



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

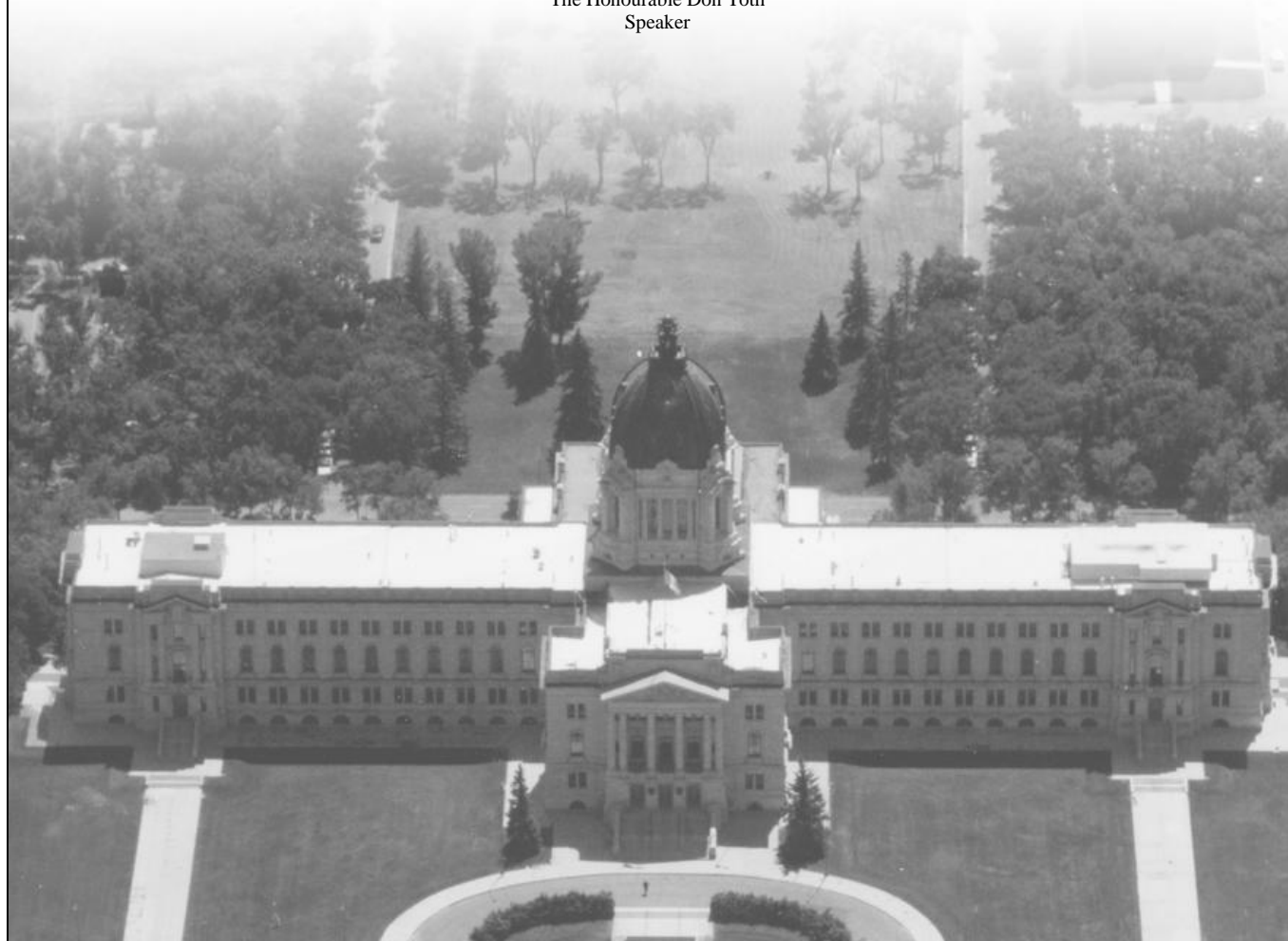
of the

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
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Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Furber, Darcy	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
Gantfoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
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Heppner, Nancy	SP	Martensville
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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
Lingenfelter, Dwain	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Hon. 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, Hon. Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Tell, 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
Wyant, Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to introduce to you and through you to all members of this honourable Assembly six accomplished individuals from Briercrest College and Seminary. Dr. Dwayne Uglem joined the staff of Briercrest College 24 years ago and has worked in a variety of positions, serving the last seven as president. Director of communications, Rob Shellenberg, comes to us by way of Alberta, but was born right here in Beechy, Saskatchewan.

Briercrest is celebrating their 75th anniversary this year, and are especially grateful for the 21,000 alumni they have served since 1935 and the 826 students enrolled on campus this fall.

I would like to recognize Rob Bancroft from Minto, New Brunswick; Tamara Bowering from Millet, Alberta; Olivia Plouffe from Connecticut; and Oschean Ulmer from Stoney Plain, Alberta. All of these students from Briercrest College are studying in the B.A. [Bachelor of Arts] and applied linguistics TESOL [teaching of English to speakers of other languages] program.

Rob spent the summer near Mazar-i-sharif in northern Afghanistan where he taught English to Afghani citizens at a language school. Tamara, Olivia, and Oschean spent the summer in Deyang in China's Sichuan province, site of the horrific 2008 earthquake. Their teaching helped to improve the English of 160 Chinese English-language educators.

Briercrest is an institution with a strong tradition of bringing talented, hard-working people to our province. For 75 years this great school has lured people to Saskatchewan because of their reputation for scholastic excellence but their students have often decided to stay in the province after their studies and make Saskatchewan their permanent home.

On behalf of the government, I wish to welcome the entire Briercrest contingent to their Legislative Assembly and ask that all members of the legislature do the same.

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

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Speaker, I know that it's my pleasure today to introduce a significant number of champions, champions in the east gallery and more champions in the west gallery.

I'm going to start with the two coaches that came: Jason Duczek who was the coach of the 3A championship football team, provincial champs, from O'Neill High School, and Christine Barber who was the championship coach for the cross-country team at the same O'Neill High School. In addition we've got the city boys' soccer championship team

seated in the west gallery behind me.

Mr. Speaker, there's close to 100 of these students from O'Neill, championship players all, many wearing the medal. And I'm delighted to see that you brought those with you today.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned the 3A football champions that are league, city, and provincial 3A championship teams. They're seated in the east gallery. The city boys' soccer championship team is seated behind me and the provincial 3A championship cross-country team is also seated behind me.

While I'm on my . . . Well let me do it this way. I'm going to ask all members to join me in welcoming these championship teams to their legislature, and I look forward to meeting them right as they leave here after question period. We're going to have pictures and a brief opportunity to meet. I invite all members to join me in thanking these students and teachers for coming, and welcoming them to the legislature.

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

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, this is Multicultural Week in Saskatchewan and I have the great honour of introducing two guests from the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan. With us today in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, are board member, Mary Chan, and executive director, Rhonda Rosenberg. Ms. Chan is also president of the Chinese Language School of Regina, one of the council's member organizations. The Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan promotes and fosters multiculturalism for us all. It's committed to working to achieve equality for everyone.

Our province celebrates the diversity of its people, their distinct cultures, and their ethnic backgrounds. In fact, Saskatchewan's support of multiculturalism is even reflected in our province's motto, "from many peoples, strength." Mr. Speaker, more and more we are becoming a province of many cultures. Ten thousand new immigrants made Saskatchewan their home this year. And at Regina's George Lee elementary school, there are 40 different countries with all of their cultures represented.

In recognition of our diversity, the week of November 21 to 28 has been declared Multicultural Week in Saskatchewan. Multicultural Week is a time for each of us to celebrate the many peoples that contribute to Saskatchewan's cultural mosaic and to our economy. Mr. Speaker, Ms. Chan, Ms. Rosenberg, and the others involved in the Multicultural Council help Saskatchewan's newest residents realize what a great place our province is in which to live, to work, invest, and raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to help me thank Ms. Chan and Ms. Rosenberg for their very good work and welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to join in welcoming the members from the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan. And as a long-standing master of ceremonies at the Scandinavian club, I work with many of these people.

But I want to make a special welcome to Mrs. Mary Chan, as her son Felix and my daughter Ingrid started kindergarten together in French immersion. And so we've spent many years watching our children grow — Felix in his endeavours, and then Ingrid, my daughter, and her endeavours as an actor, in town this week actually at the Artesian in *Jacques Brel*.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are many, many treasures that come from our acknowledgement in Saskatchewan of the multicultural base, and we're just seeing a new flowering of that. And I thank the members of the council very much for that.

Mr. Speaker, I also have a class of high school students from Dr. Martin LeBoldus High School. There are eight students in Mr. Jesse Michaud's class who are in the Speaker's gallery. And I'm introducing these on behalf of the member from Regina Douglas Park. But I would have to say that when I was first elected, Dr. Martin LeBoldus High School was in my riding and so I always count that high school as part of Regina Lakeview as well. So I give you a strong welcome and I hope you enjoy your day here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the members of the legislature I'd like to welcome and introduce today a group of men and women involved in the cattle industry. Some are Saskatchewan reps, but the remainder of the visitors up there today are from the US [United States] and we certainly want to welcome them too. They're up here for Agribition, but also to have meetings that are important to both industries on both sides of the border.

So I ask all members to welcome them to the legislature today. And enjoy your stay in Canada and Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of one of the alumni of O'Neill High School, that being the hon. member for Walsh Acres, and the rest of us, I would like to — while I'm on my feet — introduce two people seated in the east gallery. They are Jen Britton who's been introduced previously. She's part of the Save our Saskatchewan campaign. And it's good to have Jen here with us.

And while I'm on my feet, I want to introduce another O'Neill alumni, Mr. Speaker, who also has the honour of being a former football captain at O'Neill. The person I'm speaking about is Jaime García who happens also to be the NDP [New Democratic Party] candidate and next MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Regina Coronation Park. I ask all members to join me in welcoming these guests.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I would like to join with the member from

Thunder Creek in welcoming the delegation from Briercrest.

Once upon a time, my father attended high school at Briercrest. And I did not have the benefit of doing so, but I tree planted over the years with many, many individuals who helped pay for their tuition by planting trees, and returned to Briercrest in the fall. So I've heard first-hand about the quality education and the great life memories that are obtained while studying there. So on behalf of the official opposition, I'd like to welcome the group from Briercrest here today. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With us today in your gallery, seated in the east area is four very special visitors from northern Saskatchewan. These champions of change are here to propose a new strategy on dealing with youth suicide and youth justice. And they've travelled a long ways to be here. I'm particularly impressed with our elder, Marieanne Morin, who has worked diligently for many youth in northern Saskatchewan, in particular Beauval. And I want to say to Marieanne in Cree:

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

And what I said to her, Mr. Speaker, is I'm glad that she came here and that she has nothing to fear here, that this land is hers and as a Saskatchewan resident that she should have nothing at all that she should be worried about, visiting this great hall of democracy.

Also joining Marieanne of course is her son Max. Max of course is wearing a nice jacket today. If Max would stand up. And see the jacket that his mother made? And Marieanne stitched every stitch there and worked diligently while making this jacket for her son. And all the while of course Marieanne has been struggling with cancer.

The other person that's of importance here is Leroy Laliberte. And Leroy is a youth development worker. And Leroy also worked very closely with our MP [Member of Parliament], Mr. Rob Clarke. And of course the last lady here is Ms. Mihalicz who's also working very closely with this group.

And, Mr. Speaker, we're very blessed to have four of these quality people that have come all the way from Beauval in northwestern Saskatchewan to advocate for a new system of youth development and to certainly advocate for a new approach in justice and to stem the ever-growing suicide trends that many of our young people have suffered under. And I want to thank them for coming here today and, as my introduction, to tell them again, God bless you for your work. Our kids are dying and they need more champions like you to advocate for them.

So please join me in welcoming these very special champions of change and thank them for their work. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming these individuals to the legislature today. The societal and economic challenges that

face the North are very substantial and impose some very significant challenges for young people. And I think it's the work that people like this are doing that will be our road to the future. And I would like to not only welcome them, but encourage them to continue the good work that's being done and to help other people become involved in that. And I would certainly like to encourage them to stay active and continue to do what they're doing.

I hear the member opposite usually speaks in their own language. I'm not able to do that. I'm always wary of what he's saying without a translator. But I hope it's positive, Mr. Speaker, and would like to ask all members welcome these people.

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

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with my colleagues in offering a warm welcome to Dr. Uglem and the delegation from Briercrest.

[13:45]

Briercrest does have a very solid reputation, not only on the academic side, but on the spiritual side and on the life experiences, as my colleague mentioned, that many will gain from being at the institution. I know you all . . . That solid reputation also spreads into the community. And I know Moose Jaw, as being one of your closest neighbours, we enjoy the relationship. I know it's grown over the years and you do have an impact not only on Caronport and the institution, but on Moose Jaw as well. And that's been since the very early days, and I'm sure even more so since the era of Dr. Hildebrand and how important that era was at Caronport. So, Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my congratulations on the 75th anniversary and a warm welcome.

And also while I'm on my feet, on behalf of the official opposition I would like to welcome the international guests from Agribition that are here in the city of Regina for the week hopefully — maybe longer. I'm sure some of you are return visitors, but if this is your first visit to Regina and Agribition, I'm sure we'll see you next year because the show has such a strong reputation and for the display of new, current, and very progressive ideas on the agricultural side. I know you'll appreciate the week and enjoy it greatly.

Anyway, a warm welcome. Thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's giving me a great deal of pleasure to rise on behalf of Saskatchewan people who are concerned about the safety conditions of our highways. And Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

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 10 between Fort Qu'Appelle and the junction of Highway 1 in order to improve the safety for Saskatchewan's motoring public.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition was signed by the good folks from Fort Qu'Appelle, 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 on behalf of Saskatchewan renters that are facing a combination of rising rents and low vacancy rates in many communities across our province. Many renters have seen their rents increase by hundreds of dollars over the last year or more, and it's becoming increasingly difficult to deal with. Many provinces, or the majority of provinces in Canada, now have some form of rent control guidelines, and that the argument of private market would deliver sufficient affordable housing in the absence of rent control has proven to be false. And the prayer reads, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to consider enacting some form of rent control with a view to protecting Saskatchewan renters from unreasonable increases in rent.

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

Mr. Speaker, I present on behalf of concerned citizens.

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

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petitions again on behalf of residents of Saskatchewan who support the Saskatchewan Seniors Association and their 180 seniors' centres throughout the province, the vast majority of those in rural Saskatchewan.

People know these centres provide much-needed recreation and social activities as well as important health clinics, and these contribute to enhanced quality of life for the many seniors who use them. There's a real concern that due to the skyrocketing cost of utilities, insurance, taxes, etc., as many as a quarter of these may close. And the closure of these centres will lead to the deteriorating mental and physical health of seniors, also leading to additional stress on long-term care facilities and hospitals:

We in the prayer that reads as follows respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to provide the much-needed funding to assist seniors' recreation centres to remain open and active within their communities.

