



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

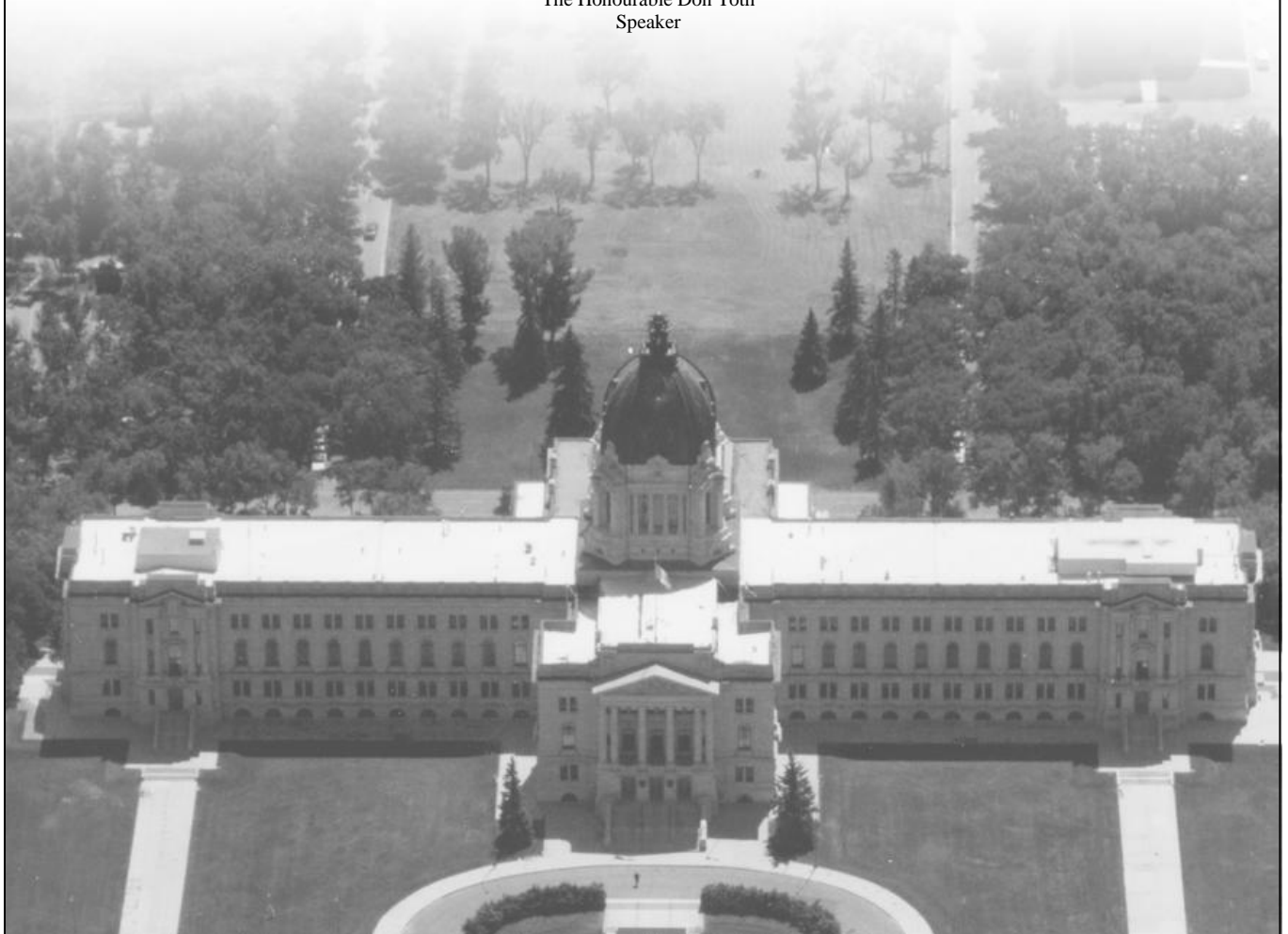
of the

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 — Dwain Lingenfelter

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
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Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Furber, Darcy	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
Gantfoer, Hon. Rod	SP	Melfort
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Higgins, Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, Hon. D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
LeClerc, Serge	Ind.	Saskatoon Northwest
Lingenfelter, Dwain	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Toth, Hon. Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
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 resumed at 13:30.]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — Being now 1:30, the House will resume with routine proceedings. I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce some folks who have joined us today. And joining us from various environmental organizations are — Darrell Crabbe from the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, Lorne Scott from Nature Saskatchewan. I believe Brent Kennedy from Ducks Unlimited was supposed to be here. I'm not sure where he is. I would also like to welcome representatives from cattle and stock growers associations. My colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, will be introducing them shortly.

And, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I would like to invite the leaders of both the environmental organizations and the stock growers and cattle associations to meet with me immediately following question period. I know there are some concerns over WHPA [*The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act*] legislation. I would like to meet with them, and we can discuss those concerns. So I put out that invitation today.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome the conservation organizations that are here in the legislature visiting the Assembly today. I'm very pleased to have these individuals in the legislature today, as they have a great interest in the legislation that is passing before the House.

And it's unfortunate that the minister is only willing to meet with them today given that there was been some concern expressed for a fair length of time. So, Mr. Speaker, as I said, it's very good to have them here in the House. And we've invited them to meet with us as well afterwards and we'll have some good productive talks. And I would like all members to welcome them to the legislature as well.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melville-Saltcoats, the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask leave to make an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The minister has asked for leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today to you and the members of the legislature, in your gallery, I'd like to introduce a number of our producers, ranchers and farmers from across Saskatchewan that are very

interested in the WHPA legislation that's coming forward, has been spoke on for a number of hours in the legislature, and are showing their concern today and their support for that Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce, start off with Jack and Kim Hextall from Grenfell, if they would wave as I introduce them. Jack is the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association president. Calvin Knoss from Rockglen. Calvin is the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association president. Rick Toney from Gull Lake, Ed Bothner from Beechy, Larry Grant from Val Marie, Orin Balas from Ponteix, Harold Martens from Swift Current, Ross Beierbach from Consul, Chad McPherson from Regina, Jim Warren from Regina, Reg Schellenberg from Beechy.

Reg and his wife, by the way, Mr. Speaker, his wife Shannon's parents, Ted and Olive Perrin, were winners of both the Saskatchewan and National Environmental Stewardship Award in 2004, and congratulate them for that.

Mr. Speaker, also I'd like to introduce Murray McGillvray from Radville. Murray and his wife Selena were winners of the Saskatchewan Environmental Stewardship Award in 2002. And I congratulate the McGillvray family for that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, also I'd like to introduce Eric Lawrence from Maple Creek. Eric and his wife Anne were winners of the Saskatchewan Environmental Stewardship Award in 1999, and congratulations.

Terry Ostrander from Hallonquist. Terry's parents Jim and Louise were winners of the Saskatchewan Environmental Stewardship Award in 1996.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome all those producers to their legislature, and congratulate all of them for the good care they take of our Crown land right across the province of Saskatchewan. Thank you for coming.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — I want to join with the minister and all members of the Assembly in welcoming our producers and organizations here today — the farmers and ranchers who do a great job of not only producing, but looking after the farm land and ranchland.

I would also be remiss if I didn't give a special introduction to our friend, Harold Martens, who served in the Assembly for a number of years representing the — I believe at that time — the Morse constituency. And we had some great debates in the Assembly, Harold, and I'm glad to see you here. And also Lorne Scott who has gone on to, I might say, bigger and better things, winning national awards.

And I just wanted to say to all the visitors here today, welcome to your Assembly. And again, to the minister, thank you for the work that you've done with these folks and people and we look forward to the great debate that's going on on the use of agricultural land but, more importantly, to the land that is owned by all Saskatchewan residents. It's a wonderful discussion and we look forward to that debate continuing today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways, the MLA for Rosetown-Elrose.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to this Assembly, it's my pleasure to introduce in the west gallery a number of dignitaries that are here visiting from out of province. We have the Hon. Luke Ouellette, the Minister of Transportation from Alberta. Luke, we'll get you to give everybody a wave.

We also have the Hon. Steve Ashton, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation from Manitoba. We have Mr. Daryl Reid who is the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for the Transcona constituency in Manitoba. And we have a number of officials travelling with them as well: Warren Chandler, Tammy Forbes, Courtney Mosentine.

They are here for the WESTAC [Western Transportation Advisory Council] meetings. I had the opportunity to have lunch with them today and I look forward to seeing them again tomorrow. And I ask all members to please give them a warm welcome to this Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming our out-of-province guests here today. I hope they enjoy their time in Saskatchewan and I hope, Mr. Speaker, that most of them had the opportunity of flying here because if they would have travelled across Saskatchewan roads, I'm afraid, Mr. Speaker, they would remember that for a long time. But nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, I . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Assembly I'd like to welcome Mr. Kyle Addison, president of the University of Regina Students' Union, to his Assembly. I was just over this morning at the University of Regina for the announcement of our new International Education Council, an announcement that went very well. And we're delighted that we were able to do it at the University of Regina.

And certainly Mr. Addison's leadership and his presence this morning certainly helped to make that announcement a success. So I would ask all members to join me in welcoming Mr. Addison to his Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, and to all members of the Legislative Assembly, I'm pleased to introduce a few members of SCN [Saskatchewan Communications Network] Matters in the west gallery. I can't see everybody up there behind me.

But SCN Matters is a group of SCN fans, viewers, and industry professionals who are dedicated to saving SCN. And despite the looming deadline of SCN fading to black tomorrow night, the group remains hopeful, ever hopeful, that the Wall government will see the error of its ways and come to its . . .

The Speaker: — Order. I just remind the member that we're not to refer to members by their names but by their constituency.

Ms. Chartier: — Pardon me. They're hopeful that the Sask Party government will come to its senses. In particular I'd be remiss if I didn't point out Heather Malek who's become a fixture here in this Legislative Assembly. And I see Jan Nowina-Zarzycki, and obviously my Polish hasn't gotten any better. And I'm sorry if I can't see the rest of you, but I ask that all members welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming Kyle Addison to the Assembly. It's good to see him here.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to introduce a few relatives and friends that are in the Assembly today who have come to watch the proceedings. If you could give a wave when I introduce you. In your gallery, Mr. Speaker, is Carman Rabuka, who is my brother-in-law. He married Esther, my wife's sister. Carman is a dentist practising in Saskatoon and is also a very accomplished musician, plays cello with the Saskatoon symphony.

With Carman, I see beside him is Nathaniel Gibson, who married my wife's first cousin, Elke Mau. So a few folks on the opposite side know the Maus from the southwest corner. We're all very lucky to marry into one of the best families in southwest Saskatchewan, I would say.

And also with the group, Mr. Speaker, is Luke Hnenny, Dr. Luke Hnenny, who is a third-year neurosurg resident at the University of Saskatchewan, a proud Ukrainian from Saskatoon. I should point out that also Nathaniel's wife — and he just moved to Winnipeg — she's doing her medical residency in Winnipeg. So they're gone for four years. We're sad to hear that, but we are happy that they are going to be coming back to Saskatchewan, and that's what we tell them.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to introduce in the east gallery — this is like a Broten family reunion here today — my uncle, David Rosom, who was able to join with the proceedings today. He's a resident of Regina. So I'm very happy that everyone was able to come to the Assembly today. I ask all members to join me in welcoming these guests. Thank you.

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are many guests that we have that are acquaintances of mine, and I want to welcome them. But there's a few, I have to say, acknowledge

the Beechy boys that are here, that being the town I grew up in.

But what I rose to my feet for was to introduce a very good friend of mine, Paule Hjertaas. Paule is sitting there giving a wave.

I single out Paule because it's quite obvious that it's a bit of a chore for Paule to appear in public. She's got allergies — it's beyond that. It's a severe environmental issue and when Paule appears in public, she wears the respirator. Many of us have seen her around Regina from time to time, but Paule is someone that I have known for 20, more than 25 years. Paule and her husband Dale are just super people who care deeply about the environment from a very personal perspective. So I'm asking all members to join me in welcoming my friend Paule Hjertaas to the legislature.

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I also want to join the member from Massey Place in his introduction. The last time that Dr. Luke Hnenny was here was during Premier Romanow's induction into this House as premier. And he was here with his class, the St. Goretti class.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I'd like to, in the east gallery, recognize a couple of trade unionists. Tom Graham, president of CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees] Sask is here. And Jen Britton with the SOSC [Save our Saskatchewan Crowns] and CEP [Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada]. I ask all members to welcome these people to our legislature.

The Speaker: — It's also been brought to my attention that retired director of broadcasting Mr. Gary Ward has joined us as well today. So we extend our welcome. Okay. Thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan who are concerned about the conditions and the safety of our provincial highways. This petition pertains to Highway No. 10 between Fort Qu'Appelle and the junction of No. 1. This particular portion of the highway is a year-round route for tourists to a tourist destination, Mr. Speaker, as well as a highway that serves three major inland grain terminals. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to construct passing lanes on Highway No. 10 between Fort Qu'Appelle and the junction of Highway 1 in order to improve the safety of Saskatchewan motoring public.

[Mr. Speaker,] As in duty bound, the petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good folks from Fort Qu'Appelle and Weyburn, Saskatchewan. I so submit.

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

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition in support of the protection of wildlife habitat lands. And, Mr. Speaker, there are many citizens concerned about this issue currently, and it speaks to the issue that *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act* protects 3.4 million acres of uplands and wetlands or one-third of all wildlife habitat in the province of Saskatchewan in its natural state. And there is concern with the government's actions of repealing the schedule listing these designated lands. And, Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action:

To cause the provincial government to immediately and without delay recognize the importance of protection of the wildlife habitat lands and immediately withdraw proposed amendments that will negatively affect the protection of said wildlife lands;

And in so doing, cause the provincial government to commit to meaningful and adequate consultations with all stakeholders that will be affected by future legislative changes to *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act*.

Mr. Speaker, I so present on behalf of citizens of Moose Jaw, Indian Head, Regina, Estevan, Biggar, and Saskatoon. Thank you.

[13:45]

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

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of citizens who know that many Saskatchewan seniors live on fixed incomes and are victims of physical, emotional, and financial abuse and believe that seniors have a right to social and economic security and a right to live free from poverty and that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The petition reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to enact a Saskatchewan seniors bill of rights which would provide Saskatchewan seniors with social and economic security and protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

And the signatures are from Garrick and Nipawin. I so present.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I have a petition in support of

maintaining educational assistants, particularly in rural Saskatchewan. And as we know, the Ministry of Education is considering changes that would drastically reduce the number of educational assistants in the province and replace them with a much smaller number of professionals such as speech and language therapists and psychologists, but we know those folks don't provide front line services. And the prayer reads as follows:

Cause the government to provide funding for the required number of educational assistants to provide special needs students with the support they need and maintain a positive learning environment for all Saskatchewan students.

