cathedrals of the past or whatever: these are crafts. And everybody understands the crafts and how people honoured that and how they were proud to be part of crafts, and that went over to be proud to be part of craft unions.

They are going to the very heart of that and can you expect, Mr. Speaker, that people will accept that? It doesn't surprise me that people that feel so passionate that perhaps you feel some of that anger and some of that disappointment as I speak to you here, Mr. Speaker because I'm trying to relay to the members opposite of the feelings of the people and the thoughts of these people who . . . This is their life, and you are taking it and tearing it apart. And for what reason? Because nobody gave them a call, nobody wrote them a letter, nobody called a meeting to ask, here's what we're going to do. And what we're going to do is, we want to get to this place and we want to try something new with you. What do you think?

Now that seems quite reasonable. I think in a common sense way that's all that people expect. That's all that the hard-working men and women of this province expect is that you would give them a call. That you would say to these people, we want to do something different. We want to try something. We think this isn't working.

And you might, while you do that, sit down with them at a meeting and say, here are the reasons why we think this isn't working. And I would bet, Mr. Speaker, that you would have a reasonable response. You would have a reasonable response from these people because they are reasonable people. They're hard-working people of this province. They've made what this province is, and they don't deserve what is happening here. They do not deserve what is happening here, Mr. Speaker. This is callous. This is arrogant. And, Mr. Speaker, this is dismissive.

And, Mr. Speaker, in that backgrounder . . . And I am astounded and I would encourage the members to read the backgrounder to this Bill because I had to reread it a few times to make sure that I quite understood what was being said. Because surely . . . And they spoke in this backgrounder, "rebuilding Saskatchewan's infrastructure" and they talked about the government's main priorities is rebuilding Saskatchewan's infrastructure. And again the government talked about:

We are spending a record amount of money to address a significant backlog of projects in transportation, health care, education and other areas. But those projects, and others undertaken by the private sector, are not proceeding as quickly as they could [and they say] in part because of a shortage of skilled labour. Projects have been delayed and there have been cost overruns.

Well here's what they say these amendments will address: "These amendments will enable work to get done more quickly by attracting additional construction companies and employees into the province and by encouraging more competitive bidding . . ."

Now what does that mean when you say this will get it done more quickly, encourage more competitive bidding?

Mr. Speaker, this is my point exactly. The workers of this province through collective agreements — as I spoke before — through sitting down between unions and employers, sitting down and negotiating collective agreements have achieved rates of pay accepted by their members through democratic votes at meetings. And instead of contacting them or instead of negotiating this at the bargaining table, the government is saying we need to do this quickly. There are cost overruns, and here's what we are going to do. We're going to bring in Bill 80 and we're going to make it so that we can have more competitive bidding and we can bring in more people.

Now nobody is opposed in this province to having people come and work here and create homes and raise their families. Nobody is opposed to that. But, Mr. Speaker, the intent of this is not to do that. The intent of this, Mr. Speaker, the intent of this is to do this more quickly and more cheaply. And I would say to you that that is a recipe for problems, a recipe for problems. Because nobody was contacted, and that shows no respect. We can talk about respect, Mr. Speaker. We can talk about respect from me talking about the minister, but there is a different kind of respect.

And that is the respect when you put this in writing, and the impact this has on the working men and families of this

province. And they don't have, Mr. Speaker, somebody there to stand up on their behalf and say, you can't do that in this province. You can't do that. They have the Supreme Court of Canada. They have the court system that they can go to, Mr. Speaker, and they can say . . . They can take an action in the courts and take that action and try and stop this. But that's a difficult, long, and expensive process.

So they don't have that. So what you have is a government that has a huge hammer, and the courts have recognized this and the courts have said that you can't quite do some of these things. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the court system is a long and arduous process that takes a lot of time.

But I think it's quite clear that why Bill 80 was brought in is to get the work done more quickly. Mr. Speaker, when you do that — and maybe while I'm on the topic of getting this done more quickly, and we've talked about the traditions and the quality and the craftsmen and the traditions that are here — what about, Mr. Speaker, another simple thing like pride in a job well done, Mr. Speaker? What about pride in a job well done?

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that minister or the Sask Party government believe in quality. Now I think by Bill 80 and what we're hearing back, is I know that people don't feel they have any respect for them. But, Mr. Speaker, it is truly, truly a sad day for this province when we sacrifice quality of work. Now I'm not saying that if we do the jobs more quickly we'll sacrifice that, but I wonder. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, and that goes to earlier in my statements regarding safety. Mr. Speaker, we continuously talk about working safe. We talk about working carefully. And here we have, we need to get this done quickly, Mr. Speaker.