And this is around 100 signatures from people from Wilkie, Meota, North Battleford, Frenchman Butte, Meath Park, Battleford, Cochin, and Weirdale. I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of eliminating poverty in Saskatchewan. And we know in Saskatchewan the income gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow, and now one in five children in Saskatchewan live in deepening poverty. We also know that when governments reduce spending, often supports for social programs are cut first. I'd like to read the prayer:

We in the prayer that reads as follows respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan act as quickly as possible to develop an effective and sustainable poverty elimination strategy for the benefit of all Saskatchewan citizens.

The people signing the petition today are from Regina and Saskatoon. I do 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 calls for the expansion of the graduate retention program, as it currently excludes master's and Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] graduates. The prayer reads:

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

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

Mr. Speaker, 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 a petition from Furdale residents. A government ministry has directed SaskWater to cut off supplies of water for domestic use to Furdale customers. The same government ministry has directed that customers may no longer treat non-potable water using methods approved by Sask Health.

Furdale residents, in dealing in good faith with SaskWater for over 30 years, have paid large amounts for their domestic systems and in-home treatment equipment, as well as for livestock irrigation lines. And that the 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, or availability of water. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly 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 residents of Saskatoon and North Battleford. I so present.

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

Mr. Belanger: — To ask for leave, Mr. Speaker, to introduce guests.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave is granted. I recognize the member from Athabasca.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In my error, I just wanted to point out that I mentioned Ms. Mihalicz when I should have actually introduced her as Ms. Debbie Mihalicz, because Leroy actually put her mother's name down here. And equally as beautiful, that's not Marie. That's Debbie Mihalicz and I want to welcome her to the Assembly and ask all members to join me in thanking her for coming here.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Gabriel Dumont Institute Celebrates 30th Anniversary

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, Gabriel Dumont Institute held their 30th anniversary and culture conference in Saskatoon. Over 400 Métis from across Saskatchewan gathered to participate in the many cultural workshops — workshops such as Métis clothing and art, traditional beading and weaving, modern Métis authors and artists, traditional Aboriginal medicine, Métis genealogy and research, and the Michif language.

At the opening ceremonies on Thursday evening, Mr. Speaker, three individuals were awarded the Order of Gabriel Dumont silver medals and 18 students, six each from DTI [Dumont Technical Institute], SUNTEP [Saskatchewan urban native teacher education program], and GDI [Gabriel Dumont Institute] training and employment, were awarded bronze medals. I was pleased to witness Friday night's gala ceremony where two individuals, Mr. Clarence Campeau and Mr. Guy Bouvier, were awarded the Order of Gabriel Dumont gold medals for their contributions to the Métis Nation.

Earlier in the day, GDI signed a \$47 million, five-year agreement with Aboriginal human resources and skills development to provide employment and training programs and services to Métis, to the Saskatchewan Métis communities so that there's . . . There was so much to celebrate, Mr. Speaker. It

was stated that over the last 30 years the SUNTEP program has graduated nearly 1,000 Métis teachers.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of addressing the delegates to the GDI annual general meeting on Saturday morning. The finances presented during the meeting demonstrate the amazing growth that GDI has experienced over the past 30 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating Gabriel Dumont Institute board and staff for 30 years of successful operations. I truly believe that these graduating students are our future ambassadors and role models to their communities, Saskatchewan, and all of Canada.

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

Canadian Western Agribition

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Each November for the past 40 years, Canadian Western Agribition has opened its doors to the world. From November 22nd to 27th, Regina will be hosting the largest agricultural show and marketplace in Canada. Approximately 160,000 people from nine Canadian provinces and, generally, over 28 American states and more than 23 countries worldwide come to Regina each year.

It all happens over six days and 22 acres of indoor facilities housing some of North America's finest livestock breeders, equipment, agricultural services, and so on. There are over 500 exhibits displaying the latest developments in agricultural technology and services, and around 2,000 exhibitors that display the best of the best in the livestock industry. Throughout the week of Agribition, the pro rodeo attracts top professional cowboys from across North America. There's also the Agri-Ed Showcase which educates thousands of children from across our province on the business of agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, putting on a world-class event such as Agribition would not be possible without the support and commitment of hundreds of volunteers. It's because of hard-working volunteers that the world has the opportunity to come to Saskatchewan to see the best livestock genetics and the latest innovations in the agricultural sector.

Saskatchewan is moving forward in all aspects of agriculture, Mr. Speaker. I congratulate Agribition on 40 years of success and look forward to the next 40. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Celebrating Success at O'Neill High School

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In addition to the championship teams of this year — the provincial 3A championship cross-country team; the league, city, and provincial 3A championship football team; the city championship boys' soccer — O'Neill High School also offers 20, a total of 20 coached team programs. Principal Dale Reed is proud of everyone involved — teachers, coaches, and all of the students who participate.

O'Neill also has a long-standing and outstanding fine arts

program. This year one-third of all students are participating in the choral and vocal jazz program. The choral program even reaches Alberta by travelling and performing at a half dozen schools in Alberta over a three-day period. This year's drama production, *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, was very successful in every way. All this and more. O'Neill High School offers both English and French immersion programs, both with great success. For example in 2008, Mr. Speaker, O'Neill students were awarded more than \$300,000 of scholarship money.

I invite all members to join me in celebrating effort, inclusiveness, and success at Archbishop M.C. O'Neill High School located in the north end of Regina. Thank you.

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

Moose Jaw Festival of Trees

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, last Saturday evening I had the pleasure of attending the 19th annual festival of trees held in Moose Jaw.

The festival of trees has become the social event of the year, attracting some 500 residents to an elegant, festively decorated ballroom. This gala event of dining and dancing, along with a live auction and cash donation, demonstrates the community's generosity as well as their commitment to the Moose Jaw Hospital. The event raised over a quarter of a million dollars that will be used toward the purchase of laparoscopic surgery equipment for the hospital.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the outstanding highlight of the evening was the auctioning of the signed jersey, number 34, of the Saskatchewan Roughriders. What made this so special was that the Saskatchewan Roughrider Hall of Famer George Reed himself was there to don the jersey and spark the auction. That jersey sold for an impressive \$12,500.

I want to thank the Moose Jaw business community for their support of decorated trees and Christmas displays. To the citizens who came out and enjoyed the evening, your participation is greatly appreciated. And to the committee who dedicated hundreds of hours in planning, organizing, and decorating for this event, congratulations on a tremendous successful event on behalf of the Moose Jaw Hospital Foundation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Community Leader Supports Youth

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Constable Max Morin was a dedicated RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] officer who served his entire career in isolated areas. Max Morin served 27 years as an officer. The Minister of Justice National Youth Justice Policing Award for 2001 was awarded to the former Constable Morin to honour his success in building trusting and respectful relationships with young people in trouble with the law, that has helped them turn their lives around.

Mr. Morin has shown imaginative leadership in starting and

supporting a number of innovative projects involving Native youth. These have included educational field trips, careers in law enforcement, active participation in healing circles, and discussions involving young offenders, victims, and families. He has an excellent relationship with band councillors, elders, and hereditary chiefs. Their support is vital to his alternative justice projects.

[14:00]

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Morin got into police work because, he simply puts it, "to keep people out of jail, not to put them in." He has started Green Arrow Healing Inc., a program designed to teach life skills and to keep people out of correctional institutions.

Mr. Speaker, we need to support community champions like this. We need to expand and create alternative measures to match the cultural needs of First Nations and Métis people across this province. We cannot allow our people to get caught in a criminal justice system which works neither for these people specifically or our society in general.

I ask all members to join me in honouring Max Morin, the strong community leader. Thank you very much.

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

Salvation Army Red Kettles

Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Christmas season brings upon many traditions for the people of Saskatchewan, whether it's Christmas supper, carolling, or any other unique Christmas traditions.

But one of the most important and charitable Christmas traditions is the Salvation Army red kettle. The traditional red kettle is an integral part of the Christmas scene with millions of dollars donated each year to aid needy families, seniors, and the homeless, in keeping with the spirit of the season. Red kettles can be found throughout the province. These donations then provide Christmas dinners, clothing, and toys for families in need.

Red kettle tradition began in 1891 when Salvation Army Captain Joseph McFee was distraught because so many poor individuals in San Francisco were going hungry. During the Christmas season he resolved to provide a free Christmas dinner for the destitute and poverty stricken. The red kettle provided Mr. McFee with the means to deliver such a meal. To this day the red kettle continues to provide those in need with the provisions for a more enjoyable Christmas. The red kettle embodies the true spirit of Christmas as a season of giving and helping our fellow members of the province.

As we go about the Christmas season, I ask everyone to give what they can when they see the red kettle. And on behalf of this House, I want to thank the Salvation Army for continuing their charitable work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Waste Electronic Equipment Program

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On November 3rd, the members of Saskatoon Centre and Regina Walsh Acres and I attended a well-organized event at the Saskatchewan Science Centre where the Saskatchewan waste electronic equipment program, or SWEEP for short, announced that it has diverted 16 million pounds of electronic waste from the environmental waste stream in the first six months of its expanded product collection. The positive impact SWEEP is making will benefit not only our generation but generations to come.

On April 1st, five new product categories were added to the recycling system, which was introduced when I was minister of Environment. This brings the total to 10 categories of accepted items that can be recycled at 71 SARCAN depots across Saskatchewan. The five new categories of accepted electronic items include personal and portable audio and video systems, home theatre systems, vehicle audio and video systems, and non-cellular telephone and answering machines.

SWEEP is a non-profit program funded by an environmental handling fee. The fees are regularly reviewed to ensure that they reflect the cost of recycling. So far SWEEP has collected 16 million pounds of waste electronic equipment, which is, if you can imagine it, the weight of over 27 Boeing 747 airplanes.

I ask all members to thank Joan Meyer, her staff, and all the people who make this program successful.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Arrangements for a Long-Term Care Facility

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, we know the Saskatoon Health Region approved the Amicus deal at its board meeting last May, and we also know that construction began several weeks earlier on April 1st. And we know that the Minister of Health was involved in discussions about Amicus in 2009. To the minister: when did the government first give the nod, or maybe it was the wink, to this insider Amicus deal?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I would say probably in about November of 2007 when this party took power, Mr. Speaker, when this party took power, and we started to look at the long-term care facilities in this province. We started to look at the number of people living in acute-care settings in this province, Mr. Speaker. It didn't take us long to know that the history of the NDP in this province was brutal, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to long-term care facilities in rural Saskatchewan or long-term care facilities in urban Saskatchewan.

We started working right then, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we have the proper facilities for our seniors in this province, Mr. Speaker. We knew that after 16 years of not a new bed produced in this province under the NDP, it was about time some beds were built, Mr. Speaker, to take off the load of the acute-care setting, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatoon. Our government

knew right after taking power from the NDP that long-term care facilities were in poor shape.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Is the minister telling us that he had to reward his friends as soon as the Sask Party was elected in November 2007?

Mr. Speaker, the information that the minister provided to the Assembly yesterday makes it clear that Miners Construction, a company whose president has donated almost \$19,000 to the Sask Party, was already finding subcontractors in January of 2010. That's a full three months before the Saskatoon Health Region voted to approve this insider deal. Miners Construction clearly knew that it had the untendered building contract for months before the Saskatoon Health Region approved the deal.

So to the minister: why does he continue to deny that this deal originated right here in this building when the insiders involved knew that the deal was in the bag?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, the accusations that member makes on a daily basis about some of the best, strongest families, Mr. Speaker, in this province, Mr. Speaker, be it in Saskatoon, whether it's the Stensruds that have done nothing but work diligently to help . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I'd ask the . . . There's a handful of members who are interrupting the Minister of Health. I'd ask the opposition members to allow the Minister of Health . . . Order. Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, the Stensrud family that have donated thousands of dollars to the Cosmos, to other charities, Mr. Speaker, in this province, they are a family that are above ill repute, Mr. Speaker, and I can't believe that member on a daily basis is accusing them of insider deal and wrongdoings, Mr. Speaker. It's absolutely unacceptable.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, ultimately it's the Government of Saskatchewan, the Sask Party government that decided to go with this untendered Amicus deal.

Yesterday the minister provided to the Assembly information on three commercial bids received by Miners Construction, who received the untendered \$27 million deal. We'll assume for a moment that the minister had permission from the two unsuccessful contractors to release this information to this Assembly. Yet at the same time, the minister's government has censored literally hundreds of pages of material relating to Amicus and its response to my FOI [freedom of information] request, which is public, should be public information.

To the minister: why was he willing to release information from

private companies but hides behind taxpayers' dollars when they're being used to fund this insider deal?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health. Order. Order. Order, order. I'd ask the young people in the west gallery to not participate in any form in the debate. The Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's interesting when you look at so many of the different issues that the opposition raises, and you look at it from what they did when they were in government and then what they expect other governments to do . . . Well the members opposite are laughing.

What tender was put out for the sound stage for phase no. 1? Was there a tender for the sound stage in phase no. 1? No, there wasn't. Was there a tender for phase no. 2? No, there wasn't. When there was a tender for phase no. 3 . . . Was it tendered? Absolutely it wasn't, Mr. Speaker. Three opportunities to tender for the sound stage, they never did it. They sole sourced, Mr. Speaker. But it's funny how it's perfectly fine for the NDP, but it wouldn't be okay for anybody else.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, I believe the sound stage is called the Canada-Saskatchewan Sound Stage and was a three-level-of-government project: Canada, Saskatchewan, and the city of Regina. So, Mr. Speaker, this project is not a Canada, Saskatchewan, local government project. This is an insider deal.

I ask the minister this: why would he release private company information but not information that should be published?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — I find it interesting how she's trying to rationalize the sound stage wasn't tendered, Mr. Speaker. She's having a hard time doing that. What I do know, Mr. Speaker, is we entered into a partnership through the Saskatoon Health Region and the Catholic Health Ministry to ensure that seniors . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Minister of Health. Order. Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — We entered into a partnership with the Saskatoon Health Region and the Catholic Health Ministry to ensure that seniors have proper accommodation at the end of their life. Living in the city hospital is no place for a senior to spend the last number of months of their life. Unfortunately under the NDP, that was perfectly fine, Mr. Speaker.

This is a good deal for people. This is a good deal for Saskatchewan seniors, Mr. Speaker. The opposition can try all they want to try and discredit this deal, Mr. Speaker, but for Saskatchewan people, it's a good deal.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Eastview.

Budgeting for Health Services

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A letter from the Minister of Finance to the Board of Internal Economy states, “Ministries were directed to submit a budget equal to their 2010-11 expense budget with zero growth.” Mr. Speaker, last year’s budget gave health regions a 3.1 per cent increase in spending when they were asking for a minimum of 7 per cent increase. Regions are now forced to run deficits and cut health services to people to make up for the Sask Party’s mismanagement.

To the minister: what health care services for people will regions have to cut in 2011, and how are health regions going to function properly and provide the care people need with a zero per cent increase in 2011?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, under the guidance of the former minister of Finance, a letter was sent around to all of the ministries back in the springtime to ask for a call for estimates, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the process that has been followed in the past was a call for estimates to look at the submitting of information to Finance, Mr. Speaker. We are looking at all options. We are looking at being able to achieve, as I’ve indicated in a report yesterday that I did, that indicated that we are striving for a 1 per cent growth in the next fiscal year. Mr. Speaker, some of the ministries, as in the case of Health last year I believe, came in just at around the 3 per cent growth, and others had a different level of growth, Mr. Speaker.