And this petition is signed by people from Big River, Shellbrook, P.A. [Prince Albert], Major, Christopher Lake, and North Battleford. I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for the reinstatement of the domestic abuse outreach program in Saskatchewan. And we know that this program, the domestic abuse outreach program, provided a number of valuable services to women victims of domestic violence and their children, including helping women to find emergency shelter and accompanying women to their homes, courts, and the hospital or police station as needed. And we know this was cut December 31st without consultation. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to reinstate the domestic abuse outreach program as a provincial government service and make it available in all parts of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from the city of Saskatoon. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — I rise today to present a petition in support of upgrading and repairs to Highway 123 that goes to the community of Cumberland House. I will read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to maintaining and repairing this highway.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

It is signed by the good people and leadership in the community of Cumberland House and the Cumberland House First Nations. I so present.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition that has been circulated by the Saskatchewan Student Coalition, a petition that calls on the Sask Party government to live up to its election promise. The prayer reads, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to implement the promised Saskatchewan scholarship fund.

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

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition are from the city of Swift Current and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Furber: — Mr. Speaker, I rise again today to present a petition in support of financial assistance for the town of Duck Lake water project. The petition is being signed by residents from all over Saskatchewan because of the exorbitant amount that Duck Lake citizens pay for clean, safe water, and that's causing them hardship. The leadership in the community went so far as to tell me that folks are moving out of their community because of the costs. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable 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 exorbitant water rates being forced on them by a government agency and that this government fulfills its commitment to rural Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by folks from the town of Duck Lake. I so present.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present yet another petition on behalf of residents of Furdale dealing with another water issue. These customers are no longer able to use non-potable water using methods approved by Sask Health, although these residents, dealing in good faith with Sask Water for over 30 years, have paid large amounts for their domestic systems and in-home treatment. An alternative water supply referred to by the government ministry is a private operator offering treated, non-pressurized water at great cost, with no guarantee of quality, quantity, and availability of water. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to withdraw its order to cut off non-potable water to the residents of the hamlet of Furdale, causing great hardship with no suitable alternatives, to exempt the hamlet of Furdale from further water service cut-offs by granting a grandfather clause

under *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2002* and *The Water Regulations, 2002*, and that this government fulfills its promises to rural Saskatchewan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

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

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I stand today to present a petition in support of maintaining quality health care services. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan essential services legislation is making a mockery out of collective bargaining process in this province, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Saskatchewan must realize that the utilization and value of the full range of professional skills offered by health care providers is promoted through the address of retention and recruitment issues and that the promotions can only be achieved through the commitment of adequate funding and installation of good-faith bargaining in the provincial collective bargaining process. Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

Where your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to negotiating a fair and just collective agreement with health care providers in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

The petition is signed by residents of Maple Creek. I so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again here today to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the unprecedented mismanagement of our finances by the Sask Party. They allude to the two consecutive billion dollar deficits put forward by the Sask Party and the billions of dollars of debt growth under the Sask Party. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly condemn the Sask Party government for its damaging financial mismanagement since taking office, a reckless fiscal record that is denying Saskatchewan people, organizations, municipalities, institutions, taxpayers, and businesses the responsible and trustworthy fiscal management that they so deserve.

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

These petitions are signed by concerned residents of Nipawin and Saskatoon. I so submit.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased again to present a petition in support of the Saskatchewan film and television industry. This petition is signed by residents concerned that this government left the film and television industry to languish for two and a half years and then dealt a huge blow to the industry with the impending closure of SCN, based on ideology rather than good public policy. I'd like to read to the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action:

To cause the provincial government to make changes to the film employment tax credit that will allow the Saskatchewan film industry to be more competitive with other provinces, to reverse its decision to shut down the Saskatchewan Communications Network, and to work with the industry to reverse the decline in film production.

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by residents of Saskatoon and Regina. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Catholic Women's League Convention

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, on Monday I had the opportunity to bring greetings to the 75th annual Saskatoon Diocesan Council of Catholic Women's League convention, which took place at St. Patrick's Parish in Saskatoon in the constituency of Saskatoon Fairview. The theme of the convention was Women of Hope and Peace, and there were over 220 delegates in attendance.

Mr. Speaker, the Catholic Women's League and the Diocese of Saskatoon consists of 52 separate councils and approximately 3,200 members. The Catholic Women's League is the official, unified voice of all Catholic women. Some of the good work they do includes CWL [Catholic Women's League] clothing depot, harvest suppers, Christmas and Easter teas and bake sales, funeral receptions, financial assistance, and the list goes on, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the work they do in their parishes, the Diocese of Saskatoon, as well as nationally and internationally helps make stronger and more vibrant communities. Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the good work of the Saskatoon Diocesan Council President Margaret Schwab along with her organizing committee for all their hard work in organizing their 75th Saskatoon Diocesan Council Catholic Women's League convention. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Biggar.

Celebrating the Roughriders' 100th Anniversary

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a life-long

member of the Rider nation, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to recognize the organization's centennial anniversary. The Roughriders are part of the fabric of Saskatchewan. For 100 years the fortunes of this community-owned team have captivated people living throughout the province.

The team formed on September 6th, 1910, as the Regina Rugby Club with gold and purple sweaters. Fourteen years later, the team became the Regina Roughriders and were sporting red and black uniforms. In 1948 the modern era of the Roughriders was born when the team became the Saskatchewan's team and adopted the familiar green and white uniforms.

Mr. Speaker, as the Roughriders embark on their 100th season, the passion for this team has never been stronger. I know that the Roughriders organization is paying homage to the 100th anniversary with a number of great events and celebrations across the province, including an opportunity for one community to be named Riderville. On Monday the Minister Responsible for SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] helped Corby Distilleries unveil its commemorative Wiser's small-batch whiskey at the Normanview liquor store in Regina. The product celebrates the centennial anniversary and is a keepsake that Rider fans will want to have in their collection.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate the Roughriders and leave you with one thought: green is the colour. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Signs of Spring

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Spring has sprung, and the signs of the season are all around us. Here on the shores of Wascana Lake, Mr. Speaker, the geese are flocking their way home, the jackrabbits are turning colour, and the days, Mr. Speaker, are getting noticeably longer.

The Sask Party government isn't immune to spring fever, Mr. Speaker so it's no surprise that they're showing some symptoms. They may not be honking, Mr. Speaker, but if a gaggle of 38 Sask Party MLAs hadn't laid nine goose eggs worth of fiscal foolishness on the province's bottom line, that billion-dollar deficit wouldn't be coming home to roost. And their hides may not be turning colour, Mr. Speaker, but with jackrabbit speed they've turned the province's signature colour of budget ink from black to red. Deficits and fiscal mismanagement aren't all they've sprung on the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They've unilaterally forced changes to the sitting here in the legislature as a result of their own mismanagement.

Spring's a season of change in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. An April day of summer heat can be followed by an April day of winter cold. So it surprised no one, Mr. Speaker, that the Government House Leader blew hot for a motion to extend the sitting hours of the House and then immediately reversed and blew cold to adjourn proceedings right away.

Mr. Speaker, whether they're mismanaging the books,

mismanaging our Crowns, or mismanaging the House, it's no wonder people are saying this spring that the Sask Party government is as incompetent as the day is long.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

Government's Nursing Strategy

Ms. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm proud to announce that the Saskatchewan Party government's nursing strategy is moving forward and hitting its targets. In today's *Leader-Post* the headline reads, "Nurse numbers booming." This is great news for health care in our province.

According to the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association recent annual report, there are 506 more nurses who migrated to the province in 2009. The rise in the numbers can be attributed to our government's ongoing investment in the nursing profession.

The NDP's [New Democratic Party] history of shortchanging nurses essentially shortchanged the people of this province. By offering wage increases and more nurse training spaces, the profession of nursing in this province has never looked better. In today's *Leader-Post* article on nursing, Shirley McKay, the registrar for the SRNA [Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association] commends the efforts by the government and its employees for retaining nurses. McKay goes on to say that the economic picture of the province is certainly attractive.

In light of this recent news, it is our government's hope that the opposition will begin to work with our government to implement more successful strategies for this province, particularly in the challenges facing rural health care. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Resources for Francophone Students

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, this Sask Party government is continually breaking promises. The Minister of Education takes more seriously his love for photo ops, news releases, and making announcements than he does his actual responsibilities to provide a quality education.

Finally the French school board got tired of waiting and made its own announcement. It is suing the Wall . . . the Sask Party government and demanding that the minister acknowledge his obligation to ensure that all students, regardless of their culture, have a right to a quality education as enjoyed by students in the public and Catholic school systems.

[14:00]

Monsieur le Président, hier le Conseil des écoles francophones a classé un procès juridique contre le ministère de l'éducation en raison de son inhabilité à fournir des installations adéquates pour les élèves francophones de Regina. Les étudiants sont enseignés dans les couloirs et forcé dans les autres écoles, où ils sont niés que leur droit d'être enseigné dans la langue française.

Le CÉF est la division scolaire qui gère les 14 écoles francophones au Saskatchewan. Selon la Loi sur l'éducation, le CÉF est supposé d'offrir une éducation équivalente des systèmes public et séparé de Regina.

La réaction du ministre était de se moquer des inquiétudes de l'école Monseigneur de Laval. Le gouvernement du Parti Saskatchewan a prouvé un manque complet de respect vers les communautés francophones. Ce ministre n'a rien montré mais l'insensibilité . . .

[Translation: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Conseil des écoles fransaskoises filed a lawsuit against the Minister of Education due to his incapacity to provide adequate resources for francophone students in Regina. The students are being taught in the hallways and forced into other schools where they are denied their right to be taught in the French language.

The CÉF is the school division which manages the 14 francophone schools in Saskatchewan. According to *The Education Act*, the CÉF is supposed to offer an equivalent education to the public and separate systems of Regina.

The reaction of the minister was to mock the concerns of l'École Monseigneur de Laval. The Saskatchewan Party government has proven a complete lack of respect towards francophone communities. This minister has shown nothing but insensitivity . . .]

The Speaker: — The member's time has elapsed. I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

Central Collegiate Institute's 100th Anniversary

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was pleased to be in Moose Jaw this morning along with the Lieutenant Governor and my colleague from Moose Jaw Wakamow to bring greetings and celebrations of the 100th anniversary of Central Collegiate Institute in my hometown of Moose Jaw.

This high school has done so much for the community. One hundred years is certainly an incredible milestone. The longevity of Central Collegiate is linked to the longevity of this province. Many of Central Collegiate's alumni have gone on to do so much for the province of Saskatchewan and Canada as well as the world.

Lloyd Probert, a retired ophthalmologist in Moose Jaw, graduated from this fine institute in 1939. He described the Central Collegiate centennial as being a "family affair" in the *Moose Jaw Times Herald*. While Mr. Probert was probably referring to the fact that his siblings and children also attended Central Collegiate, I'd like to think of Central Collegiate as one big family, a family that has been with us throughout the history of Saskatchewan.

There's also the example of Robin Broadway who graduated from Central Collegiate in 1960 and then went on to become a Rhodes Scholar in 1964. Just recently he was awarded the Order of Canada due to his impact on public policy through over 30 years of research in economics at Queen's University.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in congratulating the

staff and the students, both past and present, at Central Collegiate Institute on their centennial celebrations.

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

Checking Numbers

Mr. Furber: — Mr. Speaker, it turns out the Sask Party ministers must all be using the same calculator. The Minister of Energy and Resources stated that provincial potash revenues last year would be \$3 billion. Just a small mistake, Mr. Speaker, he was only off by \$3.2 billion. But the minister isn't the only one who better check his numbers. The Provincial Secretary believes that 20 per cent, a full one-fifth of the world's natural resources come from within Saskatchewan's borders. And here's some more Sask Party math, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier's Finance minister predicted a GDP [gross domestic product] growth rate of 2.1 per cent for last year and stated at the P.A. chamber that Saskatchewan "wouldn't take part in the global recession." Well, Mr. Speaker, we've learned today that unfortunately our GDP growth shrunk by 6.3 per cent, all the while the Premier and his Finance minister had their heads in the sand.

Sask Party incompetence must be contagious because yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the Minister for Municipal Affairs stood up in this Assembly and proudly proclaimed that Saskatchewan has the largest population in the country. According to him, Saskatchewan has more people in our borders than Ontario and Quebec, more than British Columbia, and more than Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, maybe this is the same Sask Party logic that took \$2.3 billion in the bank and, with the addition only of their incompetent government, turned it into \$1 billion deficit. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan want leadership they can count on, and not leadership that can't count. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — The minister has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, seated in your gallery in the front row, is Mr. Justice Ron Barclay and his wife, Mrs. Barclay. I will be introducing a motion later this afternoon to have Mr. Barclay appointed by the Assembly as the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, and the motion will be seconded by the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

I will say a little bit more about Mr. Barclay's history at that time, but he is well respected on the Court of Queen's Bench

and I think both the member from Meewasin and myself have appeared in front of him on occasion — and not against each other, so I think we can both claim that we were successful. In any event, I'd ask that all members join me in welcoming Mr. Justice Barclay and his spouse to the Assembly today.

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

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

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Meewasin has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know about the Minister of Justice, but I can't remember the occasions when I appeared at court and wasn't successful.

[Applause]

Mr. Quennell: — I think members misunderstand me. That goes to my memory, Mr. Speaker, not my legal skills.

I, on behalf of the official opposition, want to join the Minister of Justice in welcoming Justice Barclay here. I don't want to predict or, you know, trump the outcome of any motions that might take place later on in the Legislative Assembly, but it's again a pleasure to see Justice Barclay and in a situation that is probably less stressful than some of the situations the minister and I saw him in over the years, for us anyway, Mr. Speaker. So welcome to Justice Barclay and to his spouse today.

The Speaker: — Why is the member from Regina Walsh Acres on her feet?

Ms. Morin: — With leave, to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Walsh Acres has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my great pleasure to introduce two guests to the Assembly today. Today we have with us Uta Bellmann and Katrin Dahlmann. They're just new arrivals from Germany.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in German.]

I'd like to ask all my colleagues to join our guests and welcome them to the Assembly today. Thank you so much.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Consultation on Interprovincial Agreement

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier finally admitted that he was signing the new West partnership, an agreement that the government in British Columbia admits is really built on TILMA [Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement]. Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier, based on your own documentation from your last election campaign under the title "More Accountable Government," and I quote, "A Saskatchewan Party Government will provide Saskatchewan people with more transparency and accountability than any previous government."