[15:45]

Mr. Speaker, one of the other things that we lose under this Bill is we lose in the whole area of apprenticeships, our apprenticeships programs. Mr. Speaker, if you marginalize and reduce the pay and make effective these unions, I think we probably all, we at least on this side, understand it. I think the members opposite on the other side would probably quietly acknowledge it — at least I would hope they would quietly acknowledge it and not be out front about it. But if we marginalize and reduce the pay and make ineffective these unions . . . Because that has been what all three Bills have had the effect of doing. Mr. Speaker, the craft unions are the ones who play an integral role in helping train the future tradespeople in our province.

Now I mentioned already how we lost a generation of apprenticeship people — a generation not only of apprenticeship, but a generation of tradespeople in this province. We lost them when the Devine Tories brought in their spinoff companies and changed the last time they changed this Act. Now they've left this Act in and left the idea of spinoff companies there, but the effect is even more dramatic. Even more dramatic, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, just returning to the apprenticeships. Mr. Speaker, in this kind of scenario, where we're trying to achieve cheaper wages, where we're trying to do things quicker, what about the quality of work for the province and what about the training?

What happens to the training of our future craftspeople? What happens to our apprenticeship programs when you marginalize the very people who are training, when you marginalize the very people who provide money and time, and spend the time with these people to train so that we can have quality tradespeople in the future?

This is one of the things that is happening here. This ill-thought-out legislation with one goal in mind of getting it done quickly and cheaply — the result, Mr. Speaker, the result, Mr. Speaker, is quality of workmanship will go down. And we will feel this in years to come. Because people will go to work. People will accept jobs because they have to work. And we do have 3,300 people receiving employment insurance. But I would say, Mr. Speaker, that ultimately workmanship will suffer, training of apprenticeships will suffer, because again, if you put a Bill forward and you show . . . Part and parcel of that, if people are saying that they feel that there's no respect for them, what will you get in return, Mr. Speaker? What will you get in return? And the message, I guess, is quite clear. I mean when the Premier, I guess, is talking about going to war with labour, with the working men and women of this province, I guess, what more can you expect?

Mr. Speaker, who will be at the bargaining tables if we marginalize these people? Who will be at the bargaining tables and who will be there arguing about ratios of apprenticeship? Do we have no concept, Mr. Speaker? Does the Sask Party have no concept about discussion, no concept about sitting down with people and saying . . . Are they afraid to sit down to say and work out . . . Because that's bargaining. That's consultation. That's basic. That's basic to all of us here in this province. No concept to sit down . . . But, Mr. Speaker, who will go and argue for ratios? Who will give the input, Mr. Speaker?

We all understand one thing, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if we go to build a fence in our yard, Mr. Speaker, if we go to farm in our fields, Mr. Speaker, if we go to build a house . . .

An Hon. Member: — Yes, you'd know about that.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — We go, we go, Mr. Speaker, and we talk to people that know about that. And I heard, what do I know about that? Well that's right, Mr. Speaker, because I wouldn't pretend to know about that. But that is what is happening here. They're pretending to know about something which they know nothing about, Mr. Speaker. They know nothing about and nor do they consult and nor do they ask the people of this province — the craftspeople of this province — as to what they should do.

Instead they spend time in their communications department, Mr. Speaker, coming up with phrases of freedom of choice. Freedom of choice. It's interesting that the American . . . that Barack Obama would use that in terms for the workers, because that is what equality and fairness is, Mr. Speaker. That's who they should take a page out of. But instead, no, Mr. Speaker, they're heading for dark days because they do not believe in the respect for the workers of this province. They do not believe or understand what it means to respect the working men and women of this province. Because they're caught up, Mr. Speaker, they're caught up in an ideology that says quicker and cheaper is better. If we can get this done quicker and cheaper,

that is the end goal.

But, Mr. Speaker, we suffer. We all suffer. And it is a sad day for this province when we bow to that kind of ideology. So, Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court of Canada says that collective bargaining . . . because they respect, they know what respect is, Mr. Speaker. And the United States of America and the president, Barack Obama, understands what respect for the working men and women of the North American continent is, but there is a spot in this country, there is a province where that is obviously . . . Somehow there's a lack of understanding around that respect.

So again, Mr. Speaker, it's all about democracy, and that is not democracy, Mr. Speaker. They can spin that whichever way they want but, Mr. Speaker, people are talking out there. People are calling. I've had the opportunity of meeting hundreds, hundreds of people, Mr. Speaker — hundreds — to talk about the Bills that this minister has put forward. And they're unanimous. They're unanimous about what they think about these Bills. Now, Mr. Speaker, I've not seen such a group so eager to change sides in this legislature, but I think that that's what these people are doing because I think people have now turned and are working very hard to see those members not be there after 2011.