So that is the process that we’re going to follow. We’re looking also at a strategy to ensure that we have the ability to determine what priorities do ministries have, and we’re going to follow that same pattern, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party promised \$152 million to build 13 long-term care facilities. The minister has said construction will begin on some of the facilities by November of 2011. Interesting, Mr. Speaker, isn’t the provincial election in November of 2011? To the minister: he’s been directed to submit a zero-growth budget, so where is he getting the money to build 13 long-term care facilities in next year’s budget?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to correct for the general public. The opposition has been going around saying these projects were cancelled. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Mr. Speaker, Watrous is under way. Watrous is under way, and I would say five or six more will be going to tender, going to tender next spring, Mr. Speaker, because those facilities will be

moving ahead because of the out-dated facilities left by the NDP, Mr. Speaker. Those facilities will be moving ahead, and communities are working diligently to make sure that their share of money is in place. Scoping is being done, Mr. Speaker, so that those facilities can move ahead, Mr. Speaker.

And I certainly think that when the groundbreaking this spring on many more facilities will be in place, hopefully the opposition will take back their words and quit spreading untrue information.

[14:15]

The Speaker: — Member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — [Inaudible] . . . truth, Mr. Speaker. The Premier has all these grand ideas about a carbon capture project, clean coal project, a domed stadium, but when it comes down to it, he’s all talk and no action.

The Minister of Health is following the same path. He’s promised 13 long-term care facilities, a STARS [shock trauma air rescue service] ambulance program, but he has no money to settle contracts with doctors, interns, residents, the 3,000 professionals represented by Health Sciences. To the minister: will he admit that, like the Premier, he’s all talk and no action, and these are just pre-election vote buying?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — What I can say is this government has made a commitment to 13 long-term care facilities. And when the money’s in place by the communities, those facilities will be going ahead.

I will tell you that it is a far cry from what the NDP did year after year, and especially the member from Lakeview. The member from Lakeview would always go to the communities of Preeceville just before an election. And instead of inviting the MLA from that area, he would have the NDP candidate there at the announcement again. Seven years in a row they announced Preeceville, Mr. Speaker. When we make the announcement, we’ll be getting it done. They did it in Humboldt, Mr. Speaker. They did it in community after community — announce, announce, and announce. We’ve got it done. We’re building those facilities.

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

Housing

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All across this province, the rising cost of rent is forcing people to make hard choices. Parents are having to choose between buying good food or paying rent. Students can’t afford textbooks or taking a full course load because they can’t afford to make ends meet.

Now seniors in so-called affordable housing units owned by the government are being forced to choose between prescriptions they need or a roof over their head. Residents in senior buildings run by the Regina Housing Authority have now been hit by rent increases at least twice in the last year. To the

minister: why is her government making seniors suffer for this Premier's mismanagement?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, we all know that the seniors in this province are owed a great debt of gratitude for all the work that they have done. But we also know that with the growing economy that there are challenges. But I think the members opposite should acknowledge that we have right now, the average weekly earnings are up 6 per cent, and we have more people working in Saskatchewan than ever before.

When we removed 80,000 people from the tax rolls last year, that meant that senior couples in Saskatchewan saved up to 2,200 . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. I'd ask the . . . There's a couple members on the opposition backbench that are not allowing the minister to really answer the question. I ask the minister to respond to her question.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, last year or the year before, when we removed 80,000 low-income people from the tax rolls, that meant seniors in our province — a senior couple — saved up to \$2,200 annually. Mr. Speaker, we are working to make sure that we have indexed the rental supplements. We have made sure that there are more affordable homes for our seniors. We've built 700 affordable units to add 1,250. More are on the way, Mr. Speaker. We are working with our seniors.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the stats the minister keeps coming up with are cold comfort. And she knows very well that many of the seniors are single women who are having to make these difficult choices.

Now, Mr. Speaker, a study by the Provincial Association of Transition Houses, PATHS, found that women living in smaller communities with little or no affordable housing were afraid that leaving an abusive partner might mean moving to another community, leaving behind their families, friends, and support systems. To the minister: what is this government doing to ensure that women don't have to remain in abusive relationships because they can't afford a roof over their heads?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, everything that we're doing in this government is targeted toward making sure that everyone has a positive lifestyle in our province. We've talked about . . . We've increased the funding for housing programs in this province by 45 per cent since we took over as government. We've made sure that we partner with the federal government to use every dollar the federal government has to build more homes in our province. We've assisted 300 families to achieve home ownership. We've increased the income for our seniors

who qualify for social housing. And, Mr. Speaker, in the last two years we've spent \$2 million in Habitat for Humanity to create 40 new home ownerships.

Mr. Speaker, there's more things to be doing in this province. And one of the things that we have to make sure we do is ensure that women have an opportunity for working. And that's one of the issues that we're dealing with, with Advanced Education, is making sure that women have an opportunity to increase their education and therefore get a job, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Well, Mr. Speaker, people just are not buying the minister's rhetoric. The deepening housing crisis isn't just affecting low-income families or people living in poverty.

A mother named Krista told us about the impact of soaring rents on her middle-income family, and I'd like to quote from that letter: "Today we paid an extra \$300 more on our rent for October 1st. That's \$300 that should have went to purchasing snowsuits, boots for our three children, or could've been saved." She writes, "I'm asking that government step up and set a rate control on rent increases immediately. The government brags all it has done for Saskatchewan, but all we need to do is peel back a layer to see the destruction."

To the minister: will her government listen to the call of parents like Krista and institute some form of rent control?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I know that this is an issue. I actually had a meeting with some people this morning about rent controls and we discussed it. We know that rent control is not the answer to her question. But the answer is making sure that we have more affordable housing so that people have opportunities.

I've had meetings with the Home Builders Association, with the Saskatchewan rental housing association. They've all expressed concerns about things like rent controls. Manitoba tried it. It does not work. We know that we built new housing units in Saskatoon, and there's a significant increase in the vacancy rates.

Mr. Speaker, I've had an opportunity to talk to other people about what happens when you have rent controls. We know that rent controls produce excess demand which further reduces the stock of rental housing. Rental controlled housings tend to come off the market and stay off the market forever. Renters don't move. Rent controls create closed communities. Rent controls provide incentives for landlords to neglect property and tenants.

Mr. Speaker, there really isn't a simple answer to this, except that we have to have people involved in the economy so we can build homes. We cannot have rent controls at the bottom for housing.

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

Child Care

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, as the cost of living has skyrocketed, young Saskatchewan families have found it increasingly difficult to find quality, affordable child care spaces. At the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] alone, the two child care facilities each have a wait-list of 400 families. To the minister: what is the Sask Party government doing now to address this desperate need for child care spaces at the University of Saskatchewan?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, thanks very much for the opportunity to speak about some of the legacy from the NDP, Mr. Speaker. What we're pleased to talk about, Mr. Speaker, is that child care spaces on campuses across this province have increased by more than 40 per cent in just three years. Mr. Speaker, we know that.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we've also undertaken some significant work on student housing because there's a close connection. Mr. Speaker, that's why we have new student housing in La Ronge, in Meadow Lake.

Mr. Speaker, we also have, Mr. Speaker, new student housing in Prince Albert. We also have new student housing in Saskatchewan, in Saskatoon. We know that this is closely connected, Mr. Speaker, and that is proximity to campus offers families better opportunities to access child care, Mr. Speaker. We know that from speaking to young people. Student housing has increased by more than 3,000 per cent. As far as actual child care, Mr. Speaker, it's gone up by more than 40 per cent in three years.

Is there more to do, Mr. Speaker? There certainly is, but that's after years of neglect by the NDP.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government has been in power for three years and has had ample time to act. Yet their inaction has meant that wait times have grown longer and longer for child care spaces. But it's not just the waiting that's the problem. For families lucky enough to get a spot, the cost per child can be up to \$800 per month. When you combine that expense with higher tuition, higher rent, it is entirely unaffordable for most students. To the minister: when will the Sask Party government increase the number of child care spaces on campus? And when will they ensure those spaces are actually affordable?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, we are working with the campus to find an appropriate spot for child care spaces. But in the meantime, while that is being prepared, Mr. Speaker, we are making child care spaces all across our entire province. We have increased the child care spaces in this province by well over 30 per cent because of the neglect by the former government.

You know what? It was the former member for Moose Jaw Wakamow said . . . When she was bragging about the NDP's '07-08 budget, do you know what she had to say, Mr. Speaker? She said that a 5.7 per cent increase in child care spaces was a very good increase. Well, Mr. Speaker, if she thinks 5.7 per cent is a very good increase, she must think that over 30 per cent is amazing.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the hundreds of families on the wait-list at the U of S are frustrated by the Sask Party's willingness to just sit and wait for solutions down the road. You just heard it from the minister. It's all fine and well if permanent child care spaces are provided in future developments, but they won't likely be available for at least five years. The need is far more urgent than that.

To the minister: given the current wait-list of up to 800 families at the U of S, will she work with partners to ensure affordable spaces are available in temporary facilities until permanent facilities are developed years down the road?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, as I've said in the previous answer, we are expanding in spaces in a number of places around the entire province including the city of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. The university is looking at an appropriate space. They are working with the people on campus to see what that space may be, and hopefully they'll have a proposal in the near future. And we'll look at it when that proposal is prepared.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, we have expanded spaces in Saskatoon, in other places across the entire city. Mr. Speaker, we inherited a government that grossly neglected this particular file. We are trying to do a catch-up. And we have added, each and every year, significant number of spaces until we have well over a 30 per cent increase. Mr. Speaker, it can't all be done in one year, but we are definitely advancing far greater than was ever done before.

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

Mr. Broten: — Again, Mr. Speaker, with up to 800 families waiting for child care at the U of S, we can't afford to delay the solutions. One option for immediate child care spaces is locating modular classrooms at Brunskill School, close to the University of Saskatchewan campus. To the minister: will she or he commit today to work with partners to explore the options of modular classrooms at Brunskill School, and will they ensure that the necessary funding is in place?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes; we'll be working with partners. Yes, we will explore possibilities. There are other places where we're using portable classrooms for child care spaces. We will look at this, Mr. Speaker. The answer is absolutely yes. We have expanded a great deal over

the last three years.

We're going to continue to expand child care spaces in our province, unlike the NDP. What did they do in 1996? They decreased spaces by 46. What did they do in 1999? They decreased spaces by 182. What did they do in the year 2000? They decreased spaces by 17. Mr. Speaker, they let that file grossly fall behind. And now that we are trying to aggressively catch up, we have the member from Walsh Acres constantly saying, what are you going to do, Donna?

Well, Mr. Speaker, what we're going to do is continue to stay on task. We're going to continue to add spaces. We're going to continue to work with partners, and we're going to continue to try to address the gross neglect of the previous government.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, in 1996 . . . a good year to graduate from high school because that was the year I graduated from Marion Graham Collegiate. For a Sask Party government that claims it is so focused on looking forward, they sure like to look backwards, Mr. Speaker, to make up for excuses for their own inaction.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister . . . We know that there are desperate needs at SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology], at the U of R [University of Regina], at the U of S. Will the minister admit that she is content with waiting for many years down the road instead of taking immediate action and addressing the problem?

[14:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the largest decrease under the NDP government was in 1999. I wonder if the member opposite was still in school then too or the year 2000 perhaps.

But we committed to this in our Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to aggressively expand child care spaces across our province. We will be working with partners. We'll be working with post-secondary institutions. We'll be working with school divisions. We're going to work with the partners within the communities, and we're going to continue to expand child care spaces as money is available and as we can get the partners that have the space that's appropriate, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to stay on task. We've increased spaces by over 30 per cent in three years, which is far more than the previous government did over a decade.

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I'd ask the House to come to order so we can move to presenting reports.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Private Bills Committee.

Standing Committee on Private Bills

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Private Bills to report private Bill No. 905, *The Sisters of the Presentation Act, 2010* without amendment and to present its ninth report. I move:

That the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be now concurred in.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Chair of Private Bills:

That the ninth report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be now concurred in.

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. I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 905, *The Sisters of the Presentation Act, 2010* and that the Bill be now read the third time.

The Speaker: — The member from Melfort has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 905, *The Sisters of the Presentation Act, 2010* and that the Bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 905 — *The Sisters of the Presentation Act, 2010*

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 member from Melfort that Bill No. 905, *The Sisters of the Presentation Act, 2010* 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 Intergovernmental Affairs.

Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

Mr. Michelson: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report Bill No. 152, *The Commissioners for Oaths Amendment Act, 2010* without 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 that this Bill 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. 152, *The Commissioners for Oaths Amendment Act, 2010* without amendment and that the Bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the minister.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 152 — *The Commissioners for Oaths Amendment Act, 2010*

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. 152, *The Commissioners for Oaths Amendment Act, 2010* without amendment be passed, 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.

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

The Speaker: — Before orders of the day, I have two items I

would like to lay on the Table requested by the Assembly last spring. On May the 19th, 2010, the Assembly ordered an inquiry in accordance with section 32 of *The Members' Conflict of Interest Act* by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner regarding the conduct of Serge LeClerc, Saskatoon Northwest. Pursuant to subsection 33(5) of *The Members' Conflict of Interest Act*, I table the report ordered by the Assembly.

As well on May the 13th, 2010, the member from Saskatoon Eastview made a request of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner for an opinion pursuant to section 29 with respect to another member's use of that member's allowances, Serge LeClerc, Saskatoon Northwest. Pursuant to subsection 30 and 5 of *The Members' Conflict of Interest Act*, I table that report as well.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Weekes: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the answers to question 375 through 411.

The Speaker: — Answers to question 375 through 411 are tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 156

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Boyd that **Bill No. 156 — *The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak to Bill No. 156, a Bill that the government intends to use to repeal *The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act* and replace it with *The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act, 2010*. This legislation is being amended along with other companion legislation we might be debating as well this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

The minister's stated motivations in the second reading speech as to the reasons for this legislation was as a deliverable — I think it was put — out of the, what the government calls the New West Partnership.

And one of the motivations, at least as far as the minister was concerned, for this legislation, not the only motivation he mentioned, was to flatten out — maybe that's the wrong term, but — to have regulations across the so-called New West Partnership that are equivalent, I suppose, so that business, and particularly oil and gas business in this particular case working

in either British Columbia or Alberta or Saskatchewan in which there are gas industries in all three of those provinces and substantial oil industries in two of them, Alberta and Saskatchewan, would expect to see the same regulatory regime in place across the far western provinces of Canada.

The minister also states that the ministry has taken the opportunity when changing the legislation to ensure that the proposed new Act is better organized and easier to follow, which is always welcomed by everyone in society with the possible exception of corporate lawyers who, as long as they can follow it, I don't think are concerned about whether the layperson can or not in some cases, Mr. Speaker.

Consistency to the way taxes are being administered. And I'd be looking forward to any further information the government could provide as to any inconsistencies that were in place, in the view of the government. Efficiencies in the taxation system. And again if the government could be a bit more forthcoming, perhaps when we reach committee with this Bill, on the perceived inefficiencies of the current system, I think that would be useful for the public to know. And allowing for more timely payment of the industry's payment of taxes, which I think if that is indeed the case, if that is indeed what happens, will benefit the people of Saskatchewan, the owners of the oil and gas.