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is, why is the Premier breaking his own promise and not sharing this document with the public before it's signed?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier indicated to the Leader of the Opposition the broad-based consultation that took place. In September of 2009, the Crown corporations were consulted. The big city mayors were consulted at that time. In October of 2009, the city managers . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. Well I would ask the Opposition Leader to allow the minister to answer the question. I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In October of 2009, the city managers were consulted. The Saskatchewan urban association of municipalities was consulted. The Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities was consulted. The Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations were consulted. The University of Regina was consulted. The University of Saskatchewan was consulted.

In November of 2009, the health regions were consulted. The Saskatchewan association of business officials were consulted. SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] was consulted, and school divisions were consulted. Mr. Speaker, there has been very broad-based consultations on this agreement.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, my question on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, many who believed the Sask Party when they promised consultation on these kind of issues, when the Premier said that he would be more open and transparent, the public, many of them believed that in fact he would consult on this trade deal. He hasn't done that. And my question to the Premier or to the representative of the Premier: when the consultation with those few people went on, what about the public? What about the million people in the province who were promised consultation? Why wasn't that done, and when will this Premier do the consultation that's needed before this deal is signed?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Official Opposition, may like to say that these people represent virtually no one. I think the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association represent a few people here in Saskatchewan. The rural municipalities represent people in Saskatchewan. The health regions represent people in Saskatchewan. There has been extremely broad-based consultations with the people of Saskatchewan. The only people . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. The minister may continue.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — There has been extensive consultation with the people of Saskatchewan with respect to that. These people, the representative organizations have been consulted very, very widely on it, and I believe that they're in agreement that this is a very, very good agreement for the province of Saskatchewan to enter into.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, the member from Kindersley, can talk about the people being consulted, but the fact of the matter is the phones are ringing off the hook, of people who weren't consulted and want to be.

But the fact of the matter is, the fact of the matter is the Premier has now said, I will sign the deal tomorrow, but there's an opportunity for the public to be consulted and talk about the advantages and disadvantages after the deal is signed. Now how much sense does it make to promise consultation with the public, and in this case sign the deal and then say the debate and discussion will go on after the deal is signed?

Now this may be the Sask Party way of doing consultation, but my question to the minister is this: when will proper consultation with the public at large take place on this arrangement and this deal?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've indicated, there has been very, very broad-based consultation with the public of Saskatchewan through their representative organizations. That consultation will continue. That is a hallmark of what the Saskatchewan Party is all about. We will continue to do this, and we'll continue to go forward with this because this provides for a better agreement in terms of procurement for health regions, for education. It provides for an internal labour mobility agreement. That is something that was started under the NDP under Premier Romanow and carried forward under Premier Calvert as well. It provides for consumer and environmental protections, health and safety standards, labour standards.

This is an agreement that moves Saskatchewan forward. The only people in this province that don't want to move forward are members of the official opposition.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the minister is right about one thing. We don't want to move forward and talk about \$3 billion, \$3 billion in revenue from potash. He's the minister who promised the people of Saskatchewan we would get \$3 billion. And do you wonder why we don't trust and why the public doesn't trust you? It's because you don't get it right, that's why.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the member opposite is this. When it comes to consultation, there are many people in this province disappointed in that member and that government's ability to consult: people who dealt with Bill 5 and weren't consulted; people who had to live and now have to live with Bill 6, no consultations; Bill 80. Bill 80, I'm talking about consultation . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. I would ask the minister to allow the Leader of the Opposition, the leader to propose his question.

[14:15]

Mr. Lingenfelter: — I repeat, people were not consulted on Bill 5 and Bill 6 or Bill 80. People who are here from SCN were not consulted. This is why there's distrust of this government's consultation process.

My question is this, my question to the minister is this: will he commit today to a legislative review and hold full and transparent public involvement and review on this topic, the trade deal that is going to affect every citizen of this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, as the Premier indicated yesterday and as I've indicated, there has been very, very broad-based consultation with the representative groups of a large number of Saskatchewan people here in Saskatchewan.

And I don't think that anyone on this side of the Assembly needs to take any lessons about consultation from that member, Mr. Speaker. When that member was involved in a leadership campaign here in Saskatchewan, one of the people that were involved in his leadership team presented . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — When one of the members of the Official Opposition Leader's membership team consulted, did he consult with the people of Meadow Lake when there was 1,100 memberships sold without their consultation or consent?

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

Consultation on Changes to Legislation

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, the Environment minister has confirmed as recently as last year that her ministry follows a no net loss policy in relation to *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act*. Under that policy, when lands are removed from the Act, they're replaced with new lands of similar ecological value. Mr. Speaker, the minister is taking 3 million acres of land out from under the Act, and she has confirmed that up to 10 per cent of this land, or 300,000 acres, may be sold without conservation easements attached.

To the minister: how does she plan to replace those lands?

The Speaker: — The Minister Responsible for the Environment.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I think it's important when we're having the discussion about any legislation or proposal, particularly this one, that we make sure that we are using accurate information.

Mr. Speaker, 3 million acres are not getting pulled out of wildlife habitat protection. As I've said before, an evaluation was done on the land, Mr. Speaker. There is going to be a large chunk of land that stays under *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act*. There's another chunk of land that will be pulled out to be sold with conservation easements, and it's a very tiny portion that can be sold without restriction.

So, Mr. Speaker, the vast majority of the land that is currently under protection will continue to be under protection, Mr. Speaker. And I think it's important, as I said, that if we're going to have this discussion that we have the accurate facts in front of us. Mr. Speaker, of those 3 million acres, the vast majority will continue to be under protection in this Bill.

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

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, the 3 million acres are no longer going to be protected under legislation. They're going to be at the whim of the minister, Mr. Speaker. That's how they're going to be protected.

Mr. Speaker, just 50 per cent of the critical habitat land in this province is currently owned by the Crown. The other 50 per cent is privately held. Some of that land is no doubt available for purchase. The minister could replace those acres if she wanted to. Mr. Speaker, the minister claimed that she consulted with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations about this legislation. Vice-chief Lyle Whitefish says that just isn't true. And other groups here today, like the Wildlife Federation, say the minister didn't consult them either.

To the minister: does she define consultation as telling people about decisions she's already made after the fact?

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, the contact that we had with various groups happened last summer. On June 18th, 2009,

both the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture met with representatives from Nature Conservancy of Canada, Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, Nature Saskatchewan, and Ducks Unlimited.

Mr. Speaker, on June 29th a workshop was held to discuss all of this, both the methodology behind it, the changes that we were proposing to WHPA legislation and *The Conservation Easements Act*. Mr. Speaker, there's a long list of folks on that list including the Wildlife Federation, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association, Mr. Speaker. Some people were able to attend, others weren't, but everybody received the information package with a request that they contact us for follow-up information.

Mr. Speaker, a technical meeting was held on July 22nd 2009 where Nature Conservancy of Canada and Ducks Unlimited attended. There was also representations made to the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, Mr. Speaker. And as I said earlier, I invite those representatives to meet with me again today for further discussion.

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

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, once again we see we're going to have consultations with groups after the decision has been made. Talking about an ecological assessment of those lands is not the same as taking those lands out from legislation and putting them in regulation under the whim of the minister, Mr. Speaker.

The minister is taking three million acres out from under the protection of the Act and giving herself the power to sell them off without any public consultation. She tells us that most of the land that will be sold off will have a conservation easement, but the changes she's making to *The Conservation Easements Act* will make it almost — not almost — but will make it impossible for the public to challenge any of her decisions with respect to those easements.

Instead of an open and transparent process in full public view, the minister wants the power to make decisions behind closed doors, decisions that the public can't challenge. To the minister: why does she believe that she has the right to make decisions without being accountable?

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I'd like to just remind our guests that they're more than welcome to join us today, but they are asked not to participate in any form of the debate. I thank them for recognizing the rules of the Assembly. I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said in my first answer, I would hope that we can have some accurate information on this. Three million acres are not being pulled out of *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act*. The Act remains. There will still be a large portion of land that is covered under that legislation.

And, Mr. Speaker, on the issue of conservation easements,

conservation easements are used by groups in our province. There's over 200,000 acres currently being held through voluntary conservation easements with groups like Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, the NCC [Nature Conservancy of Canada], and other such groups, Mr. Speaker.

The difference between the conservation easements that they use and the conservation easements that we use is, Mr. Speaker, that they're mandatory. They are tied to this land. There is a mandatory easement that will be attached. And, Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Regina Lakeview last night. He referred to them as super easements, Mr. Speaker, and I absolutely agree with that.

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

Ms. Morin: — Well, Mr. Speaker, here is what's not so super: the fact that they are going to be subjecting all Crown land is in the minister's explanatory notes. The fact that *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act* is now going to be containing four pages instead of the massive document that it was before, protecting those lands, now will no longer exist, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there's a pattern with this minister, and it's the reason that so many people are concerned about this. She makes promises on climate change, but won't put the targets in legislation. She tears up 16-year agreements with a phone call on budget day. And she's brought in far-reaching changes to *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act* without proper consultation and then made it impossible for her decisions to be challenged. Mr. Speaker, the people deserve an opportunity for their concerns to be heard.

To the minister: will the government agree to public hearings on this Bill to allow stakeholders and concerned members of the public to share their concerns and their ideas for improving the Bill?

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, starting as early as last summer we had contacted various organizations. All of the information on our proposals were presented to those organizations, Mr. Speaker. And I have to say that in my ministry, in my office we've received, I would say, virtually no feedback on these proposals, Mr. Speaker. But as I said earlier, we will continue to meet with those stakeholders, I've extended the invitation.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we believe in the principle of landownership. We also believe in the principle of habitat protection and protecting our environment, but, Mr. Speaker, we don't believe that they are exclusive from one another. As we heard earlier today, landowners and users are the best stewards of that land. They get national and provincial recognition for the use of their land, Mr. Speaker. We have absolute confidence in the people that are using that land, Mr. Speaker. It is to their benefit, it is to the provincial benefit, and we have confidence in those folks, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Riversdale.

Saskatchewan Communications Network

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in a recent meeting with SCN Matters, the Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport admitted the decision to privatize SCN did not come from him or his department. He also said the decision was made at the last minute. While the minister was busy learning his portfolio, the people who make the real decisions in this government decided to privatize Saskatchewan's public broadcaster.

To the Premier: who made the decision to privatize SCN?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to clarify what was said at a meeting a couple of days ago with the members of the SCN Matters group. Mr. Speaker, we had a very thorough discussion about the decision that was made. We obviously came to an agreement to disagree on the decision but, Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport, I take full responsibility for the decision that was made. And that decision stands, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, it wasn't surprising to learn axing SCN wasn't the minister's idea. This government and this Premier have demonstrated time and again their top-down approach to decision making. Mr. Speaker, if SCN goes off the air tomorrow at midnight as planned, it could lose its CRTC [Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission] broadcast licence and its coveted space on the dial, making its remaining assets considerably less valuable to any buyer.

The minister suggested to one media outlet that he might keep SCN on the air past tomorrow, but the remaining employees are preparing to fade to black as they have not been told otherwise. To the minister: is SCN going off the air tomorrow at midnight or not?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, when the budget came down in the province of Saskatchewan last March 24th, as we announced the SCN decision, we also announced that we would be putting together a team that would explore the possibilities of transferring the licence over to another interested party and also selling off the broadcast assets, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that expression of interest process has lasted the last two weeks. It does end Friday at 2 o'clock, tomorrow at 2 o'clock, Mr. Speaker. At that time if there are no proposals that come forward, Mr. Speaker, then broadcasting of SCN will conclude at the end of tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

If there is a proposal that comes forward that merits further study and review, Mr. Speaker, the broadcast operations can continue into the month of May while we discuss that, Mr. Speaker, but at this time I won't presuppose whether or not proposals will be coming forward.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, as we've heard, the government has imposed an extremely tight time frame, just two weeks for people to express interest in purchasing SCN. That deadline, as we've heard, is tomorrow. The deadline in that expression of interest for approving a sale is one month from now, May 31st, and the government plans to transfer the assets of SCN to its new owners just two months from now, June 30th.

With such tight timelines, the government must have a buyer waiting in the wings. To the minister: who does the government have lined up and how long has this buyer known about the government's plans to privatize SCN?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, as I've said to the member opposite in previous discussions on this topic, we certainly, prior to the expression of interest period, we certainly had a number of individuals that called and emailed and contacted the government to determine whether or not there was an opportunity to take over the broadcasting of SCN. In fact the member from Lakeview on budget day introduced me to an individual who asked if the government was interested in transferring the licence and the assets, Mr. Speaker.

The other thing I want to clarify for the member is, while the expression of interest was a two-week period, Mr. Speaker, the decision was announced on budget day. And in the news release of March 24th, it clearly says that a team would be put together to explore whether or not there was interest for somebody else to operate SCN going forward in the future, Mr. Speaker. So that is over five weeks of time that people have had to put forth proposals, and we will see after tomorrow at 2 o'clock whether or not there is any interest, Mr. Speaker. I don't know whether that's going to be happening though, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, the government announced its plan to shut down SCN just five short weeks ago — five weeks ago. If they were truly interested in a fair and open process, they would not be imposing such a tight deadline for people to express interest in buying SCN.

[14:30]

The short time frame makes it impossible, for example, for people in the film and television industry to even consider putting together a bid. Mr. Speaker, these people understand the crucial role that SCN plays in telling Saskatchewan stories and in leveraging out-of-province investment, but the government is shutting the door on this option.

To the minister: will he extend the deadline for accepting bids to ensure everybody has a fair opportunity to make a bid, or is the process been rigged to favour the government's preferred buyer?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat to the member opposite that the public, whether that be individuals or organizations, have had five weeks to determine whether or not they want to put forward a proposal, Mr. Speaker. The expression of interest has been a two-week period, Mr. Speaker, but people have known about this for five weeks whether or not they want to come forward.

Mr. Speaker, the expression of interest does say that . . . Or as I have said, Mr. Speaker, is that if somebody does come forward and we need more time to study the merits of their proposal, that we'd be very interested in looking at extending the broadcasting into the month of May while the details are worked out, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to correct the member that there is no preferred buyer that is waiting for government, Mr. Speaker. In fact I'm not even sure we will have anybody come forward by 2 o'clock tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

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

State of the Provincial Economy

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this morning's *Leader-Post* it reported that Saskatchewan's economy is at its lowest point since 2005. Here's a quote from the article. I quote, "So, in real terms, Saskatchewan's economy is operating at the same level of output as it was four or five years ago . . ." Another quote, "In other words, we just lost all of the gains we made . . ." All of the gains, Mr. Speaker.

To the minister: why is the Sask Party turning back the clock on Saskatchewan's economy, and why won't they give the straight goods to Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantefer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's no question that 2009 was a difficult year around the world. It wasn't just here in Saskatchewan, it was around the world. In Canada, in the United States, Europe, really across the world the economies of countries were affected negatively in 2009, and we said all along that Saskatchewan's economy was not immune from those forces.