So, Mr. Speaker, that government, willing to sacrifice, willing to sacrifice quality, Mr. Speaker, willing to flood the market with employees and, Mr. Speaker, I wonder about this. I wonder about this strategy, and I wonder, you know, because I hear the member talking from there. But I wonder. We've often heard the members across the way talking about, bragging about going out of province and doing fundraising and then coming back and being smug about how much money they had raised. Mr. Speaker, you might wonder if this is maybe payback. Is this payback, Mr. Speaker, to that and, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, is this payback? Mr. Speaker, is this payback for those fundraising junkets that they were taking, that they were taking. Is that? Is that, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting when we start talking about money and paybacks. We have finally gotten the attention. I wish we would get the attention of these folks when we're talking about more loftier ideals like decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada and loftier ideals about equality and fairness and loftier ideals about fair collective bargaining, but it seems their only interest in is the issues around money.

Well what about the money and the fair wages to the workers of this province who make this province what it is? Every day they go to work and they make this province. And they get a Bill like Bill 80 and Bill 5 and 6, which reeks with disrespect, Mr. Speaker.

But those hundreds of people that I've been talking to outside of this legislature and the hundreds that are sending in petitions, they are mounting, Mr. Speaker. And they might be smug and sit there and think that this isn't, but that number is mounting, Mr. Speaker. And I don't want to warn them of the impending tide, but there is a tide building, Mr. Speaker, and they will be sorry for the day that they brought this forward.

Mr. Speaker, again you can talk about things like the

apprenticeship programs and, Mr. Speaker, and the dismantling — the dismantling — of the craft unions. I talked about how important that is and what it means to people in this province — people who worked in the crafts, people who are our carpenters or plumbers and all that, people who went to school and did that and who got their apprenticeship programs and who take pride in their work — to have this sort of Bill. And I guess what would be worse is that no letters, Mr. Speaker, no phone calls, no contacts for meetings — just simply, here is the Bill and we'll talk to you about it later; what do you think?

And, Mr. Speaker, they wonder why they get that reaction, the reaction that they do. And perhaps, perhaps, you know, they might in a bubble and not even understand because, obviously, they don't understand what's going on in Canada with the Supreme Court, and they don't understand what's going on in the United States. Mr. Speaker, they've gone backwards and adopted George Bush policies. These are George Bush policies and now they've adopted them. And somehow they think they'll get a different outcome.

We all know, Mr. Speaker, about trying to do something the same way and getting a different outcome — what they say about that. And I think that that's what's going to happen. Read the history book. The history books will write about this. They will write about this just as they will write about the George Bush years in the States. And they will take it apart, and they will look at the labour laws at that time. And they will see that these are exactly what was put forward by that Minister of Labour.

And perhaps he's trying to get into the history books next to George Bush. That's fine. I'd rather not be there, Mr. Speaker, but perhaps that member is trying to do that. I think he's succeeding here. He's succeeding because his name will not go next to the President of the United States, Barack Obama. He won't be in the same books. He might be mentioned as, look what was happening at a time when Barack Obama was talking about equality and fairness and collective bargaining and signing union cards and all the rest of that.

What was our minister doing in trying to get his name into the history books? Well he'd be in *Hansard*, but I dare say that I don't think he's going to make it on that kind of playing field, Mr. Speaker, as somebody who was innovative in changes that helped working people.

Because, you see, what's lost is that you have to understand that if you treat people with respect and you get the buy-in of people, they will work. And they'll provide the work and they'll do quality work. We'll have safer workplaces. But what is happening here is they're causing, they're causing strife, Mr. Speaker. They're causing strife.

Mr. Westcott said — and if I may, just maybe read that again because in case they had missed that — in terms of the stability of what they're causing “It will be very destabilizing to labour relations and apprenticeships.” Now here's somebody who's worked in there. And obviously somebody before said, you would know little about that, and so we would simply ask somebody who works in this. “There will be wildcat strikes . . . [job] confrontations, neglect of the apprenticeship system and way lower wages for all construction workers, union or not . . .”

at the end of the day.

Well if that's the goal, Mr. Speaker, I wish they would . . . instead of going to the communications department and coming up with these good-sounding phrases — freedom of choice — wow, we all get excited about freedom of choice, democracy. But when we take that apart, there's a great distance between what the Supreme Court thinks freedom of choice is, between what Barack Obama thinks what freedom of choice is, and that minister, what he thinks freedom of choice is.