Towards that particular end, the minister proposes that in this Bill the specific due date for paying freehold production taxes will be removed from the Act and added to regulation-making power. So instead of being set out in legislation passed by this Assembly, it would be set out in legislation determined by cabinet. That, Mr. Speaker, may not be that unusual from what's done in other energy and resources statutes. And if this is truly just an anachronism, that in itself would probably not cause the opposition any difficulty.

The Act does change or purports to change, according to the minister's comments, the taxation scheme around crude oil recovered from waste processing. The Bill purports to clarify audit provisions and make them similar to not only regulations in other provinces, Mr. Speaker, but also regulations within *The Revenue and Financial Services Act* — governs the collection of taxes overall by the Ministry of Finance.

The opposition requires time to consult with those in industry to see whether or not these changes are being made are actually ones that we need to see made. In many cases, there are significant changes that the industry would like to see. Have these changes that the industry would bring forward to government, are they all reflected here? Have some been rejected by the government, or does the Bill that comes from a review of the current legislation encompass in large part what the industry would like to see in this particular area, Mr. Speaker? The opposition doesn't know that yet and would certainly like to determine whether or not that is the case before this Bill moved on to committee for specific questions directed at the minister.

In an industry as widely held as the oil industry is in Saskatchewan — and it might be different in a couple of other resource industries which only have two or three significant players; that's not the case with oil and that's not the case with

gas to the same extent as it might be true with potash or uranium — there may very well be a difference of opinion even within the industry itself as to what would be the appropriate changes if any changes are appropriate. Rarely would one find a unanimous opinion, and the opposition wouldn't necessarily say legislation shouldn't proceed without a unanimous opinion.

But again it does cry out for consultation on the part of members of the Assembly. I don't expect government members to necessarily be wanting to do that. Mr. Speaker, they have been briefed by the minister. But the members of the opposition in their role will want to ensure that there's certainly no controversy within the industry in respect to the proposed Bill.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, contrary to the spin that one hears from the Sask Party government, we're actually seeing a reduction in oil production in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, a reduction in gas production in the province of Saskatchewan from 2007. We also have a reduction in the number of total wells being drilled each year from 2007.

So the trend line is not good for exploration in the oil and gas industry, Mr. Speaker. It has been on a decline since the Sask Party took power. If it was on the ascent, I'm sure the Saskatchewan Party government would take credit for the increase in production and increase in number of wells being drilled. In all fairness then, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government has to take responsibility for the decline that's actually taken place.

It becomes important, when there is a decline in exploration and a decline in production, to ask the question as to why there is such a decrease. Because from 2007 the reality is, oil production was greater than it is today. And the reality is that in 2007 gas production was greater than it is today. And in 2007 more wells were being drilled than they are in this year.

So why is this the case, Mr. Speaker? Can it be in part attributed to issues that are being altered or changed in this legislation? Perhaps not, Mr. Speaker. The legislation that is being amended, or repealed and amended in this particular case, has been in place for a while. What has changed is the government, Mr. Speaker. The government has changed, and the decline has taken place. But that's not to say that the government can't make it worse, Mr. Speaker. They certainly can make it worse. It can always be worse.

And the question that we have of a fairly complex Bill is, will this Bill assist in halting the decline in production and exploration that has taken place since this government came to power? Or will this Bill only make the situation worse or have no change, cause no effect on the decline of oil exploration, oil and gas production in the province of Saskatchewan?

What we need to see is perhaps this Bill, Mr. Speaker. That question is still unanswered for us. But what we need to see from this government is some honesty, some forthrightness about the situation as it currently exists. And it's a situation that I don't think any government could be proud of, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

[14:45]

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister of Natural Resources that Bill 156, *The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act, 2010* now be read a second time.

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Agreed. Second reading of this Bill.

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — He didn't adjourn debate. I didn't see him. I waited. We've already started. Second reading of this Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Clerk: — Second reading of this Bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the Deputy House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — I designate that Bill 156, *The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act, 2010* be referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

The Deputy Speaker: — This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Bill No. 157

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Boyd that **Bill No. 157 — *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak on Bill 157, *An Act to amend The Oil and Gas Conservation Act*, henceforth known as *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010*. This legislation is being done in concert with the amendments to the companion legislation, *The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act of 2010*.

The ministry, according to the minister, is modernizing its business and regulatory systems targeted at the energy and resource industries. We are doing so not just by what we are doing in this Act but in the other one as well, Mr. Speaker. The government wants to be able to interact with the industry in a more flexible way. While much of the ministry's efforts are focused on oil and gas process and data system redevelopment, we require amendments to *The Oil and Gas Conservation Act* to provide the ministry with the legal authority to implement initiatives that come out of the so-called New West Partnership, Mr. Speaker.

The first project, according to the minister, was announced November of last year after Saskatchewan became a partner in the Petroleum Registry of Alberta. And that registry's a joint government and industry alliance that enables Canadian upstream oil and gas producers to carry out their complex business and regulatory activities in an efficient and seamless manner, according to the ministry, Mr. Speaker. Becoming a registry partner was one of the government's early deliverables of the so-called New West Partnership.

This is also a complex Bill, Mr. Speaker, with implications on a number of levels for both the industry and for industry players. It'll take some time to review and consult with the various stakeholders across the province and the associations' response to see whether or not they truly agree with the changes being made and if they help the industry to move forward.

It is important, as I said in my previous remarks on the previous Bill, Mr. Speaker, to see the industry move forward because today we see a reduction in oil production from 2007, the same time as a change in government. We see a reduction in gas production from 2007 at a time of the change of government. And we actually see a reduction in the amount of wells being drilled in our province from 2007.

We saw a general reduction or contraction of the economy last year in the range of 3.9 per cent, after being adjusted, when the final numbers came in. We saw a situation where the *Sask Trends* said that Saskatchewan really has had no economic growth since the change of government. The improvements in 2008 were really as a result of the inflationary cost of items that consumers had to pay, and in fact since then we've seen a contraction in the economy.

In the minister's second reading speech, he said some of the changes are a result of the newest partnership, about moving our rules to those of Alberta, and moving our regulations to be compatible and comparable to those of Alberta. And that in itself may not be a negative, Mr. Speaker, but it does require some in-depth studying of the issues and talking to industry to make sure they are in favour of moving to the Alberta rules and regulations instead of a partnership . . . instead of having Alberta, say, move to ours.

Any time that you're moving to a consolidation or amalgamation of rules in an industry, whether they be with Alberta and Saskatchewan or with any other jurisdiction, it's important to understand the impact because the impact can be both negative and positive. And we need to fully understand the impact on our province, on our producers, and the net result that comes about of those changes to the people of Saskatchewan.

With the complexity of this legislation, the breadth and depth of changes, it's going to take us some time to do the required consultations, meetings with individuals and associations, and to be perfectly clear. Mr. Speaker, with that, I wish to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Meewasin has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 157, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 158

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert that **Bill No. 158 — *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise to speak on this amendment to *The Correctional Services Act*. This particular amendment includes a few things, but the main focus relates to the communication system used within the correctional facilities in the province and the enhancement, if we can call it that, to allow for monitoring of all calls made by inmates.

Now the stated reason for this — and I think a reason that we in the opposition accept — is to deal with the gang activity and the connections that some people continue while they are in our correctional system. They maintain contacts, and they maintain their involvement in criminal activity through the use of communication system that's available in the jails.

So the purpose, as stated by the minister, is that this new system will allow for better monitoring of the calls in the system itself. And it'll go everything from recording the calls, intercepting the calls, monitoring them, censoring them, restricting them, and prohibiting, or even blocking any communication at all. So those are the tools that are there in this particular system.

But clearly there are some positive reasons for doing this, but there are also many questions about what the effect of this is. And they arise in a whole number of areas that relate to both the person who is in the correctional centre and their family, their lawyer, others who will have contact with them. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that there are quite a number of questions that will have to be asked as we look at this particular Bill and try to understand all of the implications of it.

I also would not be surprised at all that these particular provisions will be the subject of litigation as the years move forward, whether it's related to the content of the calls or one of these various activities that are taking place.

Now one of the first questions that arises is, who actually will do the monitoring? I'm not sure if there will be extra staff hired within the correctional system to be monitoring all of the calls or if there will be some electronic system to do that. But there are a number of questions around how the process will actually take place. And so we'll be interested in getting some answers to that. We'll also be asking questions of some of the people that work within the system as to what kinds of review have taken place.

We also understand that the authorization in this Act that's being . . . the authorization that's being asked for in this Act relates to getting a new telephone system from some other

place. I think the place that I have heard is that we're bringing in one from the state of Texas. We'd be quite interested in understanding what all of . . . the specifications of this and why a system like that would be obtained. We know that the state of Texas has some fairly extensive correctional systems and correctional services, so it's very possible that they do have this kind of state-of-the-art monitoring and blocking kind of system. But I think it begs the question about whether this kind of a system is coming from a Saskatchewan supplier — our own Crown corporation — or whether it's coming through some other system. So there are some questions there as to exactly what the system is.

There's also the question about whether people who are talking with a person in the correctional centre will know that their calls are being recorded or monitored and what kinds of notification will be given to family members or businesses or whoever else might be dealing with a person over the telephone. And so I think that we'll be looking forward to getting better information about how every . . . you know, people will be notified of the fact that their calls are being monitored.

Another aspect of this relates to the ability of people in the correctional system to have contact with their lawyers and with getting appropriate legal advice. We've received information to say that there will be a method of whereby that kind of a call will not be monitored in the same way. But it then begs the question: well who makes that decision as to when is a call a call with a lawyer or a legal advisor and when is it a call with a family member or some other person? So we need to end up having some better understanding of how that works. Because practically the whole system may end up being ruled as being flawed if there's some problem as it relates to the rights of individuals for privacy, and especially the rights, the constitutional rights, of the inmates to get independent, legal advice. So there are some very interesting questions as it relates to that.

Now the other questions that relate to this is, how long will this information be stored? Where will it be stored? Who will have access to it? Is it the kind of thing that it ends up that there will be full telephone records on each individual inmate, that they're kept for a long time? And there may be some reasons for doing that, but very clearly that needs to be defined in a direct way within the legislation. Now what I see in this particular legislation is that all of these kinds of technical rules or the actually how it's done are going to be all dealt with in the regulations.

So here in this legislature, we will not have very much of a chance to actually see how this actually operates. And that raises concern on a whole number of levels because when you take away people's rights — whether it's the inmate's rights or their family members or the rights around independent legal advice — that must be done in a very clear way that the whole of society understands.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that there are some questions in how this has been worded so far that will have to be answered as we move forward. And it may be that some of those rules will have to be moved from any kind of regulatory law right into the Act so that we know clearly what the protections are.

Any time that you end up taking away a little piece of the rights of a person, whether they're in jail or not, you're chipping away at the kinds of protections that we have in our society under our constitution. And that's the time for legislators, whether you're in government or in opposition, to start asking questions, making sure that however those rights are taken away, you do it in a clearly justified and sustainable way.

And, Mr. Speaker, there are enough questions around this particular legislation, as it relates to that, that means that we're going to have more time needed to speak to this. But also we're going to need time when we get into committee to have the appropriate information provided by the minister and by the staff within the department. And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those comments, I will adjourn the debate on this particular Bill.

[15:00]

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 158, *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 144

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 144** — *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to say that I am pleased to enter the debate on *The Litter Control Amendment Act*, Bill 144. And as I understand the legislation and also the explanatory notes, that this piece of legislation is basically being entered into the legislature because an outstanding court case, and the government is concerned that it'll be liable for up to \$1 million or more in terms of a potential legal action. And so the government has decided to introduce amendments to the legislation in order to save themselves from this court case.

I think what I find most troubling about the legislation is that this legislation is being introduced into this Assembly retroactively, which means that, Mr. Speaker, any environmental handling charges paid after April 1st, 1998 won't be recoverable by a court action that's already been launched. And so what this legislation does is stops in its tracks a court action that has been making its way through the courts and prevents those people who are presently pursuing the lawsuit from recovering over \$1 million. And that is troublesome.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think that when you look at the contents of the Bill, other than the retroactivity, that I certainly don't have difficulty with this legislation. We know that the existing legislation allows the government to increase or decrease environmental handling charges, and that there are refundable

deposits. Now we know that this piece of legislation has been in existence since, I believe, 1973. And what the Bill does is it lays out a new schedule of environmental handling charges for a variety of containers, and it takes away the government's ability to set environmental handling charges in regulation or outside of the legislation. It does allow the government, however, to continue to set the refundable deposit by cabinet order.

Now I know why the government's doing this. In the 1990s, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that fees charged from government had to represent the actual cost of delivering that service. And obviously someone — and I'm not sure who's pursuing the lawsuit but someone — has determined that environmental fees outstripped the actual cost of the handling of these particular containers and so the government's in a position where it may have to pay out more than \$1 million.

I think it's always a very serious matter and one that we shouldn't take lightly, to introduce retroactive legislation. I can assure the public and the House that it was something that I certainly didn't support when we were in government. The reality is that we have legislation. People make decisions to pursue lawsuits based upon existing legislation, and what really the government's doing is putting in place a principle that if they don't like an outcome that may occur, they can simply introduce retroactive legislation to prevent that outcome.

We realize that there may be a legitimate goal here in that we want to stop any kind of future action, but we need to consider this very carefully, Mr. Speaker, because the government is setting itself a very significant precedent. And the significant precedent is that they are retroactively having this Bill go back to 1998, and that's — by the time this legislation is passed — that'll be a 13-year period. And a lot of water, as we know, goes under the bridge in a 13-year period.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, we're going to want to think about this legislation. We're going to want to determine exactly what is going to happen if this legislation is passed retroactively and what are the consequences of that. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 144, *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 147

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Draude that **Bill No. 147** — *The Public Interest Disclosure Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise today to talk about Bill 147.

And for those that may be viewing this, I often do a quick summary of the Bill for their information. I think it's very valuable that I do that because people know exactly what these Bills are about. And it's always good for education of the public in general and certainly for folks that might have an interest in the Bill.

And of course the Bill deals with *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*, and certainly there is . . . Saskatchewan people know that when you have people work for the Government of Saskatchewan in general, in a wide variety of careers and professions and jobs, they sometimes see things that aren't proper and a lot of times they want to bring it forward to talk about how they can correct it. And sometimes they see abuse. Sometimes they see problems within the system. Sometimes they see theft, and the kind of list goes on and on and on.

So what the intent of the Bill was to do, Mr. Speaker, was to really give some credibility to those people that are coming forward with some of those claims — to make sure that they're not frivolous, of course, that there's some solid ground for bringing forward some of those problems that other people are creating for the government.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what the purpose of Bill 147, *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*, is. It allows people to come forward that see abuse throughout government services, and that, if they come forward, they wouldn't have any repercussions on them if the information of course is correct. And of course you don't want a bunch of frivolous claims as well. There's certainly a good balance that one has to achieve.

But, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that when I listen to my leader speak about his vision of Saskatchewan, he often spoke about the four pillars. And of course one of the pillars being, make sure that the economy is moving and that things are moving along on all cylinders. And he certainly has the experience to achieve that.