But, Mr. Speaker, we have to also recognize what remarkable achievements happened in 2009. We've created more jobs than any other province in the country in 2009. Our population grew to unprecedented numbers in 2009, Mr. Speaker. The average wages went up, Mr. Speaker. All of these things happened in 2009. In the midst of a world-wide recession, Saskatchewan fared better than most jurisdictions on many indicators in the economy.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, a couple other facts from 2009 — \$1 billion deficit put forward by that Finance minister, Mr. Speaker. The second largest contraction in all of Canada at 6.3 per cent, Mr. Speaker, another fact from 2009. All we get from this government is spin, empty rhetoric, and it's disingenuous, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday the Minister Responsible for Crown Investments Corporation claimed that our economy was, I quote, "never growing before we became government." That's the talking point, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier wants the ministers to use, but we know it's not even remotely true. Under the Sask Party our economy has not grown, it has shrunk back to 2005 levels. Why are the Premier and his cabinet ministers not telling Saskatchewan people the truth about the state of our finances and about the state of our economy?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantfoer: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, in the face of a global, world-wide recession that is worse since anything experienced since the 1930s, Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan has improved its position in many indicators. And I would like . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. I'd ask . . . Order. I'd ask the members to allow the minister to respond to the question presented by the member from Regina Rosemont. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Gantfoer: — Mr. Speaker, just recently BMO said, and I quote, "But with commodity prices and global demand rebounding, Western Canada should remain atop the provincial leadership board again this year."

And, Mr. Speaker, just today the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan released their first quarter report, the second highest sales in the first quarter report at any time in the future. Clearly the industry is rebounding. Clearly Saskatchewan was negatively affected by the drop in sales of potash last year, and clearly the industry believes in its future. Why do not the members opposite believe in the future of Saskatchewan?

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

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

Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report Bill No. 137, *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2010* without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered in

Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister Responsible for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing.

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

The Speaker: — The Minister Responsible for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 137, *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2010* without amendment and that the Bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 137 — *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2010*

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister Responsible for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing that Bill No. 137 . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. I'd ask members to allow us to proceed without a lot of interference so we can hear what's going on when we're moving through this stage of the Chamber this afternoon.

It has been moved by the Minister Responsible for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing that Bill No. 137, *The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Amendment Act, 2010* without amendment be now read the third time and passed under its title.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

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

**Standing Committee on Intergovernmental
Affairs and Justice**

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report Bill No. 119, *The Ticket Sales Act* with amendment.

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill, and this Bill and its amendments be now read the third time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 119, *The Ticket Sales Act* with amendment and that the Bill and its amendments be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — When shall the amendments be read the first time?

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS OF AMENDMENTS

Bill No. 119 — *The Ticket Sales Act*

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I move that the amendments be now read a first and second time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that amendments be now read a first and second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First and second reading of the amendments.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed to the third reading.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 119 — *The Ticket Sales Act*

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 119, *The Ticket Sales Act* with amendment be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

**PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING
AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Crown and Central Agencies Committee.

Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies

Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies to report Bill No. 143, *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2010* without amendment.

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

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

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 143, *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2010* without amendment and that the Bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 143 — *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2010*

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 143, *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2010* without amendment be now read the third time and passed under its title.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

**PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING
AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

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

Standing Committee on the Economy

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 121, *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2009* with amendment.

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

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

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 121, *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2009* with amendment and that the Bill and its amendments be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — When shall the amendments be read a first time? I recognize the minister.

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS OF AMENDMENTS

Bill No. 121 — *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2009*

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I move that the amendments be now read a first and second time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that the amendments be now read the first and second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First and second reading of the amendments.

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

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 121 — *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2009*

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of the Environment that Bill No. 121, *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2009* with amendment be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

**PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING
AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

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

Standing Committee on the Economy

Mr. Hickie: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 123, *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2009* with amendment.

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

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

The Speaker: — The Minister of the Environment has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 123, *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2009* with amendment and that the Bill and its amendments be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS OF AMENDMENTS

Bill No. 123 — *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2009*

The Speaker: — When shall the amendments be read a first time? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — I move that the amendments be now read a first and second time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of the Environment that the amendments be now read a first and second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First and second reading of the amendments.

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

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 123 — *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2009*

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister Responsible for the Environment that Bill No. 123, *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2009* with amendment be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

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

Standing Committee on the Economy

Mr. Hickie: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 131, *The Conservation Easements Amendment Act, 2009* without amendment.

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

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

The Speaker: — The Minister of the Environment has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 131, *The Conservation Easements Amendment Act, 2009* without amendment and that the Bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 131 — *The Conservation Easements Amendment Act, 2009*

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister Responsible for the Environment that Bill No. 131, *The Conservation Easements Amendment Act, 2009* without amendment be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I seek leave to present a resolution for the appointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has asked for leave to move by resolution regarding the appointment of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. I recognize the Minister of Justice.

MOTIONS

Appointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the conclusion of my remarks I will be moving a motion that the Honourable Mr. Justice Ronald L. Barclay of the city of Regina, who is in the gallery today, be appointed to serve as the Conflict of Interest Commissioner by this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, members of this Assembly will know that *The Members' Conflict of Interest Act* establishes the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner as an independent officer of this Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the commissioner's role in the operation of the legislation is vital. Members are required to disclose all their personal and business interests and those of their spouse and dependent children to the commissioner for use in a public

disclosure statement. The commissioner also serves as a counsellor to, if not the conscience of, the members of this Assembly with respect to conflicts issues. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, the role of commissioner is one which requires the utmost trust of this Assembly. The commissioner meets with each member of this Assembly to assist them in ensuring that they have complied with all responsibilities under this Act.

[14:45]

Members of this Assembly will be familiar with Mr. Justice Barclay's recent service as a distinguished jurist with our Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench. Justice Barclay was called to the bar in Saskatchewan in 1960. He articulated with Tom Gauley in Saskatoon and worked there until 1962. From 1962 to 1966 he served with the provincial Attorney General in the east wing of this very building. In 1966 he joined the firm of MacPherson Leslie Tyerman here in Regina and served there as an active senior litigator for some 20 years. He was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1979 and at the time of his appointment to the Court of Queen's Bench in 1986, he was head of the litigation department at MacPherson Leslie Tyerman.

Following his appointment to the court, Justice Barclay was also active in a variety of governance roles on behalf of the court. He served as national president of the Federal Judges Association starting in 2003 as well as serving as the Saskatchewan representative on the national committee of judicial ethics for a three-year term.

Most recently Justice Barclay received the 2010 Distinguished Service Award from the Canadian Bar Association and I understand he will soon be receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Trial Lawyers Association of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure, following consultation with members of this Assembly through the Board of Internal Economy, that I put forward the Honourable Mr. Justice Ronald Barclay for consideration of this Assembly for this position. I encourage all members of this Assembly to join me in supporting his appointment. Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude my remarks by making the following motion which will be seconded by the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

I move:

That this Assembly appoint the Honourable Ronald Barclay, Q.C., of the city of Regina in the province of Saskatchewan, Conflict of Interest Commissioner pursuant to section 18 of *The Members' Conflict of Interest Act*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice:

That this Assembly appoint the Honourable Ronald Barclay, Q.C., of the city of Regina in the province of Saskatchewan, Conflict of Interest Commissioner pursuant to section 18 of *The Members' Conflict of Interest Act*.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak to the motion made by the Minister of Justice, and to

express the support of the members of the official opposition for the appointment of Justice Barclay to this position. I concur with all the remarks that the minister made about the importance of the office and the service, experience, and character of His Lordship, Justice Barclay.

I'd like to add to his comment that the commissioner requires the utmost trust of this Assembly, our comments that this position — like other positions, independent positions, independent officers of the legislature that are particularly responsible for governance of the conduct of members — requires also the utmost trust and confidence of the public. And as in judicial appointments, all the legislation and rules in the world are no replacement for character and judgment. And we believe that in the character and judgment of Justice Barclay, we have found a more than suitable appointment for the Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

And so it's with those words, and those very brief words — partly because His Lordship and Mrs. Barclay are seated in very uncomfortable chairs at the moment, sitting at the moment and with those very brief words — I wish to, on behalf of the opposition, express support for this appointment.

Justice Barclay will have heard kind things said about him today. We know from earlier proceedings in the Chamber this sitting that when he retires from this position, he will again hear kind things said about him. In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, his character and unfailing courtesy will have to carry him through. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion presented by the Minister of Justice:

That this Assembly appoint the Honourable Ronald Barclay, Q.C., of the city of Regina in the province of Saskatchewan, Conflict of Interest Commissioner pursuant to section 18 of *The Members' Conflict of Interest Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Why is the member on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — With leave to introduce a guest.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted for introduction of guests?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before they leave the gallery, I just wanted to, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, introduce Byrna Barclay who is in the gallery today with her husband, Justice Barclay, on this very special occasion.

Byrna serves very ably as the Chair of the Saskatchewan Arts Board and I want to tell all members how much I enjoy the working relationship that we have developed over certainly the short time that I've been Minister Responsible for the Arts Board. And I look forward to that in the future. And I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming Byrna Barclay to her Legislative Assembly.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order the answers to questions 1,552 through 1,554.

The Speaker: — Questions 1,552 through 1,554 are ordered.

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

The People's Trust

Mr. Broten: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure today to enter into debate on a motion that I will be reading later in the Assembly. And, Mr. Speaker, it's a motion that is consistent with many of the concerns that the official opposition has been raising for the weeks of this spring legislative sitting. And it's a motion, Mr. Speaker, that cuts to the heart of the issue, the concern that Saskatchewan people are feeling and experiencing with the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker.

Because time and time again what members of the public, what Saskatchewan people are experiencing from the Sask Party government is that of government members breaking the trust that they have established with the people of Saskatchewan, breaking the trust that they promised to the people of Saskatchewan based on the things they said during the election campaign, based on the things that they have said since they have been elected to government.

And we see a number of instances of this issue, Mr. Speaker, where the Saskatchewan Party government is having a consistent track record of breaking trust. Today in question period, Mr. Speaker, we saw some very clear examples of breaking the trust with the people of Saskatchewan by the failed approach to consultation. Time and time again through question period and through the question periods we've seen throughout this sitting, we've seen examples where consultation has been a failed consultation, where consultation has been inadequate, and it's occurred after the fact, Mr. Speaker — whether it's examples like educational assistance cuts where the idea is floated out there and is suggested to be policy but then there is a retraction, Mr. Speaker, whether it is on issues of the environment where members opposite will say they want consultation but it's at the very last hour, or it's after the fact of the matter that legislation has been passed that consultation does take place.

So we see through question period, Mr. Speaker, that when it

comes to breaking the trust with the Saskatchewan people, members opposite are very consistent. We also see, Mr. Speaker, a consistent pattern of breaking trust with the people of Saskatchewan in the area of finances.

And it was very clearly stated to Saskatchewan people that members opposite could be trusted with the finances. And we saw some promises made early on in the campaign, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite said they were going to manage the province's resources in a responsible and safe manner. We've clearly seen the opposite.

And last week's motion in private members' debate spoke to that aspect where the motion was put forward by members opposite, and it was basically a let's pat ourselves on the back kind of motion. It was a motion saying we have delivered a good budget. Well, Mr. Speaker, if you talk to anyone in the public, if you talk to people out in the community, people that have experienced cuts through SCN, people that have experienced cuts through chiropractors, people that are experiencing cuts on a number of fronts, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that they're agreeing that it was a quality budget.

So again, Mr. Speaker, for today's private members' debate, the motion that we are considering is another motion which points out the shortcomings that this government has with living up to its word, with living up to its promises, and living up to the level of trust that the people of Saskatchewan have placed in their control.

So, Mr. Speaker, the three areas that we'll be focusing on today through the debate are three very clear examples where members opposite certainly cannot be trusted, where members opposite have said one thing and are doing another. The one example, Mr. Speaker, that will be addressed by other colleagues — and I may make some remarks on it, Mr. Speaker — is the meddling that has occurred by members opposite in the selection of the Chief Electoral Officer.

And just moments ago in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, we appointed a new Conflict of Interest Commissioner, an independent officer of this legislature. And the comments made by the member from Meewasin . . . I hope members opposite heard those comments and not only heard them but took them to heart because he clearly said that the importance for independent officers of the legislature . . . We can't pick and choose, as MLAs, which officers we like, which officers we don't like. We can't pick and choose which officers we're going to listen to and which officers we're going to ignore. And sadly what we have seen with the Sask Party government, in its bit over two years in office, are some fairly concerning actions with respect to the Chief Electoral Officer and the role that he has in ensuring that we have fair and free elections in the province. So I'll allow other members to comment on that.

Another area, Mr. Speaker, where we have certainly seen some problems from members opposite is with how they are ignoring a ruling from a United Nations body, the International Labour Organization. And we've seen, Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks, a very clear example where a United Nations body — a body that represents individuals from government, from labour, from civil society — have made a ruling based on the actions of the Sask Party government, a ruling that is not in favour of the actions of

the Sask Party government, and have called for action to reverse or called for actions to fall in line with the ruling and correct their behaviour.

So, Mr. Speaker, we see shortcomings in the area of the Chief Electoral Officer. We see shortcomings in the area of respecting rulings by a United Nations body.

Another area, Mr. Speaker, and I've had the opportunity to speak to this issue on other occasions in the Assembly tied in with discussion on Bills. But we've also seen very concerning behaviour through allegations that members of the Sask Party government have inappropriately, inappropriately taken millions of dollars from another political party in order to serve their own purpose, their own aim. And, Mr. Speaker, these allegations are very serious because they tie in with the concerns that we see on the area of the Chief Electoral Officer.

Now we, as elected officials in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, we have to put our faith and trust in the process. We all compete in open, we want to compete in open and free and democratic elections at the local level. That's how we end up in this Assembly. And the integrity of that process is of the utmost importance for Saskatchewan people. So when we see actions that are contrary to open, free, and fair elections, I know that is a worry for people that are in this Assembly and a worry for people outside of the Assembly as well. Thank you to the officials who fixed the clock. I appreciate that.

Mr. Speaker, last week when we looked at the area of how the Sask Party government has broken trust with the Saskatchewan people through delivering a failed budget . . . how they have gone from a position of having huge surpluses to huge deficits, how in a few short years, Mr. Speaker, they have managed somehow to mismanage the books in such a way that the provincial finances, Mr. Speaker, are no longer being taken care of in a responsible manner, that people in Saskatchewan can no longer trust that things are on solid ground because of the actions of the Sask Party government. And we've seen this with the pie-in-the-sky, fantasyland budget projections of putting all their eggs in one basket and hoping that we would bring in over \$3 billion in potash revenues. That was one problem.