Now he's made to wear this. I guess at times, sometimes, Mr. Speaker, when I sit and I think about this, what could possibly be going on to do this, Mr. Speaker? I have to say perhaps that there's a lack of understanding or maybe perhaps he's being made to wear the can for this. I mean, I don't understand why somebody would want to attach themselves to this. Why would you, Mr. Speaker?

Why would you, on one hand, have your Workers' Compensation Board having . . . Now there's something that we could be proud of — Mission: Zero. We could be proud of that, and we could all get behind Mission: Zero because we understand that. But when we all look at that, what the goals are, we get behind that and we say, good for the Workers' Compensation Board.

But then we have somebody who comes up with freedom of choice, and they give us the kind of nonsense that's in Bill 80. Mr. Speaker, it's hard, it's hard to get behind something like that. And the people of this province are not going to get behind this — the workers, the craftspeople who spent their time in refining their craft. This is a complete disrespect for all those hours and all the time they have spent, what is going on here.

[16:00]

Now, Mr. Speaker, it all comes back to collective bargaining. Many times I've stood up and spoken about collective bargaining because, Mr. Speaker, in all the years that I spent there, one of the greatest, one of the best things that was in *The Trade Union Act*, Mr. Speaker, was the right to sit down across the table from your employer and discuss the problems at work. If you make that work, Mr. Speaker, I tell you that you have a healthy society, you have a healthy workplace, and you have committed workers. And it's not that difficult, Mr. Speaker. At the end of the day it is simple.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the other things that has been put in here is the ability in Bill 80 to have one union — one union instead of the craft system that we have, where we have many different unions on one site. We have one union come in and organize a project, and that's why we have to have project-by-project certifications, but one union could get all the crafts together.

Now people have expressed to me that there's concerns when you do that, that the apprenticeship program suffers because, Mr. Speaker, because people will not spend or pay enough attention to the different trades. And when you add in to get the job done quicker, you can see why that would happen, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as I was told, you know, I would suggest to the members opposite to listen and to maybe perhaps go out and talk, which I understand that they don't consult, that they just simply go ahead and do things, which would be something probably new for them. But perhaps they should go out and talk to people in the trades and ask them, and ask them clearly, Mr. Speaker, would it have an impact on the apprenticeship programs in this province? Would it have that? Now if they come back and they say, no it would not, Mr. Speaker, I'm willing to accept that. But, Mr. Speaker, for my part, I've gone out, and I've asked people who work in these areas. And they tell me that that is what will happen with the apprenticeship program. Yet from across there we hear, we hear that, oh no, it won't happen. Oh no, it won't happen.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you can — because it is democracy and we accept that — you can put through legislation. But our role here, Mr. Speaker, the role of the opposition is to point out and to talk to people and to point out the wrong-headedness of this approach. But, Mr. Speaker, they can march off and march off in the wrong direction, as I said, march off in the direction that's opposite to where the Supreme Court of Canada's going, march off in the wrong direction to where the United States of America's going. They can do that here in Saskatchewan but, Mr. Speaker, I don't see that this is going to be a great outcome, nor would I want to be putting my name to something like this, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, and I guess with that, as is in democracies, is sometimes because the power is vested in the government, that they can, that they can inflict this kind of damage on a system that was working.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I talked about that system earlier because over a number of years *The Construction Industry Labour Relations Act* was put into place. And the Tories in the '80s decided that wasn't going to work. They wanted it done, Mr. Speaker. And what would I say, Mr. Speaker, the outcome is they wanted it done cheaper because there were negotiated collective agreements. They didn't respect the collective agreements, so they wanted spin-off companies. Why did they want spin-off companies? They wanted spin-off companies so that they could get lower rates of pay. And what is happening in Bill 80, Mr. Speaker? Lower rates of pay. Now how many people do you think you can fool with that?

Mr. Speaker, it's quite clear that I think they've embarked, with Bill 80, on something that will not succeed because, Mr. Speaker, people understand history. There's a history within the trades that is passed on, Mr. Speaker. And that history will point out to them what happened in the '80s, and they will see, Mr. Speaker, they will see. And they're telling me, Mr. Speaker, that this is the same as the '80s. And as I said earlier, this government is trying to finish off what Grant Devine started, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, collective bargaining is not an easy issue to tackle. Mr. Speaker, it is frustrating. It's confusing. And at times, it might seem impossible. But, Mr. Speaker, it has brought us to where we are today. Now the members opposite, they say that they've created this economic reality, but they quietly know and — nudge, nudge — we know that this was built by the people of this province and the NDP administration. Now they know that, Mr. Speaker.