The second thing of course he talks about is to have a good partnership between business and government, to make sure that people understand each other's roles and that they respect each other's roles and they help build the economy. He spoke about respect for the environment, which I think is really, really key in this day and age, given global warming, given all the other challenges with the environment that have been well documented and certainly scientifically backed by many lead scientists and scholars throughout the world and from many, many countries.

And the fourth point that he raised, Mr. Speaker, is that to be an effective government, you also have to have good civil servants. And he spoke about respect for the civil service and spoke highly about their role. And he was quite clear, our leader was, that in order to achieve good government that you'd have to have those pillars in place. And it is really, really assuring to a lot of people out there that he valued the civil servants and certainly pointed out that in their role, in their professional role that they do a lot for the people of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, travelling back and forth from my home community of Ile-a-la-Crosse on a pretty regular basis, I can attest to some of the civil servants that are out there working

very hard and diligently and certainly professionally. As I travel on the roads, of course, you see some of the roads being plowed. You see the equipment being out there. And certainly in the time of snowstorms that's something that people, a lot of people certainly appreciate. And they're out there.

Mr. Speaker, it's not just about highways workers, as important as they are. It's also about the ambulance service and the health care professionals. It's also about the emergency response teams we have throughout our province. And kind of the list goes on in terms of how much we ought to value the civil servants.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we can certainly speak at great lengths about the value of the civil service because they have time and time again proven their value. And often being said around our table — I know it may not happen around that table over there — but to respect the civil servants to a point where they're properly paid and that they're certainly assured of long-term employment and benefits, and the list goes on. That is something that we think is paramount to building the new, brave Saskatchewan. And certainly our leader has spoken of that at great lengths. And those pillars, and one of the solid pillars that he spoke about is of course respect for the civil service.

Now, Mr. Speaker, under this Bill 147, *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*, we thought that if the civil servants came along and saw some abuse or saw something that they ought to report — and again you have to make sure that it's not frivolous — is that there be some protection for them. Because obviously you don't want to see a government working inefficiently. You don't want to see a government losing money. You don't want to see a government losing any assets or valuable time from workers. And in this whole notion of being professional, the vast, vast, vast majority of people in the civil service certainly do a tremendous job and are very honest, hard-working, dedicated people. But there are times and occasions when there is abuse out there.

And there are checks and balances. And as much as we have managers and different levels of management and disclosure and certainly financial accountability, there are opportunities that one could probably take advantage of. And it's there where we count on our civil servants to come forward and do the right thing and certainly — again not being frivolous, but — certainly bringing forward some of the concerns or abuse that they may think is happening. And upon investigation, if it is true, then they're certainly doing their job.

And so what this Bill is intended to do, is intended . . . And we don't believe it's going to fulfill that, partly because of the government that is proposing it. And what they claim the Bill is to do is to protect some of those workers. And, Mr. Speaker, I would say, you know, there's no question in my mind that the working people, when it comes to working people in general, this government has no idea what the working people need. And they have, on time and time and time again, slapped the working people down.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's two different Bills — the essential services Bill and certainly Bill 80. And the list goes on as to all the things that they have done to really go to war with the

working people. And now when they come along and say to the working folks out there, the civil servants, well look we have this Bill that will protect you guys from coming forth with any claims that people are defrauding the government of assets or money or not doing their job. And, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't trust this government for one minute when it comes to the protection of working people because time and time again they have shown and they have proven that they are at war with the working people.

And even though this Bill is intended to help them, what I don't at all buy for one second, Mr. Speaker, is the party that is proposing it. Because I think what they're trying to do is have the people and civil servants begin to mistrust each other, begin to bring forward frivolous claims, begin to create division amongst the members of the civil service. And that's one of the reasons why we're looking at this Bill and really saying, what exactly are these guys up to here? And I'm talking about the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker.

And from the working class and from working people, trust is something that they don't afford this government at all. So when it comes to *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*, we want to say to the people out there, in theory — in theory — the importance of protecting Saskatchewan people from sometimes the very small minority of civil servants, they may from time to time make errors. And we're allowing people to come along and bring that forward without any reprisals or lawsuits or loss of jobs for coming forward. And if this Act is intended to do that in its pure form, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can certainly support that notion.

[15:15]

But again I go back to the point I raised earlier. Like this is the same government that said it wouldn't bring essential services to the Assembly, and the moment it was elected, bang, it did bring through essential services. Even though there was assurances and words out there used prior to the election, they basically betrayed the trust of the many working people that work for the people of Saskatchewan.

And again, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the notion of some of the other Bills that they have brought forward . . . And it just doesn't, to me, doesn't encourage the civil servants to come forward under anything that they bring when they've so far slapped them around and slapped them in the face when it came to making commitments before the election and doing exactly opposite after they're elected.

But, Mr. Speaker, the opposition is concerned, for an example, that this Bill will only protect whistle-blowers who say the law has been broken, but not to those who allege that policy has been broken. And that's something that's really key, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the weakness of this Bill.

As I alluded to earlier, that in its pure form, the intent and the message of this particular Bill is good. But, Mr. Speaker, what we're seeing again is that the Sask Party has morphed that good intention, and it's something that is really meant to go to war with the working people. And that's something that this opposition, certainly our party, does not support in any way, shape, or form. And we're going to make a fight of it, Mr.

Speaker.

The other point in terms of the weakness of the Bill is that the minister suggested that the commissioner would be part of the Provincial Ombudsman office. And this is the same government that won't commit to implementing recommendations of the Provincial Ombudsman. So how can public servants have confidence that an officer working out of the Office of the Ombudsman will have any real teeth? So they're saying that an officer of the Provincial Ombudsman office could be part and parcel of this process. Well, Mr. Speaker, they have decapitated the value and the importance and certainly the effectiveness of the Ombudsman office. So how can appointing an officer from an office that they have decimated really going to have any effect and have any power to support those that are about to come forward with some of these allegations?

Mr. Speaker, this is not a promise kept by the Sask Party government. They called for a public integrity commissioner, and after three years of firing public servants at will, you know, who don't agree with them, public integrity is not really the goal here, Mr. Speaker. So this whole notion of this public integrity commissioner that was proposed and promised prior to the election, Mr. Speaker, once again this party has proven that they can say and promise anything before the election. The main thing was to gain power. And, Mr. Speaker, a lot of people of Saskatchewan saw that particular part of what they are about. And, Mr. Speaker, they have basically woken up to that fact.

I want to also point out, Mr. Speaker, that when people work in a confined space and they work with each other over the years, they generally have a lot of camaraderieship and they certainly work together well as a team. And you know, there's always people that are very, very dedicated to working for their ministry or for their service or for their profession. And our civil servants, ever since Allan Blakeney was the premier, we have been blessed by public servants that have served the public very, very well. And, Mr. Speaker, in light of that fact, we know that there is . . . they hold each other to a high degree of professionalism. They hold each other very close in terms of being a family, sharing a common vision, and certainly contributing to their professions.

So in saying that, I think there is a lot of merit in saying that a lot of the working people, the civil servants in Saskatchewan do have this great, high level of integrity. And they often have this high level of standards that they want each other to meet. And there's nothing wrong with standards, Mr. Speaker, as those standards certainly would reflect on the value of the public service to many of our Saskatchewan people.

So the teammanship, the values, workmanship, the standards — all those go to, quite frankly, making sure the people of Saskatchewan ought to know that their public servants are ones that we hold in very, very high regard and that they serve the people of Saskatchewan well.

So I go back to our situation as an opposition. You know, we want to make sure that as part of our plank in developing this new Saskatchewan, that working men and women are just as important to Saskatchewan as investment from outside of the province and certainly investment from within. The working

men and women that get up each and every day to provide services to many of our families and to ourselves and to many other people, that they ought to be valued just as effective and just as meaningful as we do with the environment. And, Mr. Speaker, they're also ought to be compared to the fact that they need good government like everybody else. And the civil servants ought to be compared to that particular plank that our leader spoke of — of building that brave, new Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that this Bill in its spirit and its intent is something that the opposition would certainly look at supporting. But the big problem is, is who is actually proposing the Bill? It's the same party that has gone to war with working people. It's the same party that said they wouldn't be bringing Bills forward and Acts forward before the election.

And what do they do, Mr. Speaker? They do exactly the opposite of what they said they wouldn't do prior to the last election. And workers out there know this. The union movement, the civil servants, and all the different health care unions, they all know exactly what this government has been doing, and memories don't die quickly, Mr. Speaker. They certainly will be sending a message here fairly soon.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I tell the working people out there of their value of course to the people of Saskatchewan. We certainly support their contribution. I would, however, also warn them that if this Bill proceeds — and again always take into account that there are frivolous threats and claims in any environment and Saskatchewan is not immune to that — that if this Bill proceeds, be wary of who is actually proposing the Bill. And that is where we see a severe weakness.

It's almost entrusting Colonel Sanders to take care of our chicken farms, Mr. Speaker. You know, he may say chickens have rights, but the fact of the matter is we know what his plans are for those chickens.

And it's much the same that I see from the Saskatchewan Party, that when it comes to working people — when working people out there are looking to the Sask Party for protection, for any, any protection for the working people — not for one second, not for one second, Mr. Speaker, do they actually believe this government is going to do anything to help protect working people.

Mr. Speaker, I worry about any Bills that this party brings forward, including Bill 147. And the reason why I worry about it coming forward is again the people that are bringing it forward have no trust whatsoever that's being afforded to them, especially by the working people, working men and women of this great province, Mr. Speaker.

So I would encourage folks to really watch how Bill 147 proceeds. I would encourage the union movements, I would encourage the shop stewards and all the people out there that represent the civil servants to really thoroughly read the Bill through because there are some provisions and areas in the Bill that do provide a lot of concern to us as the opposition.

And, Mr. Speaker, in trying to recognize the value of the civil servants, this opposition, our leader in this particular party, is going to seek the advice and seek the participation of many of

the working men and women throughout our province on what is the problem with Bill 147. And, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage them to contact their MLA and certainly contact our office to bring forward any kind of glaring challenges that this Bill would have, besides the ones that we've identified, and to also work with their union colleagues because, Mr. Speaker, what I think this Bill is intended to do is to not . . . is not foster a working relationship between workers. And that's always a worry.

So what I think the Sask Party's trying to do in plain terms, in plain language, Mr. Speaker, is to have the people out of work and the civil servants begin bickering and to begin fighting each other and devalue their service and certainly discredit their union movement. And, Mr. Speaker, I think this Bill, because it's not intended to do anything else but create that confusion and that conflict within the workplace, is actually a disservice to all people of Saskatchewan and to all those people that seek services from our civil servants.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would again point out to folks out there that if they see any particular issue that they want to raise in relation to Bill 147, the public disclosure . . . *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*, that they're only a phone call away.

And I would again stress the point that this party is proposing this particular Bill. And any Bill that that party proposes that affects the labour movement, that affects the working men and women in this province, then there's immediately a huge wall of mistrust that is built. And there's a huge feeling of betrayal by this, by the working men and women, when it comes to this particular party. And, Mr. Speaker, Bill 80, Bill 5 and 6, the essential services Bill, and all the different Bills they've brought forward is evidence enough that the Saskatchewan Party government does not have the interests of the working people at heart.

And Bill 147, again we talk about the atmosphere that many civil servants work under — by and far it's professional; they're dedicated. But, Mr. Speaker, there's no way that this opposition and many, many other working men and women will ever trust that government to bring forward any Bills without us thoroughly looking at it, without us looking at all the angles, without us ensuring that there isn't some other backdoor process or ulterior motives that that party has. Because we know there are. We just have to track them down.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's one of the reasons why we need to take as much time as we can to look at this Bill and to make sure it doesn't harm the people that help us — and that's the working men and women of this great province. So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill 147.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 147, *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 149

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 149 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to make a few comments on Bill 149, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010*.

Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the Minister of Finance propose *The Income Tax Amendment Act*. And, Mr. Speaker, at this time the . . . Mr. Speaker, what the minister had to say was the . . . laid out some ground rules under which this Act would operate. And those were that the corporation must process in Saskatchewan or extract it from a mineral resource located in Canada, but not in Saskatchewan, to the prime metal stage. And in addition, Mr. Speaker, that the corporation must have a minimum capital investment in Saskatchewan of \$125 million. The minister also went on to say that it must also employ at least 75 full-time employees in Saskatchewan and must allocate at least 90 per cent of its taxable income to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, on the face of that, basically we see that this Bill implements a five-year tax holding for mining corporations who make investments of 125 million and maintaining 75 full-time employees. Now we could support that, Mr. Speaker. The issues around this obviously would be when those 75 employees would be in place. Would that be in the construction phase, Mr. Speaker? Would that be in the actual operation? So some concerns there, Mr. Speaker. And I think one of the other things that we have that we need to look at here is, I think we all support, whether it be head office jobs coming here — actual jobs, on-site jobs — to Saskatchewan, that is good for all of us here in Saskatchewan to see a growing province.

But, Mr. Speaker, the debate we had around the Potash Corporation, the issue of what will be done or what won't be done and whether we can hold or trust this government to bring forward or to make sure that these concerns are met, that the investments are there, that the maintaining of the 75 full-time jobs . . . Again there is a lot of detail here in terms of how we will determine 75 full-time jobs in terms of definitions and how *The Income Tax Act* will look at those.

[15:30]

So in general I would say that this measure would be supported by the opposition, but again how our experience here has not necessarily been the best. And one of the questions that we have is, who was driving the changes? What exactly were their . . . Many people speculated where it would come from. I think the Minister of Finance had yelled out one time that it was going to be the Northwest Territories, but that was not exactly the kind of details we would be looking for. We'd be looking for what . . . if there was some investment that they are considering, what this would mean for Saskatchewan.

Again it'll be interesting to see, you know, what commitments

mining companies make in exchange for this tax holiday and, again, how successful the government will be in making sure that they keep their commitments.

Again as we witnessed earlier in question period, we have issues around deals that are being made in building long-term care facilities in this province. And it doesn't seem to worry the Minister of Health or the Minister of Finance very much as to how these things are tendered or what is done, which casts a dark, a dark and long shadow over many investments and the way people do business in Saskatchewan. And we hope that this is not what they bring to the table here.

However on this side, we are not very hopeful after the number of years that we have watched these folks operate. And in terms of what they are doing, that every time things are put down that there is an attempt to come up with what they call, perhaps, some unique solutions. Those solutions have not exactly been unique. Nor, Mr. Speaker, have I seen that they've been really positive for the people of Saskatchewan.

Now again they talk about that there would be . . . There are pledges here in the initial statements by the Minister of Finance, pledges of full-time jobs and new investments. And again as I sit here and listen to the pledges that have been made, those pledges sometimes ring very hollow, Mr. Speaker. They ring very hollow in the sense that they are not met with a commitment.

And there's nothing in here that tells us what will happen or what the definitions of some of these things will be, like the 75 jobs that I initially mentioned. What will that mean — 75 full-time employees — what will that count as? Would we be looking at work? Is this contracted work? Is it work of that company? How will exactly these jobs and the full-time definitions — which we don't see here — be counted? How will they be interpreted? What'll be the interpretations here?