More recently, Mr. Speaker, in the last budget, we've seen how the members opposite have engaged in financial trickery, have changed the way that traditional practices of accounting have occurred in the province and changed these midstream in an election term. And to all Saskatchewan people that raises a number of red flags because when changes like that are made in midstream, it causes people to ask what are members opposite trying to hide — changes in how debt is recorded, changes in what spending needs are, changes in how all this information is clearly and transparently provided to the people of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, when I was making comments last week on the Sask Party government's failed approach to budgeting, I shared a story with the people watching at home and members in this Assembly. And, Mr. Speaker, it was a story of a young man named Walter. And it was a story of Walter's quest for love and how Walter had his eye on a certain woman, how he set himself up, pretended he was something that he wasn't in order to eventually end up with this woman, but how at the end

of the day his actions were causing his partner to worry because his actions . . . He said he was a sound fiscal manager, and he could run the family household well, but it turns out that he was a failure in doing that.

[15:00]

Well, Mr. Speaker, there's another story about Walter that I think speaks to the concerns that we see with the Sask Party government in the allegations that they have taken \$3 million from another political party. And, Mr. Speaker, it's the story of Walter and his love for the game of football.

When Walter was a young man, Mr. Speaker, there was nothing more than he loved than football. He would spend all his time going to games. He would spend all his time reviewing the statistics. He would spend all his time looking up to these football players because to them they were a picture of strength, a picture of good athletes, and a picture of the type of individual that they would like to be in life.

So, Mr. Speaker, there was one team that Walter loved the most and, Mr. Speaker, this team was called the Proud Cougars. And the Proud Cougars, Mr. Speaker, did have a good deal of organization at the team level, and they had gained a fair amount of success as a football team. Well spring tryouts were coming along, so Walter worked as hard as he could. He was running laps around the football field. He was lifting a few weights. He was trying to eat well. He was trying to get in the best possible shape, Mr. Speaker, that he could make the team. Well tryouts came, Mr. Speaker, to join the Proud Cougars, his favourite team. And it didn't go well. Walter, he wasn't fast enough. He wasn't strong enough. He couldn't memorize the plays properly. So while his heart was in it, Mr. Speaker, he simply didn't have the ability to make the team.

So when the coach told him this, Walter was devastated. He said please just let me be involved with the Proud Cougars in some way. I'll even be the water boy. And while, Mr. Speaker, the coach, who had a good reputation — he came from the university campus and had a farm background and people thought fairly well of the coach at the time — he said okay we'll let you be the water boy, Walter, so long as you do a good job.

Well Walter poured himself into this job. Every opportunity he ensured they had plenty of cups all the time. He hauled around huge bags of ice, many bags of ice, sometimes 60 pounds of ice, a significant amount of ice. And he always ensured, Mr. Speaker, that there was an adequate supply of beverages — of water, Gatorade — and other things that the Proud Cougars needed, Mr. Speaker.

Well the Proud Cougars had a good run as a team, but as all things come to an end, Mr. Speaker, as things come to an end, they eventually had problems with their team management, had problems with the players, and the good fortune that they experienced as a team came to an abrupt halt. And many of the Proud Cougars found themselves in a bad situation with the league commissioner.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there were still a good number of Proud Cougars that loved football, still a good number of Proud

Cougars that wanted to carry on, wanted to compete. And they said, well we still love football. We've gained this experience. We have this culture of the Proud Cougars. What if we just change our name and become a different team? We can get a different coloured jersey, and no one will really know the difference. We can use the remnant of Proud Cougars that we have. We can pick up a few free agents along the way from another failed team, Mr. Speaker.

We can come together and form a new team. We can call this team Team Sasquatch. So sure enough, Mr. Speaker, Team Sasquatch, they tried to pretend they were a fighting team.

And, Mr. Speaker, Team Sasquatch, throughout the Proud Cougars' reign as having won a couple of cups, they managed to raise some resources for funding their team and for recruiting players, a number of resources to ensure that they had enough practice time and travel money. Well, Mr. Speaker, Team Sasquatch simply felt well, why isn't this money ours? I mean we were part of Proud Cougars. I think this money rightfully belongs to us, and we could use this money because we're trying to compete as Team Sasquatch. Certainly we need to rent field time. We need to buy equipment. We need to be in the game.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they carried on with these actions. And the quarterback, Walter, who had risen from the position of water boy to quarterback, at the same time he was fumbling a lot, Mr. Speaker. He was trying to be a one-man team. Instead of playing with the team, he was always choosing to run the ball himself. He wasn't passing properly. Now this could have to do with the poor depth that he had in terms of receivers and other players, Mr. Speaker, but it really was the one-man-Walter-quarterback show.

Well, Mr. Speaker, you can imagine how this annoyed some of the Proud Cougars because they had a tradition of working together, and they believed in certain things about the game of football. So when they saw Walter going astray, when they saw young Walter not living up to the motto of the Proud Cougars, Mr. Speaker, they wanted to take action. So they called the league commissioner, Mr. Speaker. They spoke to the league commissioner and said Walter and the Sasquatches have taken our money. We want it back because we're the Proud Cougars, and this money rightfully belongs to us because we want to field a team in the next season.

And, Mr. Speaker, isn't that what every individual society wants, simply a level playing field allowing them to compete fairly and openly in whatever pursuit that they are engaged in? So, Mr. Speaker, right now the commissioner is trying to decide in how he's going to rule on young Walter and the Sasquatches because the Proud Cougars certainly want their resources back to field a team. And the sad part is, Mr. Speaker, Walter could stop all of this if he simply gave the money back. He doesn't have to waste the commissioner's time if he simply does the right thing.

So, Mr. Speaker, this story illustrates what we've seen with members opposite with respect to their treatment of the PC [Progressive Conservative] trust funding. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will now read the motion that will be debated by other members:

That this Assembly condemn the Saskatchewan Party government for breaking trust with the people of Saskatchewan as evidenced by its disregard for a ruling by United Nations body, its interference in the appointment of the Chief Electoral Officer, and its continued efforts to thwart free and fair elections by not allowing the Progressive Conservatives to access their funds.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will move my motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Hart): — The member from Saskatoon Massey Place has moved the motion:

That this Assembly condemn the Saskatchewan Party government for breaking trust with the people of Saskatchewan as evidenced by its disregard for a ruling by United Nations body, its interference in the appointment of the Chief Electoral Officer, and its continued efforts to thwart free and fair elections by not allowing the Progressive Conservatives to access their funds.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Prince Albert Carlton.

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well it's an honour once again to stand up in the House and take part in the 75 minute debate. Now unlike the member from Saskatoon Massey Place, a very learned individual I know, he went off with a certain type of wildlife. I'm not going to go into that particular discussion right now, Mr. Speaker.

But it was fascinating to listen to his discussion about the International Labour Organization and the ruling that they believe we aren't following and adhering to, Mr. Speaker. Now I'll get into that in one second. But we definitely respect the work done by the ILO [International Labour Organization] when it comes to child labour, Aboriginal rights, and poverty reduction, advancing labour laws in the Third World countries to make them more like the strong laws we have in our democracy, in our society, and our Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I say our Saskatchewan meaning all of our Saskatchewan, not just the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker.

We're very positive that our labour legislation is appropriate and consistent, in fact, with the International Labour Organization convention on freedom of association. And I would argue very strongly that as we took our part in developing our legislation moving forward, we didn't do that without looking at some very learned friends in Justice. The same individuals, I would argue, were in Justice at the same time the previous, the opposition now, when they were in government used as the sounding board to move forward on legislation and changes in the rules and the Acts. So I feel very strongly that the individuals in Justice provided the right, sound legal advice moving forward, Mr. Speaker.

Now the member from Saskatoon Massey Place talked about ignoring the ruling of the ILO. And that's somewhat concerning, in fact very concerning given the fact that, you know, I think that the ILO's opinion were, their previous opinions involving, related to Saskatchewan laws or rules — back from 1966 with Mr. Ross Thatcher's government and more recently with Mr. Romanow's government in 1998 —

would fall in line with what the Saskatchewan Party government believes. We disagree, as those two leaders of their parties did back in those days and those eras, in regards to the legislation and the ruling of the ILO, the complaint. The complaint, Mr. Speaker. Now I'm sure there was some very interesting conversations around the caucus and cabinet tables of those two particular leaders in those times as well in regards to the ILO ruling.

And I think what's interesting right now . . . And I believe the member from Saskatoon Massey Place may want to discuss this with his current leader, Leader of the Opposition because I'm sure he would recall this information very clearly when he was the minister responsible for SaskPower in 1998, when it was his actions — and I would say probably not his actions alone, but the actions of the entire government at the time, Mr. Speaker — were cited by the ILO committee on freedom of association. And interestingly enough, it involved the Bill 65, *The Maintenance of Saskatchewan Power Corporation's Operations Act* of 1998, which imposed back-to-work orders on all SaskPower workers, Mr. Speaker.

So I'm sure the Leader of the Opposition, and I'm sure the member from Saskatoon Massey Place would like to consult with him, maybe before he spoke today, just to make sure he had his particular facts going forward correct.

But I'm sure the Leader of the Opposition will also realize and will also probably want to mention to his members that the idea of that Bill, Mr. Speaker, was to ensure, provide — and this is going to be good, Mr. Speaker — to provide essential services, essential services of electricity for the people of Saskatchewan when in fact they were talking about being on strike, and being on strike, in fact. So the Leader of the Opposition brought in Bill 65 for the essential services legislation portion to ensure the electricity flow to the people of this province, Mr. Speaker.

So now we have a Leader of the Opposition, who I would say that I've heard on numerous occasions talk about being against the Bills that we brought into this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, into the province to protect the people of this province for essential services. He did the same thing back in 1998 with Bill 65, Mr. Speaker.

Now ironically when the ILO made their decision in regards to that particular Bill 65, governments can take that advice and they can discuss it freely amongst the cabinet table, around the table, within their caucus, as well of other individuals. But ironically you would expect that what we did was more prudent. We said that we believe our actions are correct and proper within the convention of the ILO freedom of associations.

Well the previous leader, this Leader of the Opposition, the previous minister of SaskPower, the previous Roy Romanow NDP government, Mr. Speaker, spent two years, two years before they actually responded to the ILO and their ruling which . . . I find that to be very concerning that a government wouldn't actually start talking about a relation to the actual Bill, Mr. Speaker, in relation to how it affected SaskPower employees and essential services which is . . . I guess we're on the same page here now. I believe that now it's pretty much on record now, Mr. Speaker. Essential services are an important part of this province to make sure we in fact maintain services

to those people in the province day and night, Mr. Speaker. That's very critical.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker, ironically, ironically for some reason the Leader of the Opposition and the cabinet and the premier of the day decided that they would make a decision on the ILO ruling. But this is what their decision was. And I find it quite funny that they would in fact say that, well Bill 65 is going to expire on December 31st of 2000 — two years after the ruling, Mr. Speaker. And because the Bill was going to expire, they decided that there was no reason to cancel it, to cancel it and then fall in line with the ILO ruling. Let it run its course. Ruling wasn't on the books. But rather than take a stand and actually make a statement regarding that, they let it just expire, Mr. Speaker, the Bill. And therefore no reason to address ILO ruling.

So I think that we have here is a legacy judgment, a legacy judgment made by the now current Leader of the Opposition, the former minister of Sask Power and the cabinet of the day, and the leader of the day Mr. Romanow that set up a precedent as Mr. Thatcher did before that.

We respect the ILO, absolutely. But when it comes to the fact of making rulings in our province in regards to the actual way we do business, Mr. Speaker, is that we are positive that our legislation — as I'm sure they were at the time, Mr. Thatcher's government before that, Mr. Speaker, in 1966 — that it's consistent with Canadian law and similar to the same laws of other provinces, Mr. Speaker.

So I'm sure that the members opposite will in fact support the fact that labour laws are actually put in place, changes to laws are put in place to support the operations of government, the operations of a province and for the safety and protection of the people of this province. Bill 65, Mr. Speaker, in 1998 demonstrated that under the NDP government and now current Leader of the Opposition.

So I think moving forward, we also look at the fact that, you know, the member from Saskatoon Massey Place talked about some of the labour rulings involving the ILO.

I think it's also very important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to say that in a poll that was done by *The Leader-Post* in 2008 in regards to the labour legislation changes, 70 per cent of the public wanted unions and employers to negotiate essential service agreements, 75 per cent supported the use of secret ballots when voting to join a union. And you know, this situation's not uncommon, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And the ILO has responded to complaints by Canadian unions nearly 100 times since 1958. So again the issue of governments making laws, changing laws to ensure essential services for the safety of the people of the province isn't something new. It's not.

[15:15]

The ILO may not agree with it because unions will in fact . . . and they have the right, through different means, through different processes to get rulings from the ILO, possibly from the courts in the country as well. I think what we see though is we have a government now who says they are opposed to essential services. The opposition, sorry, is opposed to essential

services. The government wanted it in place. But this has got precedents already in place, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the 1998 Bill 65, Sask Power back-to-work legislation put in place to ensure that essential services are provided to the people of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So I think it's also critical to note that we believe that, when it comes to our country of Canada and this province, that we respect the ILO, most definitely. But we don't believe people from Geneva, an organization from Geneva, should have a ruling here . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well the member from North Battleford wants to talk about judgments. I'm not sure where he was in 1998, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I'm sure after what he's heard today, he can check *Hansard*, go back to Bill 65. Maybe he needs to go and get a little social studies lesson, a little history lesson, Mr. Deputy Speaker, before he starts to sit from his chair now and take part in this debate.

Maybe he will get up and take part in the debate. I look forward to his, I look forward to those comments maybe later if he so chooses to now argue against a government position, or an opposition position that was government at the time, which has now set a legacy position which has been in the province of Saskatchewan three occasions now — 1966, when Mr. Thatcher; 1998, Mr. Romanow; and now with the Saskatchewan Party government, essential services and labour laws.

So I think, Mr. Speaker, before I sign off for the day, I think it's important that we also recognize the most recent Insightrix poll, an online poll which is done independently, showed that our leader is 40 points above the current Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's important to realize. When it comes to trust in this province, the people of this province have spoken through poll after poll that shows the Leader of the Saskatchewan Party is well above and trusted more than the leader of the current opposition. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Calvert was much more honourable than that . . .

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard): — Member's time has expired. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise to speak to the resolution currently before the Legislative Assembly this afternoon. I will make most of my remarks about the government's treatment of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer.

I earlier today had an occasion to speak about the importance of the independent offices of the legislature, particularly those offices that have governance over the conduct of members, as does the Chief Electoral office, and the importance of a public confidence in those institutions.

The acting Chief Electoral Officer has been doing that job for over 18 months. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, he is the only person in that office, a neutral office, who has actually been in that office during the time of the Saskatchewan general election. He is the institutional memory of that office.