And what they also are in denial about is that it was the labour laws that were in existence at that time, that allowed for this base, this economic reality that we are living in today, that it was those labour laws that got us to where we are. But, Mr. Speaker, it never seems enough when you get the Tories in, the Conservatives, Mr. Speaker, and now the Sask Party. Maybe they'll change their name next time around again, Mr. Speaker. But they just can't resist it, to try and push the buttons of, we can do it cheaper. We can do it quicker. Mr. Speaker, we can do all these things cheaper and quicker. And here is the money. Here is the money.

Mr. Speaker, our Supreme Court, Mr. Speaker, has recognized, Mr. Speaker, that we might all want, Mr. Speaker . . . because there's always that in us that would like to do things quicker and cheaper, Mr. Speaker. But the Supreme Court has said that if you fix it this way, we all lose, Mr. Speaker. And so the wise judges, the wise judges which these people should probably listen to have carefully considered the topic of collective bargaining and made it a Charter right because they said yes, you have to struggle, Mr. Speaker. You have to struggle because these things do not come easy. The things of building a society do not come easy.

Mr. Speaker, they recognize that collective bargaining is something that is fundamental to democracy and that we all cherish, that we all cherish, Mr. Speaker. And I guess, Mr. Speaker, it is to the people, to the working people of this province, somewhat of an insult when the Minister of Labour trots out this kind of Bill and cloaks it in freedom of choice, cloaks it in democracy when it is nothing more, Mr. Speaker, it's nothing more than an attack on free collective bargaining and democracy.

Mr. Speaker, this is what makes it so sad, so sad because this is a lack of appreciation, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . for what is collective bargaining. Mr. Speaker, the members opposite said it's not sad. Maybe perhaps sad is the wrong word that I'm using, Mr. Speaker, but disappointment, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . It's tragic. The member here says tragic that the people of this province, the craftspeople of this province, the workers out there, that I would say to these members that they should go, they should go and talk to those workers because it has become quite clear, Mr. Speaker, through my speech here, Mr. Speaker, that they have no understanding.

Mr. Speaker, I would now reiterate what a member earlier said, is that they have no understanding of what is going on, no understanding. And yet they bravely talk from their seats as if they do. But, Mr. Speaker, there is no understanding because by their actions, by their actions any reasonable person can see that there is no understanding here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this province has survived many trials and many challenges, and the people, Mr. Speaker, I would say to those members opposite, the people of the United States got it right. They got it right, and they dismissed this kind of nonsense in the last election. And I would think that that is what is going to happen in 2011 as I . . . [inaudible] . . . and look out and see what is going on, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is a government so soon, so soon that has grown out of touch with what is going on in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to, I would like to end by saying that I am somewhat looking positively to the agreement that was reached between our House leaders. And, Mr. Speaker, thanks to our House Leader for working on this issue and getting us the ability to hold public consultations on this Bill. Mr. Speaker, many people were not very impressed with the consultations held around Bills 5 and 6 — the secrecy and backdoor dealings of those consultations, Mr. Speaker. But here at least, Mr. Speaker, we have been able to achieve some hours for public consultations.

Mr. Speaker, I would just ask that there be some respect shown for the committee structure in this legislature and allow those stakeholders that want to be heard to be heard, Mr. Speaker, so that all the appropriate presentations could be made so that the people of this province could be heard. Perhaps we can still save the day on this one, Mr. Speaker, and change it so that it better reflects what the people of the province need to build a strong economy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, by asking for further presentations, I'm not asking for an endless line of people but, Mr. Speaker, what I'm asking for is to allow the committees that were made, give the committees latitude to do their work. Mr. Speaker, the committees are a vehicle for us, and we have to show them the respect to perform their democratic role in this legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the public consultations. I look forward to hearing from the people of this province. I would hope that the government listens. I would hope that they listen carefully and, Mr. Speaker, make the necessary changes and even if it means, Mr. Speaker, that they be big enough to withdraw this ill-conceived piece of legislation which has a lot of conflicting things in it which gives powers to people where they should not.

And let's work for a level playing field, Mr. Speaker, and let's work for a collective bargaining system that works. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing me to make these remarks.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion presented by the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour that Bill No. 80, *The Construction Industry Labour Relations Amendment Act, 2009* be now read a second time. 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: — Second reading of this Bill.

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

recognize the Government Deputy House Leader.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to the Human Services Committee.

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — Before I put the motion, I'd just remind members, if you'd give us a few minutes to just go over the annual meeting of the CPA [Commonwealth Parliamentary Association] immediately, that would be appreciated.

The Deputy House Leader has moved that this House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:13.]

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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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