What does it do further? What does it do for investment? Because there's nothing here about who actually is driving the process, who actually thinks this is of benefit. It's a suggestion of how we can increase investment.

Where is the studies? Where is the materials that we should be looking at? And obviously we'll have a lot of questions around this Bill. But where's the material that we should be looking at to say to us that in fact what are the commitments of the mining companies? What are the commitments, and how successful will the government be holding them to commitments? And will this, as they say, increase investment?

The Minister of Enterprise had put out a press release at this same time outlining this and was talking about that this would change, will significantly enhance the attractiveness of refining important minerals in our province. We hope to attract quality, high-paying jobs to Saskatchewan. And now, Mr. Speaker, the minister here is talking about, we hope to attract quality, high-paying jobs to Saskatchewan. Now I would hope that there would be a little bit more planning than sitting around and hoping that there would be high-paying jobs here in order for legislation to come.

Or perhaps this is one time that again somebody has sat in the

backrooms and come up with some legislation for lack of anything better to do or with any real plan in mind. So our questions here have been . . . Other than a few unsolicited, I would say, unsolicited comments from the Minister of Finance that this was in fact, that this was . . . somehow the Northwest Territories were going to do this, there are no details here in terms of what is happening, how this works, whether it will in fact attract investment to Saskatchewan. We have a number of companies that are looking in the areas of potash for investing in Saskatchewan in new mines. In fact it was the former NDP government who put in a whole tax regime around the potash that allowed the companies to expand.

And we have a lot of, out there, Mr. Speaker, full-time jobs as a result of that expansion in the potash industry. And people are working. The mines are expanding. There are hundreds of jobs at each of those. And in fact, members opposite agreed with those changes because they haven't really changed any of them. They've left all those things there. And now people are working, working in each of the potash mines and working on the expansions.

And Mr. Speaker, I was at the mining association and had one of the managers come up to me and say . . . and Mr. Cline was standing there, and these came up to him and gave him direct credit. He said you're the one that did this, and we'll never forget that, that you were the one that put in these tax changes in to allow us to expand in the potash mines in Saskatchewan.

And then it's much like 2007, when they get elected. And then they think the world has changed, Mr. Speaker, the world has changed for them, and that they are the ones that created this, where we hear over and over again, many numbers of times, that it was in fact that we were at high record levels in 2007. And things ever since then, the economic activity, has trended downwards, Mr. Speaker.

So in all of this, again it will be interesting to see, I guess, as we talk about this whether — much as in the potash industry — whether the companies will pick up on this and we will have the investments that we're talking about here.

I would think that we would be thinking that there is some specific projects that we have that . . . Who are the people that were talked to? Who are the stakeholders in this? Who has come to ask for this? Is this something that we are negotiating with companies? Do we actually necessarily even have to do this to attract people? Perhaps we do. These are questions that we'll be looking at asking, that we're asking, that I will be asking, many of my colleagues will be asking here on this.

And again this huge exchange for a tax holiday and whether this will . . . and how successful this government will be in keeping these commitments which we see, truly, that there is a bit of a lack of action on other files when it comes to this sort of thing.

So again the points that I make are overall that we would be supportive of this type of measure if it's bringing in the jobs, if it's doing the things that the . . . if things are turning out as has been painted here. But a lot of times, we've had a rosy picture painted. Perhaps one of the times was the budget that we've had and the overestimation in potash revenues. We've had many rosy pictures painted only to find out, Mr. Speaker, that in fact

that has not been the case. And so a lot of bad planning.

And that's what makes us a little concerned when we see this brought forward and we simply hear members opposite yelling out, well this is where it's from. We would like to see the details. We would like to see some thought in here, much as we did around the potash issue that I spoke of, the taxation, so that we see directly all those jobs that are coming, that are coming in, in the potash industry when these mines are expanding.

Is this something that will happen here, or is this just another pipe dream thought up from people who perhaps don't have anything better to do and are justifying their existence?

So we support ideas. It enhances investment in Saskatchewan, enhances employment in Saskatchewan. We would hope that the Minister of Enterprise . . . that these are quality and attractive jobs in Saskatchewan. And we would hope actually there'd be more than 75. We would hope that we wouldn't be trying to scramble to get 75 jobs. We would hope that it would be twice that number and in fact, with all the building of the facilities, that we would see that would need to be built, that that would in fact also create more work in the initial stages and then that we'd maintain no less than 75.

And again 75 full-time employees does not really say what that would mean in terms of — lacking anywhere that I've seen — some explanation of what 75 full-time jobs would be, an interesting part of that being that the allocation of at least 90 per cent of the taxable income to Saskatchewan is again very interesting and something that I think that we would be supportive of just in general terms.

Now with this . . . And again I just come to, where is this coming from? Who initiated this? Is it just something of the Minister of Finance sitting alone on long nights to come up with ideas that . . . Did he get together with the Minister of Enterprise? Or is this another pipe dream, like we have the isotopes, the clean coal? And perhaps now that they're talking about the dome stadium . . . no, not as much though they've been talking about dome stadium. Maybe in Regina they talk about it a lot. But I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, travelling around the province and talking about long-term care centres and just simply asking people, how's that dome stadium working for you, you don't get a very favourable response when we talk about that.

So I would hope that there's a little more planning around this. I hope that this isn't just a concocted deal that they're coming forward with to try and get them through, try and get themselves elected, and painting again a rosy picture which has an underbelly of not a lot happening, perhaps just a huge sign out front.

So, Mr. Speaker, just the jobs, the incentives for Saskatchewan, the creation of the process for the ore that would come to Saskatchewan, the processing of this ore are laudable things that we should, that we should promote and support. And for that, as I have said, this opposition is quite prepared to do that in general terms. We will have numerous questions around this issue, Mr. Speaker, and we will be asking more questions.

I guess I would just still like to talk a bit about the numbers of

people that this would benefit and whether we have the type of ore and whether this processing would be something that would extend over a period of time, what agreements are we talking about, what mines are proposed, because this is talking about ore coming in from outside of Saskatchewan and just definitely Canada. It is something that we would . . . I think the people of Saskatchewan, when a Bill is put forward like this, have a right to know. I mean things like this are not done overnight. It takes a lot of planning. And I think it's only fair that the government should be upfront and say that this is what we are doing, this is where we're going, and here's our plan.

A good plan can withstand criticism. A good plan can stand the test of time, and I think that it's important that the plan is put out. Otherwise we all look at this and any number of questions that we ask are . . . who's driving this? What is this? Is this going to work? Can we see whether maybe we should have added a different incentive in the package to do this? Are there negotiations ongoing? Will it be negotiations? And we haven't, again, seen the best track record of people here, the government in their negotiations.

I mean they have a pulp mill that they're trying to get up. They've been working on that for three years. The member who . . . Perhaps we could borrow his billboard for the next election, and we'll run that. A vote for — I think it said — Hickie is a vote for a mill. So we would try and do that and make sure that billboard's up there. And in fact perhaps the member wants to pay for it. We'll run it for him, and I guess that would be another time we could ask, how's that working for you?

But there are many examples of that. In terms of the businesses that have been attracted and in terms of people coming here, I think they have a difficult time measuring up to what happened in 2007, in the year of 2007 — be that in oil or gas, a number of wells. That's just a fact, Mr. Speaker. That stands there and they have to deal with that. So now they come forward and they have introduced . . . I'm not sure if this is their centrepiece, but here it is, investment for ore coming in from outside of Saskatchewan, and we are going to process it — a laudable kind of undertaking but again from folks that not necessarily have the best track record with either encouraging investment in Saskatchewan or then maintaining and dealing with the companies when they get here.

So, Mr. Speaker, there will be a lot more that many of my colleagues would have to say on this venture, and so with that, I would adjourn debate.

[15:45]

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Fairview has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 149, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 150

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed

motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 150 — *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — I'd also like to add to the previous Bill, like to make some comments on Bill 150, the Act to amend *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Act*.

Mr. Speaker, from a reading of this Bill, again it's one of those Bills that perhaps that we have to be aware of and be very careful with, well I guess, the intended consequences as well as the unintended consequences of this. And a close reading of this Bill would show that it has two main provisions and that the first is to clarify how spousal survivor benefits are to be calculated, and in the case of a person who may have been married more than once and who may have both current and former spouses who could claim to be qualified to receive some type of survivor benefits.

Now again, Mr. Speaker, the benefits of spouses in case of survivors, it's an important issue. It is good that this will be clarified so that all parties have a better understanding. It's an important issue for all of us. But we too want to know and have a better understanding of the potential impact of this provision. And particularly, Mr. Speaker, we're concerned about vulnerable people.

However on the face of it, we believe there may be merit in what the government is proposing as I spoke earlier. To split these off to find, as we do now, that where there are more, there's more than one spouse is . . . At that kind of time where there's a survivor, people have gone through some very serious issues in their life, and it's very important that it be clear so that we do not enter into . . . Perhaps there would be also children involved that it's clear for the parties as to what direction and how survivor benefits should be divided. So in that we would like to also understand the potential impact, and so we would be looking and asking questions on that so that we would get a better understanding of it. And with that just generally I would think it's a topic, and this Bill is well worth undertaking so that all would be clear.

Now again the second provision is the government proposes to remove from public the reporting the amount of money and benefits paid out to individual superannuates. Now again here this is concerning, concerning for us, as this is again this pattern of hiding important information from public view and not allowing the reporting of money paid out. We're not certain why, what this is about, and we will not be supporting this provision in terms of what we see here.

Now again the government knows full well that any amounts over 50,000 paid to individuals, organizations in any one year have to be publicly disclosed. Now we're not certain as to where the request again came from to do this and what in fact that will mean. Mr. Speaker, the salaries of everyone who works for a minister of the Crown or for the Executive Council and who can make more than 50,000 a year are publicly disclosed in public accounts. Now the same holds true for other employers in the public service and so I guess the question

would be is, why are former employees being held to a different standard?

Mr. Speaker, the many questions in terms of what this would mean, what prompted this change, all those remain as well as the . . . are a little hidden from view. And we're not certain here as to what the exact reason for hiding this from the public view would be, what it would do. Who are the people that are wishing that this not be made public?

Now again we believe that this could result in former employees being able to collect pension benefits while working for the government on a contract basis — again, what the people might call double-dipping. And would anybody be the wiser, Mr. Speaker, if this was to occur?

Now we know again, and it's not only in hiding things, but we know the government likes to contract out services to its friends. And again here we've heard many times in this legislature during the question period about long-term care facilities in Saskatoon and the untendered contracts that have been given out to Sask Party donors.

And again this might be pretending that it's something new and innovative, but the understanding from this side is hardly . . . Well I guess, Mr. Speaker, the way to say it is we don't understand why you would want to do that, why at some point that why you would not want to tender contracts. Again what would this mean? What would it mean to people in Saskatchewan? Would it mean are we trying to contract out services to former employees, is a question I think that we have again because simply, would it be people who had committed or given money to the Sask Party? Now would those former employees be able to get payments from the government? Now again are they also after money from the public purse and getting a pension?

The point of this is, is that none of this is very transparent. And I would say that the transparency issue has again been something that these folks came in on, saying that they would be totally transparent, and yet 400 pages or whatever blacked out in reports on the freedom of information request. I don't think that that stands either the Minister of Health or the Premier in good stead, to be blanking out that much information. I'm not sure what that does. It must surely must've been a few lines in there, Mr. Speaker, that they could've left to read. I'm not certain that every . . . an entire report is blacked out to that degree, that number of pages.

And it's to try and stand there, I guess I feel a bit for the . . . Well maybe I don't feel a bit for the Minister of Health, but that's perhaps why they put him in such a tough position. Every day that he would have to get up and defend something, and each day trying to blame the NDP. Blame the NDP, because every time they run into problems — even after three years now — it's blame the NDP.

The issue for them is, I guess is that, what have they done? And there's not a lot that's been done, not a lot. Not a lot done, but there's been a lot of . . . Not a lot done; a lot of blacking out, a lot of blacking out. Not a lot done from those folks over across the way. And we wonder as we sit here, what is it that is going on? And it's a lot of spin, Mr. Speaker, that is going on, a lot of

talk. But when they . . . They were not too happy when they heard those figures that in 2007 we had more oil and more gas and that since then they haven't . . . It hasn't quite worked out. I mean it must be very disappointing to them.

One of the biggest things, I think, that it was interesting to watch on the potash debate as to the free traders, or the free enterprisers over there, in terms of taking that and the beating they're taking in the national media of their move.

We're glad they supported us. They saw the Saskatchewan way and stood behind keeping our resources in Saskatchewan and Canada, and that was interesting because the national press don't . . . They were friends before. I'm sure they'd be still friends probably now. But it must be quite an excruciating little experience there to go through that, to sit there for years and talk about all the things they've talked about, about it being free enterprisers and promote that, to then change on a huge issue and say, oops. Whoa, we can't do that.

And what happens? So now we have questions out there from their free enterprise friends all across Canada, talking about, well what do we do? How do we invest in potash? What happens? Well PotashCorp doesn't pay any dividends, so how . . . When you invest in this corporation, what'll happen? These are interesting questions, Mr. Speaker. Much I don't . . . I definitely am not an expert in that. But just from sitting down and talking to various people who have approached me and said, we're asking what is going on there . . .

It was interesting to listen to the debate and watch this. But I've noticed that it's been quite an experience for those folks across the way, and how they, for that matter, square all that. So very interesting, very interesting debate to see some of the national media going after the Premier and whether Saskatchewan is open for business.

And then I must have hit a nerve because soon after that we have an advertising campaign talking about open for business and having to spend money on open for business. You wonder if they would have actually needed \$2 million to do that if they wouldn't have taken the position they would have. Would they have simply said, well we don't need the \$2 million? Because as we hear on a daily basis, we've got affordable housing issues, Mr. Speaker, that could use that \$2 million.

We heard today, child care, child care could use some money. And they are off spending, trying to say, please listen to us; we are still free enterprisers here. We just had a bit of a blip, and so now we had to change the way we do business. So here's . . . We'll buy some ads, spend \$2 million, and tell the rest of the country that we're open for business. Because when you run in on a program of free enterprise and then you have to change that, it's very interesting. So money could be used in a lot better ways.

Again the disclosure item. I want to just mention one other point, and that was the government tried to bring in Bill 9 which would have raised the bar from non-disclosure government spending from 50,000 to 350,000. And this again, this is from this government of trying to do this.

And some of the other things they've done: how about firing the

employee for trying to raise issues in the public interest? That we had numbers of that where we went through and we talked about that.

So the whole, Mr. Speaker, the whole issue of the pattern of secrecy and lack of accountability and transparency of this government, when it comes to this, I'm sure they quietly amongst themselves realized that this is something that we could not support. That in fact, the provisions of the \$50,000 are in fact unsupportable, Mr. Speaker, because of the, simply that they have not shown that they could be trusted in terms of dealing and what they would do unless we had everything on the table. And in those ways, it's important for us to ask these questions, to have these debates on these Bills, so that we can send this message out and talk to our constituents and talk to the stakeholders in this and on this Bill and around these two main issues in here.