He won a fair and impartial competition which was conducted by a bipartisan selection committee comprised of the Speaker and a government representative, the Minister of Justice, an

opposition representative, and an independent representative. And the Minister of Justice referred to the acting Chief Electoral Officer as the ideal candidate to become the Chief Electoral Officer.

He had enough confidence to take his name back to his caucus as a recommendation from the Board of Internal Economy, but the Premier decided to veto that appointment, which causes great amount of consternation in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And again I find myself quoting my hometown paper, a paper whose, I think the politics of the editorial board are not exactly my politics, Mr. Speaker. But again, very, very well-reasoned editorial on March 24th which said, “. . . the premier has the duty either to accept the results of that process or make it absolutely clear why he would allow his caucus to throw it out.” The editorial went on to say, “Not only does it harm the office of this most critical public servant, it also throws into question Saskatchewan's democratic process.”

To have the Premier use his caucus to reject the Chief Electoral Officer without providing reasons leaves the impression that, to quote *The Star-Phoenix* again:

. . . the only reason the Saskatchewan Party would refuse his appointment would be an effort to gerrymander the electoral boundaries or to subvert the electoral process by stacking the office.

It appears that the position of the Saskatchewan Party is that a majority of the Legislative Assembly gets to choose the Chief Electoral Officer who will oversee their conduct in an election. That amounts to attempting to select an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly by government appointment. When faced with this very simple question, as to subversion of the rather short-lived — because it's only been about a dozen years, Mr. Speaker — the short-lived institution of an independent Chief Electoral Officer, the Saskatchewan Party unilaterally announced a change to the rules, or an attempt to change the rules, to how independent officers and particularly the Chief Electoral Officer of the Legislative Assembly would be selected and appointed.

When the government interferes with the appointment of an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly, attempts by the Premier's fiat to appoint an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly, that's a clear sign that that's a government and a Premier that cannot be trusted. When they try to change the rules for how independent officers of the Legislative Assembly are appointed halfway through the term, that's another sign that the government cannot be trusted, Mr. Speaker.

It has been often said — it's not original to me — that the premier or prime minister in a majority government situation in our British parliamentary form of democracy can be, for all intents and purposes within the jurisdiction of that government, a dictator. And in a majority government situation where the Premier can, if he wishes to act like a dictator, which they have done, the Premier has done in the case of the Chief Electoral Office — an understaffed and demoralized office in my view, Mr. Speaker, and an understaffed and demoralized office as we

grow close to a year and a half, only a year and a half from the next Saskatchewan general election — a very serious concern it should be for the people of Saskatchewan.

When a premier wants to act like a dictator, there are very few, very few restraints on him. One can be an Attorney General that has a strong sense of the robust rule of the law and a willingness to defend it. That is, I'm afraid, more often the exception than the rule, Mr. Speaker. The other is the opposition, Mr. Speaker, but ultimately we are overruled, and the rules are changed unilaterally by a government. And we've seen this government quite willing to change the rules to prejudice the opposition and to favour the government and use its majority. And of course there's a free press, Mr. Speaker.

But the opposition and the press are all dependent upon information. And we have a government that uses the slogan of transparency and accountability but in fact — in a very Orwellian sense, Mr. Speaker — is a secretive government, is a government that does not provide information. It is a government that signs deals and consults about them afterwards, Mr. Speaker. And it's a government that will not debate its decisions that it makes if it can avoid doing so, Mr. Speaker.

We have recently seen video of eggs being thrown at the Speaker in Ukraine, and the Speaker cowering underneath an umbrella, Mr. Speaker. Many people found that video entertaining, Mr. Speaker. I was not one of them. I am apprehensive, if not fearful, for people of the Ukraine, a country that many people in this Assembly and the province have an attachment. Mr. Speaker, it is a new and young democracy. And although that is not the violence that we are seeing, the bloodshed that we are seeing, say in Thailand, Mr. Speaker, it is still disturbing. And for those of us who have hopes for Ukraine, because of our family attachments to that country, have to be apprehensive about how this will end up, how this will turn out, Mr. Speaker.

But even old democracies where institutions are taken for granted, it is not sufficiently acknowledged how fragile those institutions can be if people do not treat them with respect. And the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, that independent officer, as an independent officer of this legislature is not yet 20 years old. It is a new and, I would suggest, fragile institution. This legislature in its wisdom, and I think it was wisdom, moved away from a government appointment of that position. And it was a New Democratic Party government, obviously in the '90s, who initiated that move away from a government appointment to an independent office, Mr. Speaker.

That's what the spirit of the legislation provides for. That's what the spirit of the legislation provides for. That is what we have seen with successful appointments to that position. That is the spirit that informed the appointment, the resolution that was in this House this afternoon appointing the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Mr. Speaker. That was the spirit that informs how this officer was to be appointed, Mr. Speaker.

The independent, non-partisan and bipartisan — in representing both sides of this House — made a recommendation. And without very good reason, without very good reason because of the danger of subverting the independence of the office, without

very good reason, that recommendation should have been accepted by both sides of the House, Mr. Speaker, and it was not.

And the failure of the majority Sask Party caucus to accept that recommendation, the veto by the Premier of that recommendation, has the effect of reverting or attempting to revert — because the opposition do not accept that the Chief Electoral Officer has not been appointed, Mr. Speaker — has the attempt to subvert the independence of that office and the independent appointment of that office, Mr. Speaker, and to revert back to a government appointment, Mr. Speaker.

And if we allow this to be done by the government and by the Premier, then we are setting a precedent for removing the independence of officers of this legislature, perhaps of officers whose institutions they lead are longer than this office, Mr. Speaker. And it is not just that the government can't be trusted on matters of the day and matters of policy, but on fundamental matters of protecting democracy, this government, this Premier cannot be trusted.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Elhard): — The member's time has expired. I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to speak to this motion today. I do question somewhat the motion that was put forward and I'm just going to give a little bit of my theory as to why the opposition would feel that it was important to put forward a motion like this.

It isn't a motion about the social democratic principles of their party. It's not about, you know, something that they would like to see achieved in our province. Mr. Speaker, this is just one more piece of what they think is going to be a successful jigsaw puzzle they're trying to put together. They've looked at some polling, they've looked at their leader, and they've said, you know, it's probably not going to work for us to repaint this picture. I think we need to maybe tear down the government instead of trying to build ourselves up.

And you read this. It's about breaking the trust. It's full of innuendo, Mr. Speaker. And I'm very pleased today to have an opportunity to maybe point out some of the hypocrisy that that organization, the NDP in Saskatchewan, are currently engaged in and how they think this might be a successful . . . I think it will be futile, but it is an active campaign on their part, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to start by trust. I think that's very important for political figures, for a political parties to have the trust of the people of Saskatchewan. Our party went out of our way, Mr. Speaker, because it's a fundamental belief for the people on this side of the House that you do what you say you're going to do, Mr. Speaker.

We made about 150 promises during the last campaign. At last count, with two years into our mandate, well over 100 of those commitments were achieved, Mr. Speaker. Big picture, small picture, all of them are important.

And when I go back to my constituency, and I can look the members of my community in the eye and they say, you know I

heard you talk about that during the campaign or I saw the Leader of the Opposition at that point during the campaign speak about this, and today it's a reality, that's a powerful thing, and it will continue to be.

I also think that the decorum in the House, Mr. Speaker . . . On this side of the House we've made a very conscious effort. There is no heckling, Mr. Speaker, from this side of the House. We think if the opposition has a point to make, Mr. Speaker, that they should have that opportunity to ask those questions.

[15:30]

On the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker, they have a different view. They think that if they ask a question, that there should not be an answer. They think that they are the government that we should have, and that the people of Saskatchewan were wrong, so why would we want to hear the answers to the questions that they ask, Mr. Speaker.

You know, maybe that is their belief. Maybe they think that the people of Saskatchewan made a horrible mistake and that that'll be reversed, but I think that that attitude is the exact attitude which will keep them on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

We see on that side of the House constant bickering and finger pointing, innuendo. I don't think that's productive, Mr. Speaker, and I think that the media, who the former Speaker mentioned as one of the pillars of holding governments accountable, have grown tired of inaccuracies in their statements.

I know that their Finance critic has had many a red-faced scum in the rotunda where he was trying to defend a position that those members put together for him to take to the public, and it wasn't defensible. And trying to defend an undefensible position, Mr. Speaker, I think . . . I've seen the shade of those people's faces when they're trying to do that, and it isn't pretty, Mr. Speaker.

I think the way they treat each other is sometimes questionable, specifically the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker. Doing a little research for this debate on the Internet I saw some clips of where the Leader of the Opposition, who had left his party and had moved to Alberta, was at an event, a public event, making jokes about his own people — that he had served with — his colleagues. He called one of them a wimp, Mr. Speaker, in a public venue, a wimp. He talked about them as a lefty or, I served with those left wingers for years. Mr. Speaker, I just, you know, you may joke with your colleagues but you don't get in front of a TV camera and make those sorts of statements.

The Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, is who made those comments. He made some very disparaging comments about the then premier, Mr. Calvert. He said he was redder than . . . and I won't repeat it, Mr. Speaker. But I will also say that he made that exact same slur against who is now the member for Saskatoon Nutana, Mr. Speaker. A woman who has dedicated, I would say, the largest part of her career to this Assembly and too for the people of Saskatchewan.

I don't share her views, I think I would be more centrist on the scale and I think she'd be more left wing, but I wouldn't in a public venue be saying that she's redder than a . . . Mr. Speaker,

and I will not say it. I will not say it because I don't think it is appropriate to say it. But that, that is the leadership that's leading that party right now and I think that the debate motion we have before us today is just one more statement that carries down that line. I don't think it's acceptable.

Another thing, Mr. Speaker, that's recently happened is again, the minister, the critic of Finance wasn't allowed to speak on budget day. And the members of this House have never seen a situation where the critic of Finance . . . budget day. The galleries are full. People are here to hear his comments; what does he think of the budget? Again, it probably wouldn't agree with what our side of the House thinks of the budget, but people expect that he's going to give voice. On budget day, Mr. Speaker, he was kicked to the curb, kicked to the curb by the Leader of the Opposition, and I know that a lot of people were disappointed. I would imagine most specifically that member. I just don't think that that's how you treat your team, and I think the people of Saskatchewan see that and they notice that, Mr. Speaker, and it's not acceptable.

One story that was related to me recently by a member of my constituency, and I'd heard it before, but it struck home with me, and it's about trust. It's about the Leader of the Opposition when he was a cabinet minister, Mr. Speaker. He was the Minister of CIC, Crown Investments Corporation, and one of their largest investments was a little company called Wascana Oil.

It was a nationalized oil company in Saskatchewan under a former NDP government. It then got privatized, stock was sold off, but the Government of Saskatchewan was still the largest shareholder. It held a golden share to ensure that the head office remained here in Saskatchewan, that it remained a Saskatchewan presence, and a real asset for the people of Saskatchewan. But when he was minister of CIC, he sold it, Mr. Speaker. And there's transcripts in *Hansard* of why we had to sell it and what it would mean. He assured the people of Saskatchewan as minister of CIC that the head office would remain in Saskatchewan and that that wouldn't be a problem and, in fact, the head office would probably grow. That was his commitment to the people of Saskatchewan as the minister responsible.

How it worked out, Mr. Speaker, is he sold that company. He sold it to a larger oil company in Calgary called Nexen. Nexen buys Wascana Oil. Everything's going fine. The oil's still pumping. But the surprising thing, Mr. Speaker, is that Nexen all of a sudden needs a vice-president. They decide they need a vice-president — a junior VP if you will — and they go on a talent search, and if they don't hire the cabinet minister that had just sold them that very major asset. Now this individual back home, when you're talking about trust, Mr. Speaker, this person back home told me that didn't smell right. And I don't know what happened. I wasn't in the Chamber at the time. But on the surface, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't.

So he moves to Calgary. He leaves Saskatchewan and that's fine. We all move on from politics and we all find careers afterwards or we retire. But, Mr. Speaker, that person's first task as the VP of public relations of lobbying for Nexen was to come back to Saskatchewan, lobby his former colleagues, many of which are sitting across the aisle right now, Mr. Speaker, one

of which is heckling because he doesn't want the people of Saskatchewan to hear this, Mr. Speaker. He comes back to Saskatchewan. His first job as an employee of Nexen is to lobby his old colleagues to get the golden chair, to allow them to move the head office out of Saskatchewan, which he just months earlier had committed would never leave Saskatchewan.

Again, Mr. Speaker, that might not smell right. But, Mr. Speaker, I think that that's not what the people of Saskatchewan will trust today. And I think the people of Saskatchewan will be remembering that, Mr. Speaker. And their motion to pull everyone down to that level, I don't think anyone can lose the confidence in the way that an Act like that would do, Mr. Speaker.

I'd also like to touch on the electoral officer, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important we have a very good and trusted electoral officer. The recent scandal in the NDP leadership, Mr. Speaker, when the Leader of the Opposition has a record, a track record of . . . You know, maybe he wasn't involved. I'm not here making any accusations. But when there's serious accusations about leadership races of the successful leadership candidate of the NDP who now sits in the Chamber, I think it is imperative that we don't rush into any decision, Mr. Speaker, that we do the research necessary to get the best, most appropriate electoral officer in this province, Mr. Speaker. And I would ask the member opposite, the former attorney general, that he would support us in that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting this motion. I believe the people of Saskatchewan have complete confidence in this government to do the right thing, and we will continue to do the right thing, Mr. Speaker, for a long, long time. I know that the members opposite will . . .

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I suppose the purpose of the 75-minute debate is to allow private members to practise their skills, but they should, they should, Mr. Speaker, talk to the motion at hand, Mr. Speaker. That would be . . . Perhaps someone over there could advise that member.

But, Mr. Speaker, I do want to make some comments on this. And the one thing I did notice that the member from Lloydminster was talking about, he was talking about taking the time to make the right decisions. But I think what we all have seen over the last couple of years is that this Sask Party has done anything but take time to make decisions, and it has now got them into hot water. It's got them in hot water with the ILO, the International Labour Organization, Mr. Speaker, which is a tri-part body of the United Nations, which consists, Mr. Speaker, of representatives from government, labour, and business. And that body has now ruled against the Sask Party government in favour of Saskatchewan workers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they can write this off. They can say they have passed it by their lawyers or whoever they want. But, Mr. Speaker, we know that — with all due respect to lawyers — but they can be wrong. And that is why we have bodies like the ILO. That's why we have courts.

Mr. Speaker, the thing that brought us to put forward this motion is to point out the degree to which this Sask Party government has mismanaged the labour legislation file. They've mismanaged it so bad that they have now got the attention of the United Nations. And it's recognizing, not only as we recognize here, their mismanagement and incompetence around the finances of the province, but it's recognizing their incompetence in labour legislation.

Mr. Speaker, just as a bit of background, the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, 16 provincial unions, and 5 national unions filed a complaint with the United Nations in 2008 over the Sask Party's — if I may — ham-handed approach to labour legislation. And it was this filing, these parties taking this to the International Labour Organization where there was a ruling made.

So that we all understand here, that government, the Sask Party government, had to work through the Harper Conservatives because now they have included the national government in this because national government, Mr. Speaker, deals directly with the ILO. That is, the ILO can't deal directly with the provincial governments because they recognize Canada, because Canada signs onto these things that they will abide by, and Canada's a signatory at the ILO.

Now, Mr. Speaker, so they had to contact their cousins at the federal level and say we've messed up. We've messed up, and now you have to speak on our behalf. So they had to put forward, they had to put together some arguments as to why they felt they were right. And those arguments, the very arguments that they said they had passed by their lawyers, and they passed that on to the ILO, and they said you're wrong. They said you're wrong. And Mr. Speaker, they said they were wrong.

And from here what we see is, we told them about this because if we all . . . I know this is all old history, Mr. Speaker, but on many occasions we had the Premier saying that he would not, for example, under Bill 5, the essential services legislation, that this was not necessary. We had the Minister of Health saying oh no, we don't have to go there — I think was the quote. We don't have to go there. It's not necessary because up to that point in time, Mr. Speaker, we had a form of essential services legislation. I know that might surprise some of the members across, but we had essential services legislation.

But that essential services legislation was worked out when there was a strike, so we didn't go into spending enormous amounts of money which have already, Mr. Speaker, been spent at the Labour Relations Board, determining who was essential. And as we know — which has been stated here quite clearly — that in fact if there ever was a strike, to the embarrassment of them, that there would be more people having to work during a strike than the Health minister is able to afford to put in place now. So if it's essential during a strike, we wonder what their definition of essential services and essential health care is when it comes to that.

But Mr. Speaker, also for the record, I want to put in what the ILO has said about their legislation. And here's what they're facing. Here's what they're facing. The committee expects the government will ensure that the provincial authorities hold full

and specific consultations. Now there's a great wakeup call for that side who does not consult on anything. I mean, this is going to be a trademark of those folks over there when they're gone in 2011 after November, that they've never talked to the people of Saskatchewan. They felt . . . as we heard earlier, what they used to say is that we just had an election, and that's enough consultation. But people have grown tired of that. So they're telling them they have to consult, and they have to roll back everything and start again.

And here's what they say, another thing the committee has to say. To amend in consultation, they say:

. . . to amend the Public Service Essential Services Act so as to ensure that the LRB may examine all aspects relating to the determination of an essential service, in particular, the determination of the sectors in question, classification, number, and names of workers who must provide [that] . . .

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wonder sometimes, when I listen to what they're saying, if they even understand what that means. And to try and put it simply to them . . . And the money that has been wasted at . . . money, money that is so needed in the health care system that is being wasted before the Labour Relations Board, spending hours determining who is essential and who is not, not getting any resolution there. The resolution is not there because the Act is so flawed. The Act is so flawed that it doesn't work, but they will not listen to that. We can tell them that time and time again, but it's flawed, and it doesn't work.

And so, Mr. Speaker, so that's not working, and they're spending money. And then maybe a bit more, a point that should be made as well is that where people — and this might really come back to be a problem — where the government has required people to be essential or has taken them off, that they “. . . take the necessary measures so that compensatory guarantees are made available to workers whose right to strike may be restricted or prohibited and keep it informed in this respect.”

[15:45]

Now when you take all this together, there are potentially costs here into the future. There are potentially even costs here into the future. And we saw in British Columbia when that government there snubbed its nose at collective agreements, what happened, and the dangers, and the dangers that that poses.

Now one of the things that they also should understand is this is a first step because the unions in this file are proceeding to the Supreme Court. And one of the things that the Supreme Court will look at is the ruling of the ILO. They respect the ruling ILO. So if they say, well we think we're right at the ILO and just dismiss that, they've got a problem because they obviously don't understand how the Supreme Court works. And even though I am not a lawyer, that part is that they will take into consideration a ruling of an international body.

And if they do that, and we come back here and we then say, well now there could be costs with this, then I would think as . . . I see the Minister of Resources sitting there and shaking his

head. Probably he's not one who should be making predications, as we see his \$3 billion prediction in potash. But if that's going to be the degree and the sophistication of their predictions, then I would say that perhaps that's the wrong crystal ball to look at from the member there from Kindersley because I would venture to say that there's a good chance they might be wrong.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think in the few short minutes that I've had to try and put this together so that perhaps this government, giving them one final chance to understand, to understand the issue before them here . . . because it becomes at times very frustrating, very frustrating where they walk away from a deal where they . . . We had a court case against the federal Conservatives which could have resulted in \$800 million, which was quite clear that that federal Conservative Party promised before the election. All of these MPs [Member of Parliament] that we have in Saskatchewan agreed that Saskatchewan should get \$800 million with that kind of a backing. We backed them as well, as I recall, on that. Both parties were going to take this, and now they back away from that.

But what they don't back away from is fighting the people, the people, the very people who work and create the wealth for this province. They don't back away. They take them to the Supreme Court, and they want to hurt them. So as we've said earlier here in the present negotiations that are going on in health care, where over 80 per cent are women, they're willing to hurt those people. They're willing to hurt those families, working families in the province, but they're not willing to take on and take what is Saskatchewan's \$800 million. They're not willing to fight that fight, but they're willing to take on the workers in this province. And I say shame to them, Mr. Speaker. I say shame to them.

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

Mr. Michelson: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's, you know, it is indeed a pleasure to get up and speak in this House. Mr. Speaker, when I look at the motion that was presented, it certainly reflects the negative attitude of the people on that side of the House. They talk about breaking trust, disregard, interference, thwart. It's just a negative attitude that just spews over here constantly.

And I took, I took up the disregard. And when we talk about disregard, they seem to have a total disregard for the people of the province and the traditions of this House. And I'm saying that, Mr. Speaker, because there have been traditions in this House for many years of speaking on both sides. And two of those opportunities for speaking in the House generally come, as tradition, twice during session. One is during the budget speech, and one is during the Throne Speech.

Mr. Speaker, when we had the budget speech . . . and tradition is that all members on both sides have some time, 15, 20 minutes by tradition, by agreement that they are allowed to speak. Mr. Speaker, this was disregarded by the members of that side. And I, for one, was not allowed to speak, not given permission to speak because of the disregard for the traditions of this House when we were talking about the budget.

There's a lot of things about the budget that I would have preferred to have talked about, you know, the infrastructure that we're following up on, the highways. You know, the twinning of Highway 11, very important to this province to have the transportation in this province, that's a very important part; the Lewvan interchange just west of the city here, part of what we're doing to increase the productivity of this province, improve the infrastructure; the Yorkton bypass.

And, Mr. Speaker, talking about highways, there are over 700 . . . 470 kilometres of highway construction and over 600 kilometres of resurfacing. Those are some of the things that I wanted to talk about in my speech on the budget. But because of the disregard of that side of the House, I was never allowed to.

You know, when the Leader of the Opposition got up and gave his little retort, he talked about back in the '80s. That's what he was referring to, back in the '80s, in the old days, we might say, from the modern times. Mr. Speaker, he talked about Minister Berntson and the former Premier Devine back in the '80s, of how they made decisions for the caucus and only caucus could talk if they were given permission to. That's what he said. That's what he indicated when he spoke.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not how it was. When we put the budget together, there was no disregard for other members. The members on this side went out to their constituencies. They talked to the constituencies and got the feeling of the people of Saskatchewan, came back and sat around the caucus table and said this is what we like to see in the budget. This is what we want.

And did I get everything that I thought that should be in the budget? Well not really. But at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, when we all had our input in, we accepted the decisions of the caucus as a whole. We came out with a budget that was fair. It was hard because we're in some times that we need to be very careful with our expenditures, Mr. Speaker. It was presented. It was passed. And I'm grateful for that.

But what I'm saying, you know, I didn't have a chance to talk about that because of the disregard . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I'd just like . . . Order. I'd just like to remind the member, the motion before the Assembly is the motion we're currently debating, and I ask the member to at least acknowledge the motion. And his comments, direct them towards the motion.

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And perhaps I got a little carried away on the disregard for this side of the House.

You know, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the motion as it sits, and it talks about this side of the House having a disregard for different things, and one of them is the International Labour Organization. And we realize that we respect the International Labour Organization working on important issues like child labour and Aboriginal rights and poverty reduction, advising labour laws in the Third World to make them more like the strong labour laws we have here.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the International Labour Organization can

have those recommendations. They can say that. But they don't have the jurisdiction to dictate in here, in this legislation. We appreciate what the ILO has the opinion of, but we strongly disagree with their recommendations. And I'm sure it's much the same that would when Ross Thatcher in 1966 strongly disagreed with them, as did Roy Romanow. And my learned friend from Prince Albert spent some time on this, that the legislation was just the ILO's complaint.

Again it was a . . . And at that time, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition was the minister for SaskPower. Total disregard for the ILO's recommendations at that time. Total disregard. In fact they sat on this for two years. The maintenance of Saskatchewan Power Corporation Act of 2009, Bill 65, imposed back-to-work legislation, Mr. Speaker. It was disregarded just like they're accusing us. But that was a disregard, and they do that often.

They have a disregard for people's . . . the taxpayers of Saskatchewan with the money they spent on places like SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] and Channel Lake and Navigata, and the list goes on. Even the health issues, Mr. Speaker. They talk about the disregard for the health issues. In fact they closed 52 hospitals in their reign. They disregarded the concerns for the people of Saskatchewan in so many respects — for schools, hospitals, and highways.

They didn't even bother when the ILO put up their objection to the back-to-work order in regard to Bill 65. They didn't even bother to respond for two years, Mr. Speaker. They planned to take no action, they said, on the ILO's recommendation because Bill 65 would be expiring at the end of December. What does that tell you, Mr. Speaker? They didn't have any disregard then. They don't have any disregard now. They go through, they go through all this rhetoric, but it really has very little meaning.

Mr. Speaker, there's just . . . And a total of \$204 million that they disregarded in ventures that that government tried right from SPUDCO to Navigata to Coachman Insurance — all the stuff that they disregarded and yet they're trying to tell us that we're not doing things right.

Mr. Speaker, I really don't support the motion in any way. I can't support the motion. I can't support the negative position that is put forward by that party that disregards the traditions of the House, that disregards the traditions of the hon. members, that disregards even the members of their own party. When the member from Rosemont was to give his reply on the budget, he was told to sit down and wait till he was spoken to. I can't support that, Mr. Speaker. He has shown . . . They have shown that there's no disregard even for the position of the Speaker. They have no regard for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The members' 65-minute debate has elapsed. I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Question to the member from Prince Albert Carlton. The motion in front of the Assembly is very clear, condemning the Saskatchewan Party government for breaking trust with the people of Saskatchewan. The member from P.A. Carlton knows that

nothing destroys trust more than a broken election promise. The member from Prince Albert Carlton made a very specific promise: a vote for Darryl is a vote to keep the mill open. What does he say to the people of P.A. Carlton today?

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

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well let's begin with some trust issues. Let's talk about things like, well SPUDCO, Channel Lake — money invested, money lost. Well it has to go there, Mr. Speaker. It has to go there.

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I would ask the members to allow the member to respond to the question presented to him. I recognize the member from Prince Albert Carlton.

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well having said that now, this government has a stand. We're not going to risk taxpayers' dollars in business ventures like the Leader of the Opposition did back when he was in cabinet for SPUDCO, Channel Lake, and others.

And I guess the way it's now the same over there, hasn't changed at all. They're prepared to risk hundreds of millions of dollars in business ventures, Mr. Speaker. You want to talk about trust. Let's talk about trust about the Inshtrix poll, Mr. Speaker. Forty points our leader leads their leader, and that's based on things like trust — messaging, promises made, promises kept, Mr. Speaker.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? The Leader of the Opposition in the year-end poll, the year-end discussion with the *Leader-Post* said that he believes, he thought, he wouldn't be surprised if a poll was done . . .

The Speaker: — Next question. I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A current candidate contesting the nomination for NDP in Regina South has in the past requested that the NDP leader withdraw from the 2009 NDP leadership race. This demonstrates a complete lack of trust within his own party. My question to the member from Saskatoon Fairview: how do you intend to restore trust within your own party after such a sorry performance in 2009?

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I am not certain the pointing of fingers here, when what we have is the member from Saskatoon Northwest and what is happening over there. Mr. Speaker, the number of broken promises from that Premier is now enough to start filling up a book, and I could go on naming a number. I just spoke on the labour Bill about saying we'll not need labour legislation or essential services legislation. That is not necessary.

There are certain things in terms of this government in terms of their handling of the finances of the province as far from lending itself to trust. So I think before they start pointing fingers here, I think they should have a look at the track record

that they've established over the last two and a half years.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The final paragraph of the Court of Queen's Bench ruling starts this way:

Clearly, the action against the Saskatchewan Party would not be allowed to proceed if it were just a publicity stunt or an exercise in paranoia but the dual roles of the trustees and the questioned changes in the trust agreement by the trustees raise enough questions that the matter is not plain and obvious and beyond doubt as the precedents require.

Mr. Speaker, everyone knows if you take something that isn't yours, that's not right. Surely the member from P.A. Northcote, who is a police officer, knows that if you take things that don't belong to you, that is not right. Given that the member from P.A. Carlton, the member from P.A. Carlton is a police officer, knows that taking things that don't belong to other people is not right, will he go to the Premier and the Deputy Premier and tell them to give back the \$3 million that they have taken from the PC Party?

[16:00]

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

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the analogy that I want to bring up is a bully at the playground, Mr. Speaker. And I want to talk about a bully at the playground like we have Walter with the Cougars and some Sasquatch team from the member from Saskatoon Massey Place. I want to talk about the fact that a bully in a playground who goes into a community and decides that he would like to all of sudden impose himself and say, I want 1,100 memberships sold and I want them sold to anybody under any name and one box number, Mr. Speaker, I think that bully needs to be taught a lesson. I think that is the level of trust that the people of the province see. He took something that wasn't his. He took the leadership of the opposition, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question once again will be for the member from P.A. Carlton. Mr. Speaker, we all know that in the Court of Queen's Bench documents the Premier and Deputy Premier are named as involved in the issue of the PC trust fund and the \$3 million, Mr. Speaker. Why, if a political party is in possession of another political party's money, why would they not simply return it to clear the air with that cloud hanging over them?

My question to the member is: will he immediately urge his Premier and Deputy Premier to return the money?

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

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I want to make

mention that this matter is still before the courts, so I don't want to comment about any specifics related to that.