Again the spousal survivor benefits, I just think it is important to have clarity in this area. At the time of death is not the time and oftentimes, Mr. Speaker, we find ourselves in those situations. But in a time of death, it's much better to know clearly and concisely where we are going. And, Mr. Speaker, for something like that, generally I think we could have a close look at that and look at the provisions. There are some questions that no doubt we would have to try and bring clarity to the issue, to bring understanding. And I think those are questions that we will do.

And of course we have to, as I mentioned earlier, there could be the again, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to this, the unintended consequences of actions of a Bill like this, the questions around who, why we're bringing it forward I think is somewhat clear in the first provision. The first main provision here is to clarify survivor benefits, the calculation of those benefits, how we would sort this issue out. I think it's very important for people to know this, and who benefits and who doesn't benefit, Mr. Speaker, where families are involved. It is important to understand that and get some very clear directions from this. And I'm sure that most of us would support that.

It is again the second part of the provision, when I spoke of the transparency issue, spoke of the accountability issue, Mr. Speaker, that we need to hold this government to account because on the many issues that they have brought forward that there has not been transparency. Right from day one, there has not been the transparency or the accountability.

[16:00]

We have many Bills, many times, whether it was in Environment or the pony Bill, where there was talk about consultation. The consultation was not there. It did not happen. Many times people were brought back and asked whether they had spoken to people, and people came forward and said that they had not in fact been spoken to.

And again then it comes back to that now an issue, wherever an issue comes forward like \$50,000 that people would not have to declare and what they are getting over \$50,000, I think these are public funds that are here. The public has a right to know about these things, much like we have disclosure in conflict of interest.

I mean we have had issues. I know the Minister of Justice had issues around the conflict of interest with the disclosure rules. It's for us to function properly in here. We all come here, and I think it's important that we disclose those sorts of things. Because over time people have known that it's very easy to get into situations where we have to make sure that there is an objective look.

We are dealing with taxpayers' money and in most cases the people demand that of us. It raises the bar here for us inside this legislature. It raises the bar so that when we go out, we can say that we are doing the best job with people's money — the best job, Mr. Speaker.

Many times on the doorstep when we go out door knocking, talking to people — and many times I've gone — and people look, and when you come, most people are friendly, most people. And some people do have an opinion of politicians, and it is that . . . I think that is our struggle, Mr. Speaker, for both sides to want to be able to talk to people and have people have the confidence in us as politicians that we are dealing with their taxpayers' dollars in the proper manner.

And again when we have the Justice minister in terms of in a conflict of interest situation, that's important that these kind of things are written down so that people can say, we've got a problem here. And then that individual has to remove themselves from that area because in fact they are not in a position where people have felt that they can make an unbiased decision on this. And that's fair; that's fair, Mr. Speaker. That goes across the piece where people . . . It's just common sense. Whether that be in our everyday activities, we want to know that there's a sense of fair play. Where people have a sense of fair play, they might not agree with what you're putting forward, but in fact if there's a sense that if the decision was arrived in a fair manner, people would be more likely to accept that.

And that's why the government has got itself into all sorts of trouble around the long-term care facilities in the province because they're not simply being transparent. They're not being transparent. One year they say they're building all of these. The next year they pull back money. And they simply withhold the money and tell people, here's the money; we give you that money, but use it for operating. Use it for operating, they said to the people of this province, and we'll see about next year.

And many times they have spoken about, well we will build, or there will be recruitment of doctors, and that'll be a plan that'll take us past the election. And it's those type of statements that do not lend themselves to a lot of trust in the government. And I think that that's what people of Saskatchewan are telling us. They're telling us these kinds of things, that they're sitting there and wondering what happened. What happened to the great promise? What happened to the rosy picture when we elected this government? We are still hoping that they would come true.

But truly, Mr. Speaker, they are losing faith in this government. And it is through issues like transparency and fairness, because those are important to people, that people feel that they're being treated fairly. And it's difficult for people to see that they're being treated fairly. And issues like trying to hide money over \$50,000, issues like . . . Then they come up of untendered

contracts. Those are things that people want us here to ask questions on. Those are things that people want us here to debate, as I'm doing here this afternoon, Mr. Speaker. They want us to ask the much-needed questions that, what is this government really all about? Can we trust them? Do we have to . . .

And we need the details, Mr. Speaker. We need details on all of this because without those details, Mr. Speaker, we are left in a void, in a void where we have to ask questions and try and find what is going out. It's not the easiest thing to do in the Assembly sometimes. Sometimes there are no direct answers to our questions. Where we would ask questions of the government . . . And in fact they seem to enjoy talking about previous years, Mr. Speaker. They enjoy talking about if we get elected. I think they have forgot to do things and to implement policy, to pass legislation, much like this legislation that we have before us here in the superannuation supplementary provisions, Bill 150. We need to be doing more of this, and there is a scarcity, I think, of initiatives by this government on these particular issues.

Pensions are an important issue, Mr. Speaker. Pensions are something that, in my opinion, we should have legislated for everyone, Mr. Speaker. Because I know on the pension issue, many times people, when they are younger, would not think that pensions are important and would in fact say, why am I getting pension deducted from my wages? And I would rather do that because I've got some bills to pay at home, and many times at that.

But when they come, Mr. Speaker, when they're starting to get up there — even not quite where you and I are at — they all of a sudden see the importance of pensions and they see how important that is for their well-being and for their families. And again, in terms of division on that, what happens to that pension at a time of death where there's survivor benefits? What would happen? What happens? And it's important that we talk about this type of legislation.

But again we have here something that at first glance appears to deal with an important issue, but again we're not clear because of the . . . There's so little information around what is driving this. Have we had a clear explanation of what some of the unintended consequences will be around this Bill? And then again, then they, just to make matters worse, we've put in an issue of, sort of, just trust us to do the right thing here. And we have a problem with that, Mr. Speaker. And I think I've spoken on that and don't need to reiterate my entire points on that.

But suffice to say, there is definitely a concern here and a question of credibility in terms, on issues that this party has brought forward. And again I point out that Bill 9 . . . When they tried to get Bill 9 in there and tried to raise the bar from 50,000 to 350,000 so that they wouldn't have to talk about payouts for people, I think that they found what can happen when the public hears stories like that.

So what we have is again a piece of legislation that we think deserves, has some things and deserves our attention here. But again we would like to know our questions around the \$50,000. And again, why are former employees going to be held to a different standard? Why would that be necessary? That question

has not, neither in the remarks that I was able to look at, nowhere has there been anything that outlined that there was a concern here. We have not been told that there was a concern.

And again the legislation is brought forward leaving many questions, many questions unanswered in terms of what is intended here. And it's that intention. People might say, well you know, just trust us. You don't have to be constantly — as we hear from the other side — being negative. There's a difference, Mr. Speaker, between being negative and asking questions and asking questions on why a certain piece of legislation has been brought forward. If you are not interested in telling people why people over \$50,000, why you will not tell them . . . of individuals why they've had this . . . [inaudible] . . . disclosure.

Surely if there were some legitimate concerns brought up for us, we would . . . We on this side are reasonable people as well. We would agree. We could say we could support this. But if you simply say, we're going to try and hide anybody who has over \$50,000, and we're not going to talk about that and to say, well now you just accept that. And again the history here has not been exactly exemplary on this front. We didn't really . . . There've been many issues. I think I've spoken of just a few. But there is a . . . The list is growing longer, Mr. Speaker. The number of years here, it's surprising of how long that list actually is in terms of people being non-transparent.

I think one of the most unfortunate, of course, was the wildlife habitat issue we had last year that arose and the lack of consultation and the lack of meeting. Having people have to actually indicate that they had not met with the minister was in fact rather disturbing. So that's definitely a problem. And again the transparency issue that comes with that of not being transparent and saying who was met with on what occasion. What was said? These are very serious, serious allegations. And of course we would continue to ask those hard questions, continue to pose the questions for this government in terms of why they are in fact doing the things that they are doing.

So, Mr. Speaker, the continued pattern of secrecy, lack of accountability and transparency that has defined this government and is becoming ever deeply embedded in the minds of Saskatchewan people, and what they are doing, leads us to have a lot of difficulty with this particular piece of legislation, a lot more questions that we will be asking on that. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would adjourn debate on Bill 150.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Fairview has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 150. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 153

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 153 — The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to speak on Bill 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, I want to say right off the hop that on the surface of it, it looks like, you know, it's certainly . . . Not all of the proposed Act is bad or poor or whatever other words that you might want to put with it. Some of it is actually probably even commendable.

But we have some significant concerns with this Bill 153 as it repeals the civil division of the Provincial Court and it looks like it transfers some significant responsibilities that are currently handled by Provincial Court judges and shifts that to justices of the peace. And some of the questions we have, Mr. Speaker, are: how is that going to affect the serving of justice? How is it going to affect people who rely on our judicial system to help us find what the path is, what the law says, to interpret the law in a wise — we hope — wise way?

And usually justice doesn't have to be pretty, but it does have to be honest. And so we want to be very careful that we're not doing something to the judicial system that would in some way make it less stellar than it is today. We want to make all the changes that are ever made to a judicial system improvements.

[16:15]

One of the questions that immediately comes to mind is, who called for these changes? Who called for it? There's no mention in any of the research that I've done, any of the reading I've done around this Bill, about where the call for these changes came. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to say off the hop, I'm not a lawyer. I have no significant legal training at all so there's my denial of legal expertise. But I am an MLA and have been for just long enough to know that there is a separation of our responsibilities as legislators and the judiciary. I know there's a separation there, and it's often an uneasy separation.

So I'm questioning what the relationship is with respect to Bill 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act* as it's being proposed in this session of the legislature. Again I ask, who called for these changes? I noted that in the Bill, some of the things that are happening actually are taking some of the responsibilities away from the chief provincial judge and moving it presumably into the Department of Justice. I'm talking some of the administration. And I'm always uneasy when there's even the remotest appearance that somehow a government might be more involved than it should be in the judiciary.

Governments clearly have to have some responsibility. We have to fund the justice system. We have to put legislation in place that sets the standards of judges, if I can describe it that way, make sure that the minimum standards are set. But we have to be very cognizant all the time about recognizing the independence of the judiciary, and we want to make sure that the judiciary want the changes that are being proposed here, that somehow it will be an aid to the implementation of justice.

And I'm just not getting a sense, frankly, one way or the other on this one, but I have to ask lots of questions around it. You

know, who asked for this?

See the Bill allows for a greater public disclosure of the results of investigations into the conduct of judges by the Judicial Council. Well it's interesting because we've asked questions. The member for Saskatoon Nutana has asked questions day after day after day after day about Amicus. The media gathered, report zippo, day after day after day after day. The government seems to have its way — a \$27 million untendered contract and no answers.

How is it, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act*, will hold judges to a higher level than they hold themselves, the government? How is it that this Bill will allow greater public disclosure of the results of investigations into the conduct of judges than it will allow into the conduct of itself? How can that possibly be? Because we're MLAs, because we're government, we get to pass the legislation. We get to pass good legislation for us. It reminds me of Tommy Douglas' white cats, black cats that passed laws that were for good for cats but not so good for mice. And, you know, there are analogies. If anyone doesn't know the story, I invite them to look it up. Google it if you must, but get some of that information for yourself.

I again have to ask, how it is that we legislators could possibly think that it's a good thing to pass legislation on somebody else that holds them to a higher level of accountability than we're prepared to hold ourselves? The government clearly is not wanting to be held accountable for the Amicus deal, \$27 million untendered contract. We have heard that close to \$70,000 in political donations to the Sask Party from several of the major contractors in this \$27 million untendered contract.

Again I've got to just ask, well how can this possibly work? How can we in *The Provincial Court Amendment Act* say it's okay to report what the judges have done. You know, when the Judicial Council does an investigation, a proper investigation into the judges . . . okay, we can make it public whatever they find out. We'll just tell them everything. We'll just make it . . . Maybe post it on the Internet, I don't know. You know, it wouldn't be the first time that inappropriate information gets posted on the Internet under this Sask Party watch. But how can we hold judges to a higher level of accountability than ourselves?

You know we talk about disclosure. And I've mentioned the Amicus deal now a number of times. I think I'll leave that for a little while, Mr. Speaker. But I mean this is a government that . . . I just listened to my colleague speaking just before me about the superannuation Act. And I heard him speaking, as I did just yesterday, of some concerns we had in that Bill that is around public disclosure because that Bill says less public disclosure. And this Bill, Mr. Speaker, says more public disclosure.

And if you wonder why it is that we're sometimes confused or I'm sometimes confused, wonder why it is that the public is sometimes confused, it's because we get two Bills in the course of five, ten minutes proposed, one that says we're going to restrict information that's currently, currently released to the public in public accounts, but we're going to change the law so that that information regarding superannuation does not have to

be released publicly. And then this Bill, we're saying but we're going to make public everything about Provincial Court judges. When the Judicial Council does an investigation, we'll make public whatever their findings are.

So how can it be, you know? It's like the right hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing with this government. And yes, you heard me right. I hate to admit that they might actually have a left hand over there, considering that I'm left-handed personally and I'm proud to be — what many people consider — left on the political spectrum, and I'm proud of that and always have been.

But how is it that the right hand doesn't know what the right hand's doing? How is it that two Bills . . . one can propose eliminating disclosure, public disclosure, and the other one, this Bill 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act*, says oh, but we'll do public disclosure when it's on the judges, not on us. Not on the government, but on the judges we'll publicly disclose any and all information.

So who has asked? Who is it that is driving these changes? Who is it that wants the changes in Bill 153? I don't think that this would be something that necessarily Provincial Court judges would want. It diminishes their responsibilities in some ways. It moves some of the judicial work that they do into the realm of what do we . . . I'm having an old-timer's moment here, Mr. Speaker. The courts are not looking at the things that have been looked at by Justice of the Peace. It was Justice of the Peace that I was absolutely struggling for and thank goodness it rolled around in my head and popped in.

But how is it that a Provincial Court judge would ask that the Justice of the Peace take on their responsibilities? Maybe they are. Maybe that's what's happened. But we certainly haven't heard any indication of that from the Minister of Justice or from the government on this Bill. We've just got questions and questions and questions about what this is really all about. Who's driving it and why is it that it's good for us to have public disclosure, Mr. Speaker, around judges, but not public disclosure around government operations?

Because there is a separation of the judiciary and of government. We clearly are responsible to make sure that we report on ourselves — if I can describe it that way — on government, on opposition, on MLAs. We have obligations to be clear and as transparent as we can be with the public. I hesitate to use the word reasonable, reasonably, but I do say that because there are simply things that we do on a daily basis that are so inconsequential. Why would you report them? You don't want to know how many meetings I've attended earlier this day, Mr. Speaker. Nor do I want to know how many you have attended although I can say, just for the record, I know it's significant in both instances. I know it's significant, but I don't know the number.

Why is it that we want to open up to the public — open up widely — what judges do but hide what it is that we do here? Why is it that the government wants to do that? Why is it? I've talked about Amicus. I've talked about some of the other things going on. Why is it under Bill 9 that's before the legislature that the government is proposing to enable itself to spend up to \$350,000 without public disclosure? That's in Bill 9. How is it

that it says for \$350,000 of taxpayers' money being spent, we don't have to disclose it? Why? Because it's the government. But if the judicial review panel looks at Provincial Court judges, by gosh we're going to open it up so they can report everything.

It seems to me . . . I'm trying my best to paint this picture of a double standard. And it's just so bizarre, this double standard, that I'm struggling to understand how it is that we could possibly, how could a government, how could a Sask Party government possibly propose double standards that are so vehemently opposed to each other? One standard for themselves that says whatever we touch, we don't have to disclose. Whatever we do — if it's a \$27 million sweetheart deal, Amicus deal — we don't have to report that. It's untendered. We don't have to report that. That's what they say, and they're making it stick every day in question period. With the help of our friends in the media, they're making it work. And I say shame on our friends in the media. That's me saying that. That's none of my colleagues. That's me. I say shame on them for not reporting, Mr. Speaker.

How is that we can have that? How is it that we can have a Bill before the legislature that proposes when the government can spend up to \$350,000 without reporting it now, without public disclosure? It's under Bill 9. Look it up, Bill 9. Up to \$350,000 without public disclosure and yet . . . Those are two examples, Mr. Speaker, that affect the government.

And yet this Bill 153, *An Act to amend The Provincial Court Act*, says we'll open it up. Whatever is found out about the judges, we'll just allow for greater disclosure. It's bizarre. It just doesn't make any sense that the results of investigations into the conduct of judges by a judicial council can have more reporting now, while these other examples that I've used . . . the government is saying but we won't report that. We won't report that because it affects the government, but because this affects judges, we will report it.

[16:30]

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that does seem to make sense about this Bill . . . and I did say there are some good things about it. One of the things that does seem to make sense is the Bill allows for the appointment of temporary judges that are currently serving on the bench in other provinces, to serve. And the minister has said this is to address cases where all the available judges on the Saskatchewan Provincial Court have a conflict of interest with one or more of the parties involved in a particular legal matter.

I can't imagine what that matter would be, but you know, on the surface of it, that explanation makes sense because you know that all of the Provincial Court judges are not available at any given time to take on an additional caseload. And you may have one or two or three or, you know, relatively small number of Provincial Court judges that are available to take on a new case. And that one judge or two judges or a small number of judges may all know one or more of the parties and have a conflict of interest and not be available to hear that particular case.

In the service of justice, what this one provision does is allows for a temporary appointment of a judge from out of province, a

duly appointed provincial judge from presumably one of the other provinces or possibly one of the territories. And that we can salute on the surface of it. That seems to make sense. I'm always reluctant to say we salute on the surface of it because, Mr. Speaker, it frankly displays that I have some lack of trust in what the government members say.

And I just — but having said that — just know that I have some doubts about it. We will want to ask some questions about this to make certain that that explanation is absolutely straight up. And we will also of course be wanting to know if we've ever had a situation where that has occurred, where there has been a conflict or where there's no Provincial Court judge available to hear a judicial matter because of conflict of interest or the judge knows everybody or too many of one or one of the parties involved. But that appears to be a reasonable part of this Bill.

But that's just one tiny part of it that almost never comes into effect. I doubt if it's ever . . . I don't know that it's ever been utilized, but we'll certainly look forward to finding that out.

There is a provision to bring eligibility for disability benefits to the same standard as is provided to other provincial government employees. So the judges would get the same three months of disability benefits that other provincial employees get. Well of course that's just a logical part of the Bill that is really easy to salute.

We hope that nobody ever needs to use disability benefits, but the very fact of the matter is that things happen in life, and we've got enough Provincial Court judges that some things . . . I wish them all nothing but good. I wish all of our Provincial Court judges and all of the people of Saskatchewan nothing but good, but the reality is that life sometimes throws a curveball at us, and we need some disability benefits. And we would want our Provincial Court judges to have the three-month disability benefits equal to that of other government employees.

There are changes to the law, the nature of the Law Society, that as it respects its representation on the Judicial Council. Mr. Speaker, currently the president of the Law Society serves directly on the council and it results in frequent turnover on that council. So this Bill will allow representatives of the Law Society to serve for a longer period of time, and it allows the Judicial Council thereby to keep its experience for a longer period of time. And on the surface both of these seem to be very reasonable.

You want to have, in any good operation, you want a certain amount of continuity. You don't want to change your personnel every year. Or nor would it, nor would it be healthy, quite frankly, to change the entire Legislative Assembly every election, to say that members can't seek re-election. The voters will decide that. And in a similar way you want, in the Judicial Council, you would want to have some corporate history — if I can use that term — so that you get better service out of the Judicial Council at the job that it's challenged to do.

This would help for any person, organization that brought complaints before the council. And again that's fairly easy to support that particular amendment. Because at the end of the day, what all judicial services are, what we hope they are, is an attempt, a sincere attempt to provide the very best ethical legal

service that we possibly can so that the rules are the same for me as they are for my constituents as they are for all of our constituents — in other words, all Saskatchewan people who want the law to be the same for us all, and we want it to be applied equally for us all.

And I know that they . . . Well I know that my experience with legal matters is pretty limited. It tends to be transfer of property. But whether that's what it is or something that we would consider more serious than a transfer of property or the arrangement of a will or something like that, we want, Mr. Speaker, to have . . . I know I want to have first-rate legal services provided to me. And I want that for everybody. I want it unanimous right throughout the province. It should be as readily available and as good a service as we possibly can.

So *An Act to amend The Provincial Court Act, 1998*, Bill 153, is proposing some significant changes. We're in favour of three fairly small changes that I've just spoken about, but we're very much questioning the need for all of the changes in total. We're questioning a couple of things. One is, what functions are being transferred out of the Provincial Court? What types of cases are going to be handled by justices of the peace that are currently handled by the Provincial Court system? And why is it that we would suddenly think that these types of cases have less merit today to be heard than they had a year ago or 10 years ago? And it may be that there are some legitimate reasons for these changes.

But as I said earlier, I'm wondering what's driving the changes, Mr. Speaker. Who's requested it? Where was this Bill 153 dreamt up? Where does it come from? Who's the proponent of it? What was broke that needs to be fixed? What is it? And why is it, with the separation of state, of government, from the judiciary, why is it that we are saying in Bill 153 we want to change the way the judiciary operates, in some fairly minor ways but they are nonetheless changes to the way the judiciary operates?

So my question is very clear: does the judiciary, did they request these changes? Did they say, we don't want to be involved with the administration of this, that, and the other? Did the judges, did the judiciary say, but we want where we're investigated by — I want to get the words right here — by the Judicial Council, where as a judge I'm investigated by the Judicial Council, I want the Judicial Council to be able to make the results of that investigation more readily public than is currently the case?

It may be, Mr. Speaker, the judges asked for that, but it's sure counterintuitive to me. It's counterintuitive that the judges would say, when a governing body looks at what I'm doing, not usually because I'm doing such a terrific job, usually because there's some question of something that I've been involved with or done, and I'm going to ask for that Judicial Council to be able to make it more readily public what the results of their investigation are. It just doesn't quite seem to me that the judges would have asked for that change in Bill 153.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on. I could go on, but I think the key to this is we've got a Bill that's being proposed. We know not from whom it's proposed, other than the government has brought it forward, the Sask Party's government brought it

forward. But we don't know who's asking for this Bill. We don't know what's broken that needs to be fixed. We don't know why it's coming, whose ox is being gored, if I may borrow a metaphor. Whose ox is being gored? I don't know this. But why is it that this legislation is changing some of the job that Provincial Court judges do and moving it to the justices of the peace?

I've got nothing against justices of the peace. Maybe the justices of the peace asked for this legislation. I don't know. Doubt it, but I don't know. Again I say I don't think that the judges asked for all of this either. And I'm particularly concerned when we can have a situation where we're saying in Bill 153 . . . The Sask Party government is saying in Bill 153, *An Act to amend The Provincial Court Act*, that where the Judicial Council investigates into the conduct of judges, that this Bill allows for greater public disclosure of the results of that investigation.

So if greater disclosure for judges but no disclosure for actions and activities of the Sask Party government . . . They can spend, under Bill 9, up to \$350,000 without public disclosure. That's what they're proposing for themselves. But judges, they have to report any time there's any, any Judicial Council investigation into them. It can be publicly reported.

We have a situation of \$27 million untendered contract, and the government's saying, we don't have to report that. We don't have to report that. It's only \$27 million in an untendered contract. They're saying they don't have to report it. It seems to me, it seems to me we have a double standard here, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Sask Party government and things they want to do. No public disclosure, oh no, oh no. The public doesn't need to know about the \$27 million and how that got awarded without tender — \$27 million. You know, Mr. Speaker, we're not talking chump change here.

And Bill 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act* says but when it respects judges . . . And I think I've hit a chord here with the government. They're saying, oh talk about Bill 153, they say. If I had the Amicus deal, if I had a \$27 million untendered contract, if I had that, I would want you to be talking about Bill 153 as well. If I was responsible for a \$27 million untendered deal that stinks to high heaven, I would want the opposition to talk about something else. I say, shame on them. Shame on the media for not reporting this — not what I'm saying, but what the member for Saskatoon Nutana's saying — for not holding the government's feet to the fire and getting an answer. Shame on them all.

[16:45]

I would want the opposition, if I was a government, I would want the opposition to talk only about Bill No. 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act*. That's what I would want, I would want. But, Mr. Speaker, you know full well that every piece of legislation we pass in this legislature, every piece of legislation we pass, is for the people of Saskatchewan. It's to do the greater good.

I was elected here to represent my constituents and, in a broader sense, the people of Saskatchewan to make sure that we get as good a piece of legislation as we can possibly get here. We're

elected. We're chosen by the electorate in our constituencies, and we either are fortunate enough, Mr. Speaker, to be part of the government or — some would argue — a little less fortunate, and we're put in the position of being in opposition as I am right now.

I want to tell you this. There's no bad seat in this legislature, Mr. Speaker. Every one of these seats, every one I've had the privilege and honour to sit in, has been a good seat and every one of the seats has allowed me to raise questions whether I've been in opposition or government or back in opposition as I am right now. And I've served all through the NDP administration and served proudly. I want to tell you we didn't do everything right. I want to tell you that. But we did an awful lot more things correctly for the people of the province than we did wrong. An awful lot more was good.

And I tell you that this, this piece of legislation . . .

An Hon. Member: — What's the number of this Bill?

Mr. Trew: — What's the number, the member for Cannington says? Without looking, it's clearly 153. It's . . .

An Hon. Member: — What's it about?

Mr. Trew: — Well now I can't help. Now I can't help the hon. member for Cannington who asks what's it about. And I'll tell you why I can't help him. I have been speaking to this Bill for half an hour now, Mr. Speaker, a half an hour and with a recurring theme about accountability from the Sask Party government and how they hold judges, Provincial Court judges accountable to a much higher level than they hold themselves. And for half an hour, that member's been sitting there, I thought maybe listening a little bit. I thought that was what democracy was about, Mr. Speaker. Clearly, clearly there's none so deaf as he who will not listen.

Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act* is a Bill that has some good points to it. It has some strengths to it, but it has some real concerns. And my concerns are growing by the minute with this administration because, Mr. Speaker, we've got a Sask Party government that inherited more than \$2 billion in the bank and, and, and they parlayed that into two successive multi-billion dollar deficits. They say what's that got to do with the Bill? Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you what that's got to do with Bill 153.

And I'll tell you this, because in 1991 I was elected to be part of the government. We took over from the previous right wing government. The debt problem was so bad, Mr. Speaker, that in our caucus when we were looking at the first budget, we didn't have one nor two, we had three complete discussions about what it would mean to declare bankruptcy as a province. And the first answer we were told was our jobs would be gone and that Brian Mulroney in Ottawa had a transition team to take over. That was the first answer: our jobs would be gone. And we said okay. Then what, Mr. Speaker? And without money, you can't deal with Bill 153 or any other legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bradshaw): — Why is the member on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is ostensibly speaking to Bill 153, but — over the course of the last half an hour of ranting that we've heard — very, very little that he's spoken about has had anything to do with Bill 153. The member's been here for a long time. He knows the rules of this House. He chose to stand up to speak to this Bill; he should speak to this Bill rather than irrelevant matters.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bradshaw): — The member from Regina Coronation.

Mr. Trew: — I thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to continue my debate on Bill 153 which is a Provincial Court amendment Act. And quite clearly, quite clearly any government needs to be able to fund its legislation. That was the point I just made. But Bill 153, Mr. Speaker, is quite, quite clear. This is proposed . . . It's a 10 clause Bill. There are . . .

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bradshaw): — Sorry about that. I take the member's point of order. And I have been listening to the debate, and there was a certain amount of rambling around which is allowable in debate. But I would ask the member to stick more to the Bill if at all possible.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much for that. And Bill 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act* . . . And I'm just getting warmed up because clearly there's some misunderstanding by government members about what all is in this Act, this 10 clause Act, Mr. Speaker. The changes that are being proposed in Bill 153 are allowing for a judge to be appointed from out of province where there's a major conflict. I've said, I've said that that's a good thing. It can be from another province or I presume another territory. It says . . . I think I believe the wording is a jurisdiction outside of Saskatchewan. I may be corrected on that, but clearly the intent is another province or territory. I don't think we can go beyond that. I don't think we could go to another country. But in a rare case — I'm not sure it's ever happened — but in a rare case, we might well want, we might well have to use that provision. That's one provision that we would be supportive of.

Mr. Speaker, I have said that, with respect to public disclosure, that there is some real concerns here because we've got a government that holds itself to one very low standard. It set the bar so low that you can't hardly even trip over it. You just walk over it. And yet for judges, they've set the bar significantly higher. And I'm just trying to point out on behalf of Provincial Court judges who do not have a seat here, don't have any representation . . . They have to rely on MLAs, members of the legislature, to make good decisions for them because they have no voice in this legislature. They have no voice here.

So I'm trying to point out that what the Sask Party government is trying to do is to, in this Bill, is to make any . . . Well it will allow for a greater public disclosure of results of investigations into the conduct of judges by the Judicial Council — so greater disclosure. And yet the government, by its own actions, is saying but don't look at us. I'm saying in opposition, Mr. Speaker, that we have to have similar rules for all. Why are judges different than government MLAs? Why is it?

And I point out the additional seriousness here. There's a

separation of legislature and judiciary, and they're distinctly separate. And we have to be very careful what it is we're doing with respect to the judiciary. We have to be respectful. We have to be always trying to make the situation work better. We have to be cognizant of public expenditures. We have to make very clear, Mr. Speaker, that we can't, we can't have this double standard. It just doesn't work.

Mr. Speaker, I have clearly stated a number of concerns to Bill 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act*. I've clearly outlined them. I invite government members to read the *Hansard* and review that particularly as it's respecting the Amicus deal and the \$27 million untendered and other comments that I made.

I don't think I have a whole lot more that MLAs opposite are willing to listen. So, Mr. Speaker, at this point, to allow us to do a little bit more research, I'm going to move that we adjourn this debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bradshaw): — The member from Regina Coronation Park has moved adjournment of debate on Bill 153. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bradshaw): — I recognize the Deputy House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To facilitate work in committees, I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bradshaw): — It has been moved that this Assembly now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bradshaw): — Carried. This Assembly now stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:55.]

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Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Minister Responsible for Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Minister Responsible for The Global
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