But we're talking about if there's anything about any kind of return of anything in this province, how about the hundreds of millions of dollars that that particular Leader of the Opposition was responsible for around the cabinet table, in poor business decision in his tenure with the NDP government?

They have a practice of investing in bad business decisions that cost the taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't know but I think the current Leader of the Opposition has some explaining to do when it comes to next election about how he invested money back in the day. Thank you.

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

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, the ILO has responded to over 100 complaints by Canadian unions since the late 1950s. Most Canadian jurisdictions have ignored these ILO rulings. To the member from Saskatoon Fairview: why are you putting the interests of the bureaucrats way over in Geneva over the good people of Saskatchewan?

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, this coming from a member who said, this is the best budget . . . or what was the exact words that he said?

An Hon. Member: — The best budget in the world.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — The best budget in the world. The best budget in the world, he said, Mr. Speaker. And now they've had \$2.3 billion. And now they're in debt by \$1 billion. They put up . . . Theirs is the party, the same party that puts up billboards all over, all over the city of Saskatoon, defacing the skyline saying the debt's going down. And, Mr. Speaker, it's probably correct for about one day. It's probably correct for about one day because after that, it's downwards.

And then there's a projection, a projection that the debt is projected to increase by 55 per cent by 2014. And then they have the nerve to talk about bureaucrats in the ILO. This will be the day, if we come back here and they have to pay money because of a Supreme Court judgment, that'll be the day. That'll be the day.

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

Mr. Quennell: — To the member from Moose Jaw North, why did his caucus veto the choice of the Board of the Internal Economy and the recommendation of the Attorney General of Saskatchewan, the ideal candidate for Chief Electoral Officer? What was the reason of the caucus opposite, Mr. Speaker?

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

Mr. Michelson: — Mr. Speaker, when it comes to selecting someone like that, it takes a long time to find the right person. We wanted to make sure that we do the right process, to look far and wide to make sure that the right candidates were . . . had an opportunity to apply, we could review them, and then we would look at them.

So this is what the process is doing. This is the process we're going through. And when it's done, we will have the right person that everybody will be happy with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Ms. Wilson: — Mr. Speaker, party members of the NDP considered a resolution to remove the cost of party membership. To the member from Saskatoon Fairview: was the intent of this proposal to make the rigging of future NDP leadership contests easier?

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, again this from a party that has been on a massive spending spree, a massive spending spree over the last two and a half years, over two and a half years, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is incredible that that should be that question.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was just amazed by some of the rhetoric over there from the Sask Party, especially when it comes to the ILO, as if that's something to do with Third World countries only and has no jurisdiction here in Canada. I'm simply amazed by that.

And less than 24 hours ago, we were commemorating the Day of Mourning here in Canada, something very serious. But yet 24 hours later they aren't doing anything. So to the member from Moose Jaw North: will he encourage his party to scrap Bill 80?

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

Mr. Michelson: — No.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

Ms. Ross: — Mr. Speaker, given that the NDP government business failures totalled something just south of a quarter of a billion dollars and that their leader's popularity is currently in the lower 30's, how can the member from . . .

The Speaker: — Time has elapsed on the 75-minute debate.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Sutherland.

Motion No. 4 — Support for Bill C-391

Ms. Schriemer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to make a motion that states:

That this Assembly encourage all members of parliament to support Bill C-391, a private member's Bill that seeks to abolish the expensive and ineffective long-gun registry, which unfairly penalizes law-abiding firearm owners, but fails to provide further protection for Canadians against crimes committed with firearms.

Mr. Speaker, in 1995 the Liberal government of the day passed gun registration legislation. The legislation was set out that long guns — which are the rifles that are used in Saskatchewan in everyday life for some ranchers; they're used in sport for hunting — the law stated that we would have to register these long guns.

We, the Sask Party, has always not supported this legislation. I believe that it was a bad piece of legislation and it was created to appease female activists in Quebec after the Polytechnique shooting. The interesting thing about that shooting is that Marc LePine, the offender in that case, got his weapon because he was a military person. That doesn't diminish the fact that there exists violence against women. That does happen; we know that. But in Saskatchewan we know and we can say that most of the offences against women are done by physical force. In fact most of the murders that are done, committed in this province and in Canada, are done so with sharp-edged weapons, not firearms.

So in 1995 the Liberal government of the day passed this legislation that requires the registration of legal firearms. In the Criminal Code at that time and today, there was still legislation concerning the prohibition of firearms. There is prohibited weapons. You cannot possess a prohibited weapon, and that includes guns that have a short barrel length. It's stipulated in the Code how long the barrel length on a firearm must be. And also the registered weapons as far as handguns, those weapons had to be registered. There had to be permission given to a person transporting a hand-held firearm, and so there was legislation that governed firearms that were used primarily in offences such as a sawed-off shotgun. Those were illegal at the time and no one could be allowed to have them.

So the gun legislation of 1995 set out to control what was legal previously. In 2004 there was a report released to CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] that to date, from 1995 up to 2004, \$2 billion had been spent on the long-gun registry. And that money, Mr. Speaker, \$2 billion would pay for 1,000 police officers for 20 years.

In May of 2004, the Liberal government, just days before an expected election call, eliminated the fees for registering and transferring firearms. Ottawa says it would also limit spending on the gun registry to \$25 million a year, spending that has averaged \$33 million a year and reached as high as \$48 million. That's a lot of tax dollars, Mr. Speaker, to regulate something that didn't need regulation. We didn't need to register a law-abiding citizen's firearms.

As a police officer, in my experience, there aren't a lot of firearms calls or offences committed with a long gun. Shotguns are sawed off by the bad guys when they are going to use something like that for a robbery, but most of the offences are done by fists, as I stated before, or sharp-edged weapons or blunt objects. And as I stated before, violence against women is primarily done with physical force as well in domestic disputes.

To tell you the truth, Mr. Speaker, when I've come across any long guns in my policing career, they were suicides actually. But the handguns, etc., are starting to appear more frequently today, but as related to drug trafficking. Drug offences are a lucrative proposition, and in order to protect their money and their product, probably 80 per cent if not higher of drug traffickers also have firearms, handguns mostly. But handguns were registered anyway prior to 1995, so it wouldn't restrict handguns today. It has no affect on the handguns.

A lot of the weapons that come into Canada that are unregistered and found, in cases of organized crime or drug traffickers, things like that, are coming up from the United States, and they're smuggled across the border, so most of them are not even purchased in Canada.

[16:15]

In 2006, May 17th of 2006 actually, Public Safety minister Stockwell Day says the Conservative government will introduce legislation to eliminate the long-gun registry. He announced that a number of measures would affect the gun registry while it's still in effect, and that would be a one-year amnesty for those who have not yet registered their non-restricted firearms, which pertains to the long guns. Long-gun owners will no longer have to pay to register their weapons, and the government will provide refunds to those who have already registered their long guns.

Responsibility for the registry will be transferred to the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] from Canadian Firearms Centre and the annual operating budget for the program will be cut by \$10 million.

Mr. Speaker, due to the fact that there is an unstable opposition in parliament — we have a minority government — the gun legislation could not be amended. So a private member's Bill recently has been put forward, Bill C-391, in Ottawa in parliament by a Manitoba Conservative member. And that private member's Bill suggests or states that the long-gun registry, just the long-gun registry part of the firearms legislation, would be repealed.

Now in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, it is very, very, very common to own a long gun. And I think it's really unfair that you would have had to pay to register it in the first place. So a lot of money is being spent and having absolutely no effect. There's absolutely no research to indicate that the long-gun registry has succeeded in crime prevention.

What it does do is it allows you to run the firearm model and serial number and find out who owned the gun. However, that's not very helpful because that's usually after the fact, after the offence has occurred. And so to say that it's helpful in policing, I don't agree with that statement because the fact that someone

owns a firearm does not change how you would respond to a call unless the firearm was being used.

Lots of people have firearms in their home. You respond to a call, maybe an unknown problem, a disturbance call. You're not going to deal with it any differently if they own a firearm or don't own a firearm. You are going to respond differently if a firearm is suggested in the call, for instance someone's pointing a rifle in a yard or in an alley. You would attend that call with, you know, safety in mind that there is a firearm there. So to say that it is safer for police, I don't agree with that.

When police do search warrants, drug raids, it's standard procedure to do the entry in a dynamic fashion because you would expect there to be firearms. If the information you have is that the drug dealer does in fact have a firearm, and your informant says that he has one, he's seen it there recently, then we would use, police would use the SWAT [special weapons and tactics] team or ERT [emergency response team] team to do the entry for the search warrant.

So, Mr. Speaker, this has been a long-standing mistake by government to make this law, especially the long-gun registry. I think that we need to recognize as legislators that sometimes when we make legislation it doesn't always work like it's supposed to. And I think this wasn't thought out well enough and 15 years ago, you know . . . We're still here in Saskatchewan saying, you know, just a minute here. This doesn't make sense.

And so I would ask the members opposite to support my motion. They are on record, both Mr. Quennell and . . . Oh, pardon me. The member from Meewasin and the former minister of Justice, Chris Axworthy, is in *Hansard* as being opposed to the long-gun registry as well.

So I think today what this is about is taking a long-time, bad decision and saying no more and ask that this legislation be repealed and that we send a very strong, clear, united message to Ottawa encouraging the members of parliament to support Bill C-391. So I so move the motion:

That this Assembly encourages all Members of Parliament to support C-391, a private member's bill that seeks to abolish the expensive and ineffective long-gun registry, which unfairly penalizes law-abiding firearm owners, but fails to provide further protection for Canadians against crimes committed with firearms.

I so move, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The motion before the Assembly is the motion presented by the member from Saskatoon Sutherland:

That this Assembly encourages all Members of Parliament to support Bill C-391, a private member's Bill that seeks to abolish the expensive and ineffective long-gun registry, which unfairly penalizes law-abiding firearm owners, but fails to provide for Canadians against crimes committed with firearms.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure why we're in a debate about an issue — although relevant to Saskatchewan people and one that when we were in government took a very firm position on — but it is truly an issue that is before the Parliament of Canada, Mr. Speaker. And the issue won't be determined by a debate in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. And this is an opportunity for the people of Saskatchewan to hear us talk about the issues that are in front of us and the responsibility of us provincially.

And so we're a little astounded that we're today talking about an issue that will be decided in Ottawa, if ever decided, Mr. Speaker. But I am very happy to hear the members opposite with the concept of supporting private members' legislation, and that I'm happy with because, Mr. Speaker, we have many pieces of private members' legislation before this Assembly which we would hope they would support as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's kind of ironic to bring forward a motion talking about support for an issue where your opposition's already made that very clear when they were the government and was very straightforward . . . let the people of Saskatchewan know where they stood. So why would we then debate an issue that really everyone's position is understood. And where the issue is well understood by both parties, I don't know why we would waste our time talking about something where we're clearly, clearly already decided. Clearly already, when we were government, made a firm stand and they obviously have the same position. So why are we debating?

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take a few minutes though and talk about some of the private members' legislation we have before us in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, because we could have taken this opportunity to talk about private members' legislation here, things that are important also to the people of Saskatchewan. And I'm not saying this issue isn't important, but it's outside our immediate control and outside our immediate ability.

But we do have a number of pieces of legislation that we could have been debating today, and we could have been trying to move forward, Mr. Speaker. And they could have supported the opposition and moving forward one of these Bills today by making it their priority and helping move forward important private members' legislation. We do appreciate that they believe private members' legislation is important.

Mr. Speaker, we have a number of very important Bills before us today that are private members' Bills, Mr. Speaker, the seniors' bill of rights, *The Autism Spectrum Disorder Strategy Act*, *The Earth Day Recognition Act*, Mr. Speaker. Now these are Bills that are before the people of Saskatchewan, private members' Bills.

We also have, Mr. Speaker, *The Public Safety, Security and Protection Act* and *The Whistleblower Protection Act*, Mr. Speaker. So here in Saskatchewan we have before us six private members' Bills that we could have had taken the opportunity to advance these private members' Bill in the interest of the people of the province of Saskatchewan and something that's within our control and within our mandate and within our responsibility, Mr. Speaker, as well.

Well, Mr. Speaker, as I reflect upon the Bills that we have brought forward in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, there are Bills that are there for the protection of the public, in *The Public Safety, Security and Protection Act*, Mr. Speaker. That piece of legislation is about enhancing the security and protection of Saskatchewan citizens within our provincial boundaries, Mr. Speaker, within our jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, that's an important piece of legislation that the members opposite could've brought forward, Mr. Speaker.

Or we could've been dealing with Bill No. 609, *The Whistleblower Protection Act*, Mr. Speaker, but no instead they want to talk about a piece of legislation that's before the federal commons, House of Commons, Mr. Speaker. Also we have other Bills that, Mr. Speaker, that are before us, the seniors' bill of rights, Mr. Speaker, a very important piece of legislation to enhance the seniors' rights in the province of Saskatchewan. Something I would hope all members of this Assembly would support, Mr. Speaker.

And these Bills are before this Assembly, but they're also Bills within our immediate jurisdiction, within our responsibility, and things that I think, Mr. Speaker, that we should be spending our time dealing on, rather than issues that are before the Parliament of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

We also have, Mr. Speaker, I think a very important Bill dealing with *The Autism Spectrum Disorder Strategy Act*, Mr. Speaker. That's a very important Bill to many families in Saskatchewan. There are many, many Saskatchewan families with autistic children that would love to have this Bill passed, Mr. Speaker. It would be an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to move a Bill on autism forward and provide hope for families with autistic children, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, those are things that are within our responsibility. Those are things that, Mr. Speaker, we should be willing to move forward on. And then, Mr. Speaker, we also moved forward a very simple Bill, recognizing Earth Day, Mr. Speaker. *The Earth Day Recognition Act*, Mr. Speaker, that's also before this Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

And if the government truly wanted to work on private members' legislation, Mr. Speaker, any one of these Bills would move to help and enhance the lives of Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, which is what our primary responsibility is. Now, Mr. Speaker, we do appreciate, we very much appreciate the Bills that are before the House of Commons. We appreciate the work that federal members of parliament do on behalf of their constituents which include our constituents as well, Mr. Speaker. But we should be spending our time in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, debating important legislation for the people of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to once again just take a moment or two to talk about a couple of very important Bills. And, Mr. Speaker, probably, probably the most important piece of legislation before us here is a piece of legislation called *The Public Safety, Security and Protection Act*, Mr. Speaker, a Bill designed to help ensure the security and protection of Saskatchewan residents, Mr. Speaker. And they don't want to debate this Bill. They don't want to vote on this Bill, Mr. Speaker, and they don't want to move it forward to help protect the security of Saskatchewan residents, Mr. Speaker. And we

should all want to enhance and protect the people of our province now.

The Speaker: — Being now 4:30 and pursuant to order of this Assembly, we'll recess until 6 p.m.

[The Assembly recessed until 18:00.]

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